

# Gideon Leads God's People

Wanted: Leader of Israel  
Judges 7

**Bible Point**

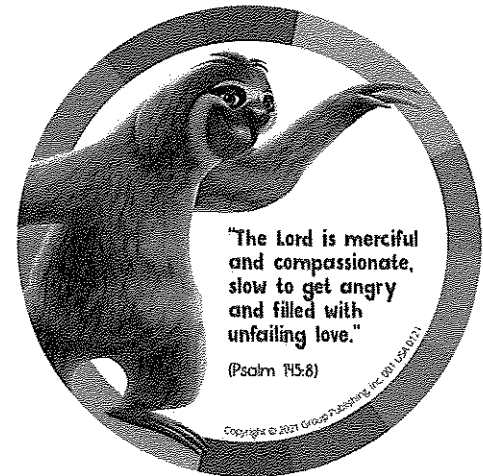
**God is patient...and we can trust him.**

**Purpose**

Kids are usually the ones in the back seat, repeatedly asking, "Are we there yet?" While vocal in their impatience, they *do* trust caregivers to guide and provide...eventually!

In Judges 6, God patiently responded to *Gideon's* repeated questions. Finally, Gideon prepared to take bold action, following God's plan. Yet God *still* asked Gideon to wait, winnow down his army, and trust in a less-than-conventional method of warfare! God's patience through each step displayed his intentional plan for *the Lord* to receive the glory...not Gideon or his army.

Today, help kids discover that sometimes God asks us to wait and do things *his* way, to bring him honor and praise. By patiently trusting God, we may get to witness jaw-dropping mighty miracles!



**Prayer**

Loving God, it's hard for us to wait and wonder at your timing. We're so thankful you're in control, but we need your help to be patient, just as you are! Help us look to you and trust in your timing. In Jesus' name, amen.

**Prep**

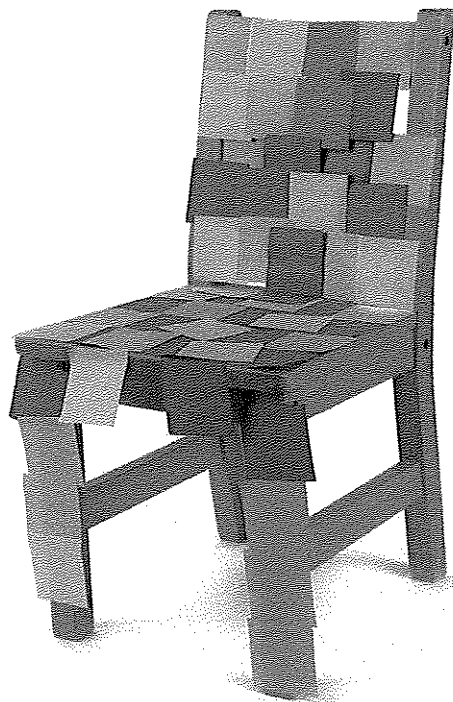
Opening Options	Sing & Play	Bible Discovery & Friendship Finale	Apply-It Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Option Cards*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Note Coat</i>: sticky notes, any classroom object</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Ball-ancing Act</i>: ping-pong balls, cups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> countdown video*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Music Video</i> DVD*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Buddy Video</i> DVD*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Moe Bible Memory Buddy poster*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> media player</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Bible (bookmark Psalm 145:8)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> "Gideon Leads God's People" Bible Story poster*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Moe Bible Memory Buddy stickers* (1 per child)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Take-It-Home Flyers* (Unit 1, Week 4) (1 per child)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Bible (bookmark Judges 7:2-3, 19-20)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> paper bowls (1 per child)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> pitchers of water</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> paper</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> markers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Explore More</i>: Bibles, timer</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Game</i>: no supplies</li> </ul>

\* in your *Simply Loved Kit*



# Opening Options

Set up one—or both—of these intro activities to start your time together. Each activity connects kids to the Bible Point and to each other. Cut apart these Option Cards, and place one by each activity you choose. Crew Guides will follow the directions and build friendships with kids as they make discoveries together!



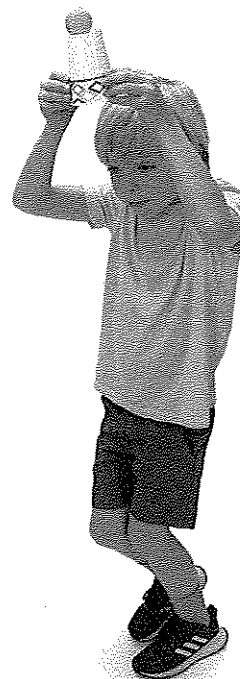
## Note Coat

**Supplies:** sticky notes, any classroom object

Work together to “hide” and completely cover a classroom item with sticky notes.

**? Tell about a time you tried to hide something.**

**Today we'll hear about a man who fought a battle by hiding something! He needed to follow God's special plan—even though it didn't make sense! It's a good thing that God is patient...and we can trust him.**



## Ball-ancing Act

**Supplies:** ping-pong balls, cups

Set a ping-pong ball on top of an overturned cup and hold it high overhead. Walk heel to toe quickly across the room and back without letting the ball fall and without lowering your arm.

**? Tell about an unusual way you do something.** Examples include eating snacks, making beds, and tying shoes.

**It's unusual to carry a ball on the bottom of a cup rather than inside. But it made for a fun game. Today we'll hear about how God helped the Israelites win a battle in an unusual way. God is patient. Even though God's people had disobeyed, God didn't give up on them. He creatively helped them instead!**

# Opening

Now's a great time for Opening Options. Choose one—or both—to introduce today's Bible discoveries.



countdown video (1 minute)

Help kids transition, clean up the activities, and sit with Connect Crews. A Connect Crew is a small group of kids with one Crew Guide.

## Sing & Play

Welcome, friends! Isn't it great to be all together today? Jesus is right here with us as a friend and helper. Let's start with a song.



"No, Not One" music video

### Bible Point

**God is patient. That's our Bible Point today. Every time you hear the words "God is patient," touch your chin, move your arm forward (demonstrate), and say, "Thanks, God!" I'm so thankful God is patient with us! Let's try that together.**

- Touch your chin, then bring your arm forward as you say "Thanks, God!"
- Repeat this several times.

Repetition cements learning, so be sure to say today's Bible Point A LOT. Have fun with it! Kids will love listening for it and responding with "Thanks, God!"

**God is patient. (Thanks, God!) We can be thankful because every good thing comes from God! Let's sing and celebrate that!**



"All That Is Good" music video

### Supplies

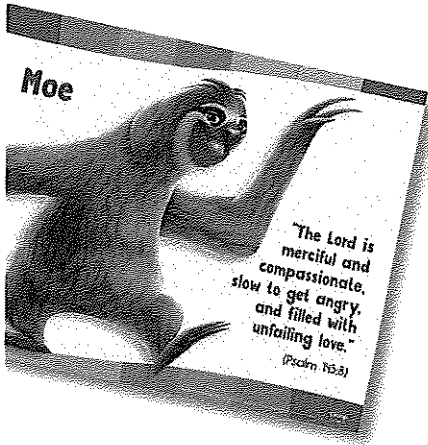
- Bible
- media player
- *Music Video* DVD
  - "No, Not One" music video
  - "All That Is Good" music video
  - "Leaning on the Everlasting Arms" music video
- *Buddy Video* DVD
  - Moe Bible Memory Buddy video (Week 4)
- Moe Bible Memory Buddy poster



Thanks, God!

## Bible Memory Buddy & Verse

Moe is our Bible Memory Buddy! Show the Bible Memory Buddy poster. Moe is a slow-moving, sleepy sloth. I wonder what *you* know about sloths. Let's find out with a This-or-That Challenge! You'll hear two fun facts about sloths like Moe. It's up to you to decide which is true—this fact or that!



- ❓ Can sloths sleep hanging upside down, or would they fall out of the tree if they tried that?
- Have everyone rest their head on their hands and snore to vote for *this* (sleeping upside down) or wave their arms and yell as if they're falling to vote for *that* (falling out of a tree).
- Make a drumroll sound by patting your thighs or the floor.
- Dramatically give the answer: **Sloths can sleep hanging upside down in a tree!**
- Watch the Bible Memory Buddy video.



Moe Bible Memory Buddy video (Week 4)



Show the Bible. **The Bible is God's true story of love! The word *bible* means "book," and this is God's special book. We have a verse from the Bible to remind us that God is patient. (Thanks, God!)**

Let's say the verse together. I'll say a line, and then you repeat it after me.

**"The Lord is merciful** (*extend one arm*)  
**and compassionate,** (*extend other arm*)  
**slow to get angry** (*slowly move palms down*)  
**and filled with unfailing love."** (*move arms up*)  
(Psalm 145:8)

**God is patient. (Thanks, God!) But lots of times we are *not* patient! We have to trust God's plans and lean on him to guide us through tough times. Let's sing about that!**



"Leaning on the Everlasting Arms" music video

# Bible Discovery

## Circle Up & Connect

Let's circle up and spend a little time simply getting to know each other in smaller groups called **Connect Crews**.

- Form Connect Crews with one helper—or Crew Guide—per group.
  - Invite kids to sit in knee-to-knee circles with their Connect Crews.
  - Have kids give their Crew Guides a fist bump.
  - Kids take turns saying their names and answering this question. Crew Guides go first.
- 🗣️ **Would you rather do things with a big group of friends or just a few? Tell why.**

## Experience the Bible Story

Our story starts with a man named **Gideon** getting ready for a big battle with an even **bigger** enemy! I'll be **Gideon**, and **you** can be my army. We'll need a **mighty army**! Gather kids in a huddle and begin counting them.

**Good! We have a decent-size army here. You all look strong. Show me your muscles.** Pause while kids flex. **You look superhero-brave.** Lead kids in posing with hands on hips. **We're good to go take on those mean Midianites that keep stealing our crops and making our lives miserable!** Lead kids in cheering.

**Wait. God has a message for me. I'll share it with you.**



Read aloud Judges 7:2-3.

**Anyone feeling a little nervous about fighting today?** Point to a Crew Guide. **You seem a little pale. You're excused.** Send the Crew Guide to the other side of the room, then point to someone else. **You look a bit worried. You're excused.** Continue "excusing" about half of the kids and sending them to the other side of the room.

**Wow! This army suddenly got a lot smaller! Gideon didn't get to bring his friends back to fight, but I want everyone to be part of this story, so come on back together.** Welcome the "excused kids" back.

**Okay, army! We may be smaller in number, but we're strong, we're tough, and we're ready to take on those Midianites. They've been so mean to us, and God heard our cries for help. So God told me to lead us to victory. Ready?** Lead kids in a loud cheer again.

**Um, this is awkward. I'm getting another message from God. He says to wait... we're not ready yet. This time I'm supposed to take you down to the river for a drink.** Have kids sit down.

## Supplies

- Bible
- "Gideon Leads God's People" Bible Story poster
- paper bowls (1 per child)
- pitchers of water
- paper
- markers

We call helpers **Crew Guides**. If you lead a small class, you can be the **Crew Guide**. Simply circle up with the kids. If you have helpers, form smaller groups so each child can be known—and so kids can befriend your helpers, too!

Place a bowl on a table or the floor in front of each child, and have Crew Guides help pour water into each bowl.

**This is your personal stream of water. You don't have a cup, and you can't pick up the whole stream—or the bowl. Show me how you'll drink water.**

Let kids demonstrate how they'd drink. Some may scoop up water with their hands, some may put their faces into the bowl, and some may slurp from the edge of the bowl. Let kids notice how others are drinking, too. Then have everyone stand up.

**God told me to watch for anyone who put their lips to the water to lap it up, sort of like a puppy dog. Those people could go home. If any kids drank that way, have them sit down. People who scooped up the water with their hands stayed in the army. Wow—I'm not sure about God's way to choose an army. And now we're even *smaller*! But I trust God.**

**In the Bible, Gideon had only 300 men in his army! I need a few more to get close to that.** Have all the kids stand up again and quickly move the water out of the way.

**Okay, smaller army! We can do this! We've got this! God is with us, and he'll help us defeat the Midianites. We Israelites haven't always been true to God. But God is patient. God's always stayed true to us. Let's go!** Lead kids in a loud cheer again.

**Um, well, not quite yet. God says we need the right equipment. And, uh, this is kind of strange. Usually I equip my army with swords and shields. But God says we need something different.**

Hold up your left fist. **First, we need torches. Here's mine. Can you all hold up yours, too?** Pause while everyone holds up "torches."

**Ahh! Now it's nice and bright here in the darkness outside the Midianites' camp. We also need clay jars.** Have kids dump the water from their bowls back into the water pitchers and then hold up their "clay jars" with their right hands. **Hmm. These are unusual weapons.**

- ❓ **How would you feel fighting a huge army with just a few men, a horn, a torch, and a clay jar?** Invite a few responses from the whole group.

**Well, God has patiently showed us his plan, and I trust him. Whisper. By now, night has fallen—in fact, it's midnight. The enemy is sleeping. God finally says it's time! This is the battle plan: I'll split you into three groups to sneak around and surround the Midianites.** Form three groups, and have them tiptoe to different areas of the room.



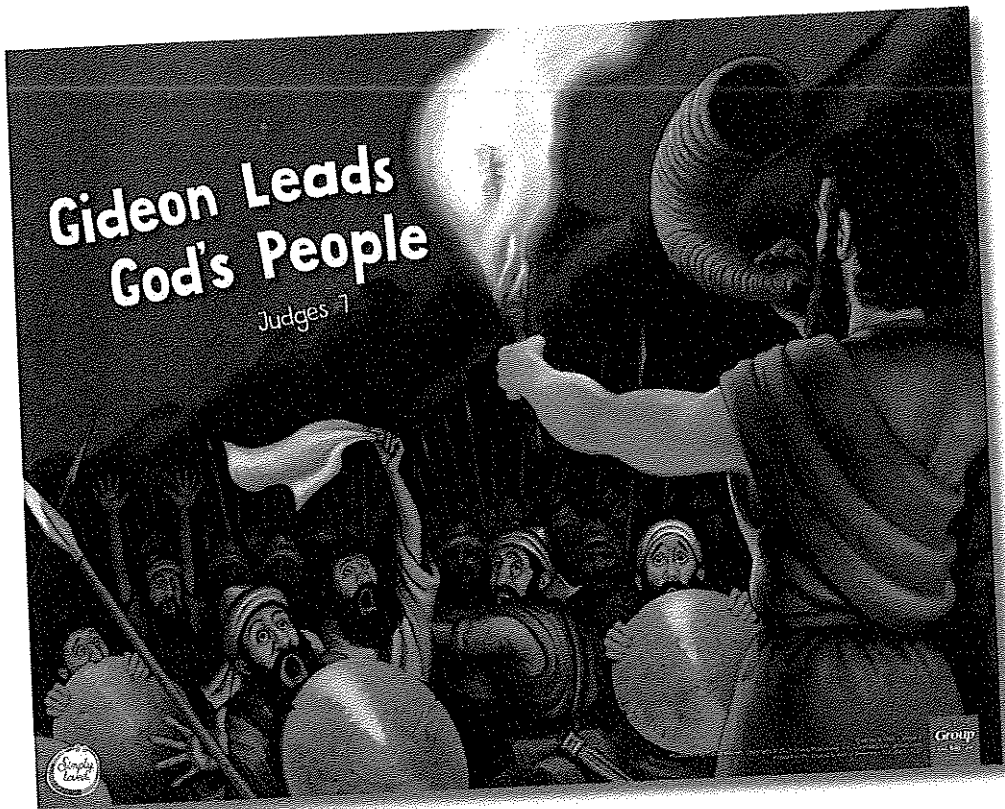
Read aloud Judges 7:19-20.

Lead kids in acting it out as you read.

- Make trumpet sounds.
- Throw down the "clay jar" bowls.
- Raise "torches" high and shout, "A sword for the Lord and for Gideon!"

Welcome several responses, making sure to repeat each answer given. Your recap will allow kids to know they're understood, and it'll help everyone else hear quiet voices.





Show the Bible Story poster. **Here you can see the chaos that erupted when we trusted in God's plan! The Midianites got scared and confused. They ran around slashing each other with their swords! They scattered and ran away. That made it easy for our army and some smaller surrounding armies to round them up and defeat them.** Lead kids in cheering.

Talk about this, inviting responses from the whole group.

- ❓ **How might the story have been different if Gideon had rushed into battle with a bigger army?**
- ❓ **What makes this story so surprising?**
- ❓ **How does Gideon's story encourage *you* to trust God?**

**God is patient.** (*Thanks, God!*) **And we can trust him! Even though the Israelites hadn't always been true to God, God was patient and true with them. He saw they needed help, and he answered their pleas in an unusual way. Without a doubt, it was God who won that battle and not the Israelites on their own.**

## The Heart of the Matter

**Gideon wanted as many warriors as possible in battle with him. That makes sense, doesn't it? But God patiently told him that this battle was for *God's* glory—not someone else's. God knew this was a time for people to realize *his* power—not the power of his people. Let's explore that a little.**

- Hand each person a sheet of paper and a marker
- Have everyone draw a large happy face on the paper.

Let's talk about this in Connect Crews.

- 🕒 **What's a problem you're facing or recently faced?** Invite Crew Guides to share first. As individuals share, have them tear their paper into four pieces.

Now I have two questions for you to think and talk about. They're kind of tough, but I can tell you're up for it!

- 🕒 **First, how could God fix your problem?**
  - Give Crews a few minutes to discuss.

Here's the second question to talk about.

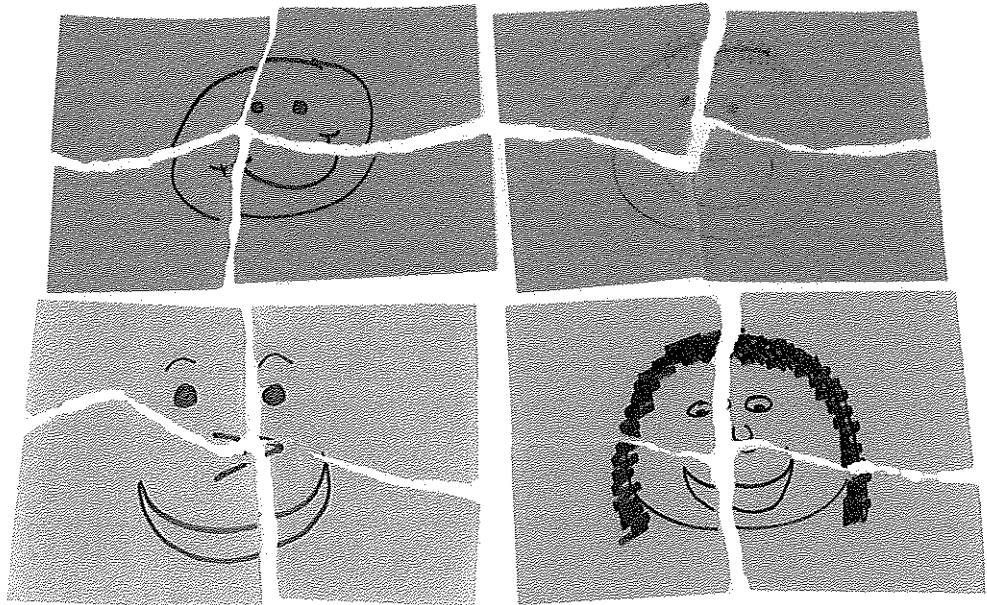
- 🕒 **How could God be *glorified* through your problem? Or how could people see God's love or power through your problem?**
  - Give Connect Crews several minutes to discuss.

Usually we ask God to fix things...to make them easier for us. Guide kids in laying their ripped papers back together. **But God has a bigger plan, a grander picture!**

- Let Connect Crews each use their torn pieces to create one large Crew picture or design on a tabletop or floor.
- Invite each Connect Crew to present its picture or design to the whole group.

**When we worry or complain or don't understand, God is patient. (Thanks, God!) God can help us look at things in a new way, seeing *his* glory through our brokenness.**

Now's a great time for Apply-It Options! Choose one—or both—of the following reinforcement activities to support today's Bible discoveries before the Friendship Finale.





# Apply-It Options

Choose one—or both—of these activities to support kids' learning after Bible Discovery.

## Explore More

**Supplies:** Bibles, timer

**Gideon may have been ready to rush into battle and fight the Midianites, but God revealed a different plan. Gideon had to wait and do things God's way. Waiting is hard! Let's see how patiently *you* can wait.**

- Close your eyes.
- Set a timer for two minutes; it should have a silent "alarm."
- Have everyone give thumbs-up when they think two minutes has passed.
- After two minutes and a few seconds, call time.

**Let's talk about this in Connect Crews.**

- ❓ **How well did you do at guessing?**
- ❓ **Do you think the time went slowly or quickly? Tell why.**



Distribute Bibles, and help kids find and read 2 Peter 3:8 together.

- ❓ **How does this verse remind you of waiting for the timer?**
- ❓ **In real life, what's something that's hard to wait for?**

**God is patient. (Thanks, God!) That can be hard for us because sometimes we aren't patient! When we remember that God's time is different from ours, it can help us trust in his way and his plan.**



## Game

- Choose a child to be "It." It will stand at one end of the room, back turned to the rest of the group.
- Everyone else gathers opposite from It.
- Everyone tries to sneak up on It to be the first person to tag him or her.
- It can turn back around at any time. When It turns, everyone else must freeze in place. If It catches anyone moving, that person has to go back to the start.
- The first person to tag It becomes the new It.
- Play several rounds so lots of kids get to be It.
- ❓ **What did you discover as you sneaked around in this game?**
- ❓ **How did patience help you in this game?**

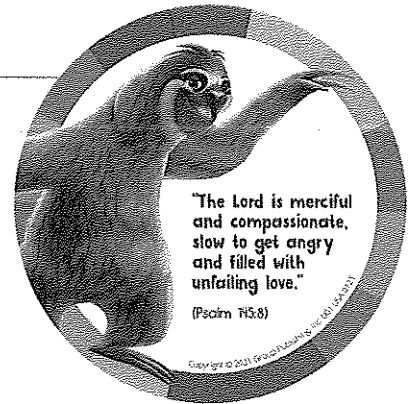
**Gideon and his army patiently trusted God's plan, even when it didn't seem to make sense. With a small army, they sneaked up on the Midianites and defeated them! When we want to hurry up and tackle a problem, it can help to remember that God is patient! (Thanks, God!)**



## Supplies

- Moe Bible Memory Buddy stickers (1 per child)
- Take-It-Home Flyers (Unit 1, Week 4) (1 per child)

# Friendship Finale



**Moe, our Bible Memory Buddy, can help us remember that God is patient. (Trust God!)**

**You'll each receive a Moe sticker to help you remember to trust God and wait for his timing and plan throughout your week. To show how we can be patient, today you'll patiently wait till you get home to put your sticker on or put it near a clock in your home.**

**In our Bible story, God told Gideon to look for people who used cupped hands to scoop water. Hold your hands cupped as you receive your sticker like this!**

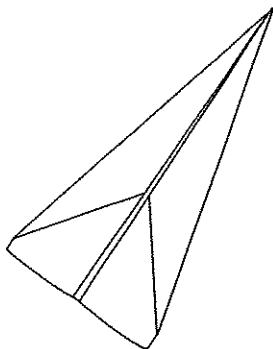
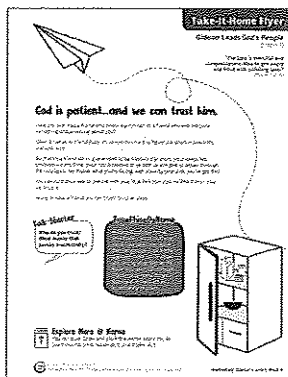
- Have a Crew Guide cup his or her hands.
- Place the sticker in the Crew Guide's hands as you say, "[Crew Guide's name], **God is patient**, so you can trust him!"
- Crew Guides say, "[Child's name], **God is patient**, so you can trust him!"
- Crew Guides give thumbs-up when everyone has received a sticker.

**God's plan to help his people may have seemed unusual or hard for Gideon to understand. But Gideon trusted God because he knew God cared for his people. God's Son, Jesus, showed God's awesome power and love, too, sometimes in ways people didn't understand!**

**When we don't understand, we may shrug and put our hands up, like this. Demonstrate, and have kids imitate the posture. Listen while I read something about our friend Jesus. As I do, keep your hands turned up, but slowly relax your shoulders. Rest your questions and problems in Jesus' loving hands.**

- Read the first section of the Unit 1, Week 4 Take-It-Home Flyer.
- **Now I'll give you one of these flyers to help you talk about Jesus' love in your Connect Crews and at home, too. Think of this as a practice time for talking about Jesus with your family at home.**
- Distribute Take-It-Home Flyers to Crew Guides, and have them share about their own friendship with Jesus as they discuss the "Talk Starter" question.
- Kids share prayer requests—things they'd like to tell Jesus—in their Connect Crews.
- Connect Crews pray together.
- Crew Guides distribute Take-It-Home Flyers and follow the directions to help kids fold the paper to "fly" home. ○

**Saying each child's name in a loving way helps kids simply experience God's love through you!**



## Gideon Leads God's People (Judges 7)

"The Lord is merciful and  
compassionate, slow to get angry  
and filled with unfailing love."  
(Psalm 145:8)

### God is patient...and we can trust him.

Have you ever had a friend who broke a promise? Or a friend who told *everyone* something embarrassing about you?

When it comes to friendships, it's sometimes hard to figure out who's trustworthy and who isn't.

But there's a friend who's guaranteed to be trustworthy: Jesus. Jesus keeps his promises—every time. Jesus has promised to be with us and give us power through the Holy Spirit. No matter what you're facing, with Jesus by your side, you've got this!

You can trust Jesus will be patient with you. That he'll love you. He'll be there—you can trust it.

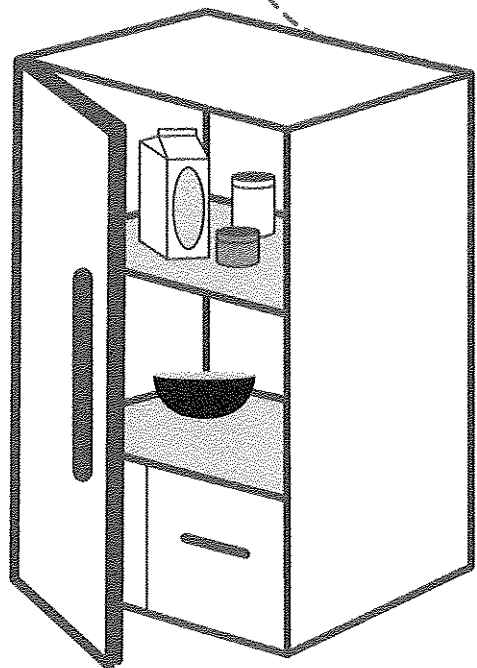
Ready to have a friend you can trust? Trust in Jesus.

#### Talk-Starters

Who do you trust?  
What makes that  
person trustworthy?

#### Try-This-@-Home

Walk around your home and make a list of stuff you trust. Like when you open the refrigerator door a little light will come on. Or when you stomp your feet on the floor, you won't fall through. You trust so many things—but none of them are as trustworthy as Jesus!



#### Explore More @ Home

You can trust God—and you'll feel better when you do.  
See Proverbs 3:5-6; Isaiah 26:3; and Psalm 56:3.



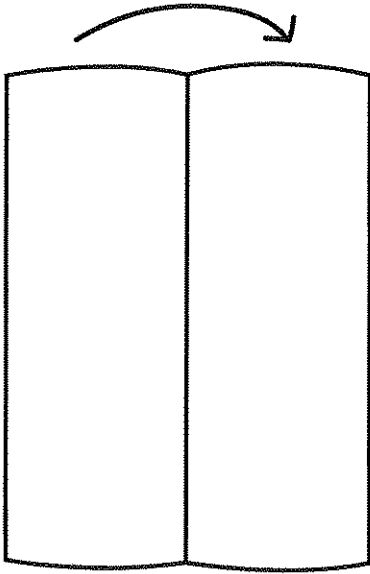
# Make this page fly home!

Fold a flyer. When you get home

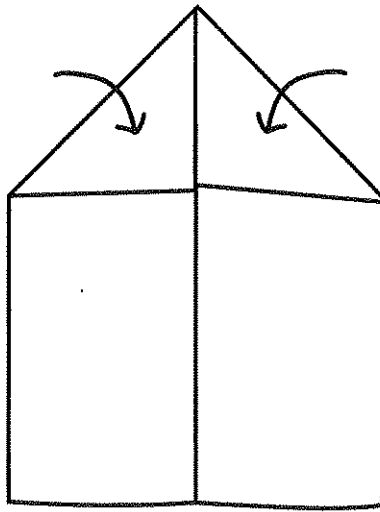
...patiently show a family member how to fold one, too. Then see how far you can throw them!

## Here's how:

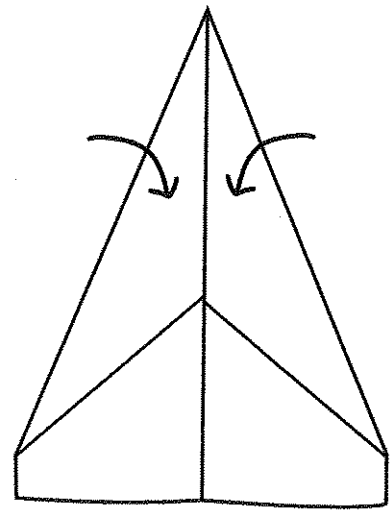
- ① Fold the paper in half lengthwise as shown.



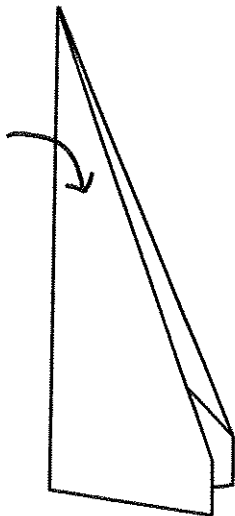
- ② Unfold, and then fold the top two corners to the center line to create flaps.



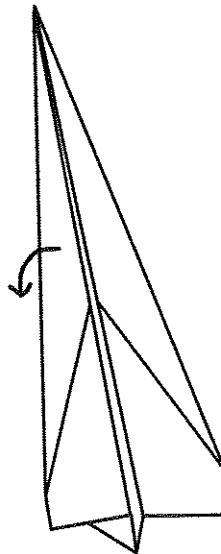
- ③ Fold the top edges to the center of the paper.



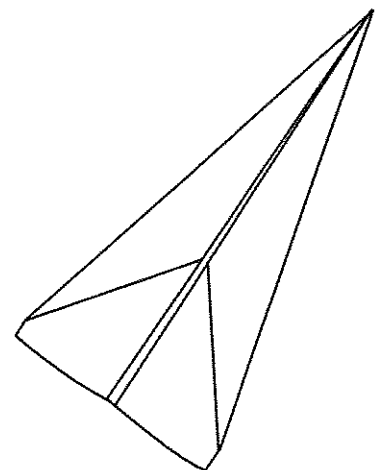
- ④ Fold the plane in half.



- ⑤ Fold the wings down to meet the bottom edge of your plane's body.



- ⑥ Take aim, and let it fly!



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Wanted: Leader of Israel

Judges 7

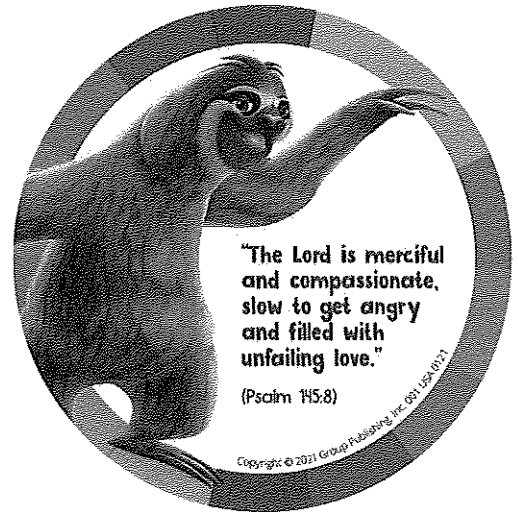
Bible Point

**God is patient.**

**Purpose**

Sometimes we get ourselves into trouble and we wonder how we'll get out. God is bigger than our blunders and patient as he helps us through them. Gideon and the Israelites' victory over the Midianites is a message of hope for these troubled times. This story reminds us that God's power and patience go hand in hand.

Give your troubles to God because he knows how to create victory in your life, just as he did for the Israelites. And help your kids trust God with their troubles, too. Look for opportunities to remind them that God is patient with all his children—grown-ups, too!



**Prayer**

God, help me model trust and hope in you. Show these little ones that you are both patient and powerful and you always act out of love for them. In Jesus' name, amen.

**Prep**

Opening Options	Sing & Play	Bible Discovery & Goodbye Circle	Apply-It Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Option Cards*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Count and Sort</i>: jumbo chenille wires</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Paper Tents</i>: crayons, index cards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Music CD</i>*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Music Video DVD</i>*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Buddy Video DVD</i>*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Moe Bible Memory Buddy poster*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> media player</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Bible (bookmark Psalm 145:8)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> "Gideon Leads God's People" Bible Story poster*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Music CD</i>*</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Moe Bible Memory Buddy stickers* (1 per child)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> media player</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Bible (bookmark Judges 7:2-3, 4, 17-18)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> bedsheets</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> tables</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Game</i>: blocks</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Food-n-Friendship</i>: snack, napkins, hand cleanser, <i>Music CD</i>*, media player</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Coloring Creation</i>: "Gideon Leads God's People" Coloring Creation pages* (1 per child), crayons, yellow and orange tissue paper, child-safe scissors, glue sticks, <i>Music CD</i>*, media player</li> </ul>

\* in your *Simply Loved Kit*

# Opening Options

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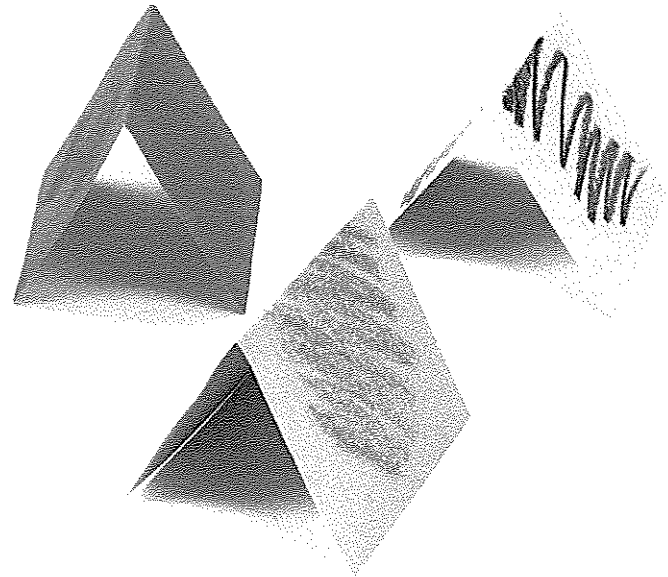
## Count and Sort

**Supplies:** jumbo chenille wires

Sort these fun, fuzzy chenille wires by color. Count how many there are of each color.

**?** What toys can you sort and count at your home?

We had to be patient as we sorted these fuzzy wires. God is patient with us. In our Bible story, we'll hear how God sorted some men into separate groups to make just the right size army.



## Paper Tents

**Supplies:** crayons, index cards

Color and fold the cards to make tents, and make Gideon's army's "camp."

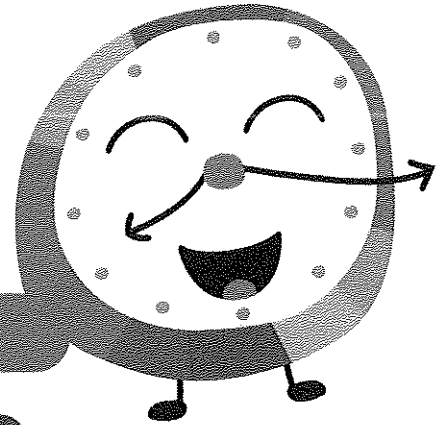
**?** Tell about a time you had fun in a fort or tent.

Today we'll hear how God's friends camped before they got ready for an important job God gave them. God was patient with them as they learned to follow his directions and trust him. God is patient with us, too.



# Opening

Now's a great time for Opening Options. Choose one—or both—to introduce today's Bible discoveries.



 "The Cleanup Song" (Music CD track 1)

Help kids transition by cleaning up before sitting with their Connect Crews. A Connect Crew is a smaller group of kids with one Crew Guide.

## Sing & Play

### Welcome

Hi there, friends! We're going to have so much fun today! Let's sing our welcome song.

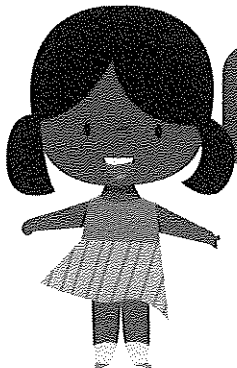
 "Hello, My Friends" (Music CD track 2)

Let's say hello to our Crew Guides. They're our go-to friends who are here to have fun and learn along with us.

- Kids give their Crew Guides an elbow bump.

### Bible Point

Ready to hear today's Bible Point? Here it is: **God is patient. Every time you hear the words "God is patient," touch your chin, then move your arm forward like this (demonstrate) and say "Thanks, God!" Let's do that together.**



Repetition cements learning, so be sure to say today's Bible Point A LOT. Have fun with it! Kids will love listening for it and responding with "Thanks, God!"



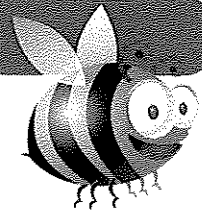
Thanks, God!

### Supplies

- Bible
- Music CD
  - "Hello, My Friends"
- Music Video DVD
  - "All That Is Good" music video
  - "Leaning on the Everlasting Arms" music video
- Buddy Video DVD
  - Moe Bible Memory Buddy video (Week 4)
- media player
- Moe Bible Memory Buddy poster

When we say "Thanks, God," we're celebrating that God is patient with us as we learn to follow his directions and trust him. Like good teachers or parents are patient as we learn to follow their directions, **God is patient.** *(Thanks, God!)* Let's praise God with a song.

 "All That Is Good" music video

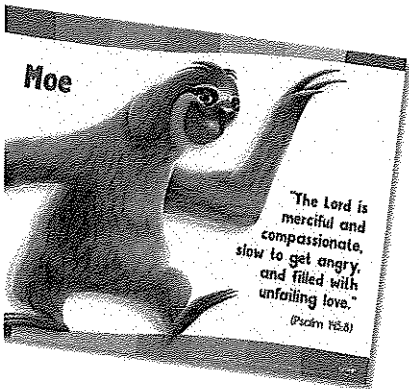


## Bible Memory Buddy & Verse

It's time to talk to our friend Buzzy. Buzzy will help us get to know our Bible Memory Buddy friend. Let's call for Buzzy. Do what I do!


- Flap hands quickly like a bee.
- Make buzzing sounds.

 Moe Bible Memory Buddy Video (Week 4)



Our friend Moe reminds us that **God is patient.** *(Thanks, God!)*

- Show the Bible Memory Buddy poster.
- **Sloths like to swim in the water.**
- Have everyone pretend to swim. Lead different ways to swim, such as the backstroke, doggie paddle, and butterfly!

 Show the Bible. **The Bible is God's true story of love! Our Bible Memory Verse comes from the Bible. Let's say it together. I'll say a line, and then you repeat after me.**

**"The Lord is merciful** *(extend one arm)*  
**and compassionate,** *(extend other arm)*  
**slow to get angry** *(slowly move palms down)*  
**and filled with unfailing love."** *(move arms up)*  
(Psalm 145:8)

I'm thankful **God is patient.** *(Thanks, God!)* **God doesn't get angry right away; instead, he's calm and loving. It's so wonderful to have such a loving God. Let's sing and celebrate!**

 "Leaning on the Everlasting Arms" music video

# Bible Discovery

**God is patient.** (*Thanks, God!*) That means he doesn't get so mad that he doesn't want to be our friend anymore. Instead, he loves us and helps us obey his directions.

- Get comfy and sit in knee-to-knee circles with Connect Crews.
- 🗣️ **Tell about a time this week you were patient with a friend or family member.**

Hold up a Bible. **The Bible tells us about a time God was patient with his people, the Israelites. The Israelites asked God for help because there were some people who were being mean to the Israelites; they were called the Midianites. They weren't nice at all! Do this with me.**

- Make a mean face to show the Midianites.
- Make a scared face to show the Israelites.

**The Israelites were scared of the Midianites. Even though the Israelites had forgotten about God and gotten themselves into this mess with the Midianites, God said he'd help his people. So he asked Gideon to be their leader. Do this with me.**

- **Gideon gathered a large army.** Make a line and be "Gideon" as you lead everyone marching around the room one time.
- **Gideon led his army to camp near the Midianites.** March to tables and work together to cover them with bedsheets to make tents.
- Gather inside the tents.


**Let's read what happened while the army camped.**

 Read aloud Judges 7:2-3.

**God said, "Your army is too big. If people are scared, send them home."**

- Invite some of the group to move out of the tents.

**Let's read what God told Gideon next.**

 Read aloud Judges 7:4.


**After Gideon sent home all the men who were scared, God said, "There's still too many people here."**

- Invite more people to leave the tents, leaving only a few kids. Then lead everyone out of the tents. Bring a bedsheet with you to make a "stream." Gather everyone around the stream.
- **Some people sipped water with their hands.** Have everyone pretend to scoop and drink water from their hands.
- **Some people lapped up the water with their tongues like a dog!** Have everyone pretend to lap water like a dog.

## Supplies

- Bible
- "Gideon Leads God's People" Bible Story poster
- bedsheets
- tables

We call helpers Crew Guides. If you lead a small class, you can be the Crew Guide. Simply gather kids in a cozy circle around you. If you have helpers, form smaller groups so each child can be known—and so kids can befriend your helpers, too!

 **Read the verses from the Bible.** You're showing kids that God's Word is special. And don't worry; we've kept the verses short for young attention spans.

**God sorted the men based on how they drank. People who sipped from their hands went over there.** Point one way. **And people who lapped from the stream went over there.** Point another way. **The people who sipped from their hands would stay, and the others would go.**

- Imagine some people are leaving the stream area and have everyone wave goodbye.

**The Israelites may have thought they needed a big army to win against the Midianites. Maybe they forgot how powerful God is and thought they needed to win by themselves. But God was patient with them. God would win the battle for them! God is patient with us, too. (Thanks, God!)**

**God was patient with the Israelites when they tried to win the battle with a big army. God brought the Israelite army down to only 300 men. He wanted everyone to know that they would win because of his power, not because of a big army.**

Welcome a few responses. Be sure to summarize what kids say so everyone can hear.


❓ **What kinds of things do you think God is powerful enough to do?**

- Invite a few responses from the whole group.

**Gideon knew God was powerful enough to help the Israelites. Gideon told the Israelites to circle around the camp. He gave each person a horn and a clay jar with a torch in it. In Bible times, a torch was something that held fire so people could see in the dark. Do this with me!**

- Tiptoe quietly as you gather in a big circle, imagining you're surrounding the Midianite camp.
- Pretend to hold a horn in one hand and make a quiet horn sound, then encourage kids to be sneaky and quiet again.
- Pretend to hold a jar with a torch in the other hand. Hold it up and call out things the light helps you see, like trees, tents, and the Midianite camp.

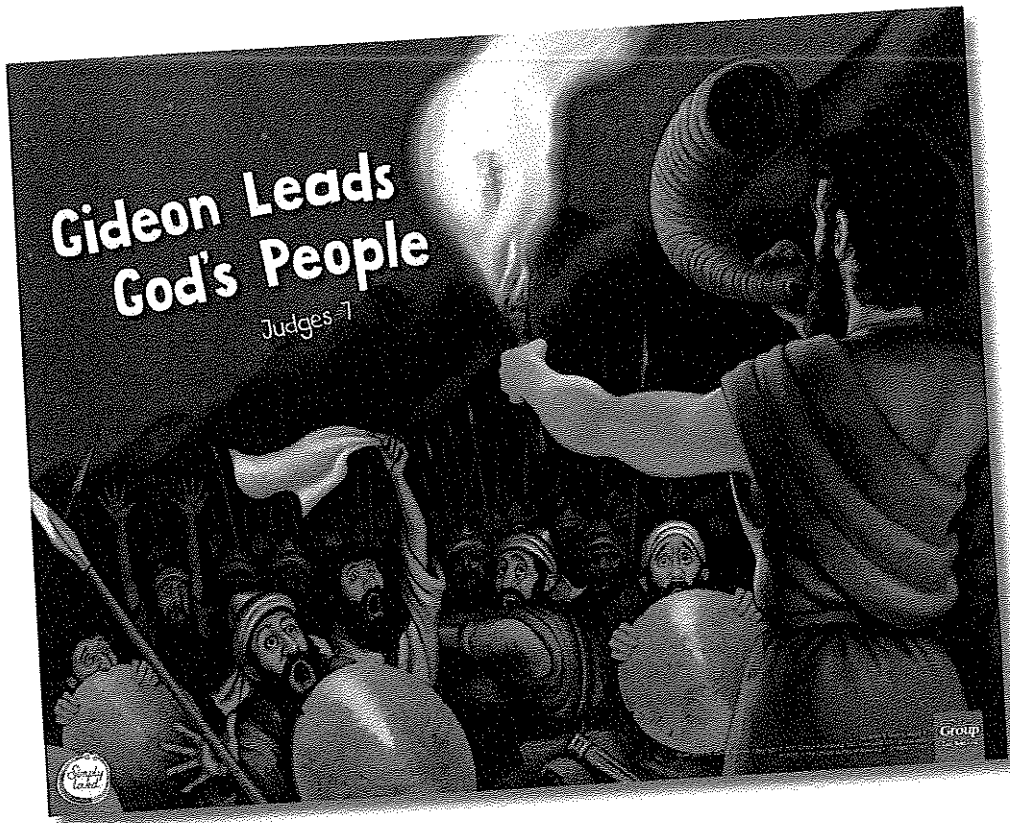
**Let's read what Gideon told them to do next.**

 Read aloud Judges 7:17-18.

**The Lord is another name for God. It was God's job to win the battle.** Show the Bible Story poster, and point out Gideon, the horn, the torch, and the scared Midianites. **Let's follow Gideon's instructions now.**

- Blow pretend horns loudly!
- Say **"Smash!"** and pretend to throw a jar on the ground with one hand and hold up a torch with another.
- Shout, **"For the Lord and for Gideon!"**

Repeat, repeat! Feel free to do activities more than once. You'll give kids time to catch on and jump in.



Now it was the Midianites' turn to be scared. They were so scared they ran in all different directions, and some even ran away. The Israelites won the battle! Well, actually, God won the battle *for* them. Now the Israelites could live in peace for a while. God helped them. God was patient as they learned to trust and follow him. And God is patient with us, too. *(Thanks, God!)* Let's talk in our Connect Crews.

- 🗣️ **When are you thankful God is patient with you?** Invite Crew Guides to share first.
- 👍 Crew Guides give thumbs-up when everyone has shared.

**God is patient.** *(Thanks, God!)* God loves us, and he'll help us when we get ourselves into trouble. Do this with me.

**When we disobey,** *(shake head "no")*

**God is patient.** *(Thanks, God!)*

**When we go our own way,** *(march in place)*

**God is patient.** *(Thanks, God!)*

**When we ask for God's help,** *(fold hands in prayer)*

**God is patient.** *(Thanks, God!)*

**C'mon, everybody,** *(motion "Come!")*

**Tell that God is patient.** *(Thanks, God!)*

Now's a great time for Apply-It Options. Choose one or more that fit your time frame to support today's Bible discoveries before the closing Goodbye Circle.



# Apply-It Options

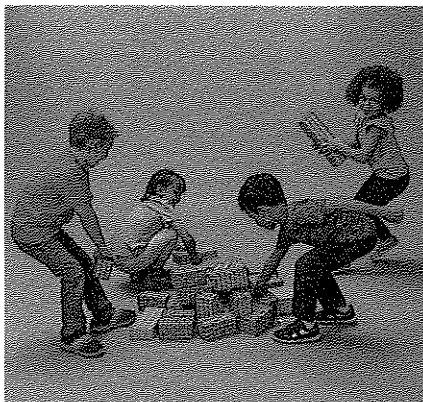
Choose one—or all—of these activities to support kids' learning after Bible Discovery.

## Game

**Supplies:** blocks

Have kids make a large circle around a pile of blocks. When you make a horn sound, kids race to remove the blocks from the circle one at a time and take them to the surrounding walls as quickly as possible. Repeat as time allows.


**We moved all the blocks so quickly! That's like how Gideon blew his horn and all the Midianites moved quickly—and ran away! Even though the Israelites had disobeyed God, God is patient. (Thanks, God!) He won the battle for the Israelites! We can trust that God will patiently help us, too.**



## Food-n-Friendship

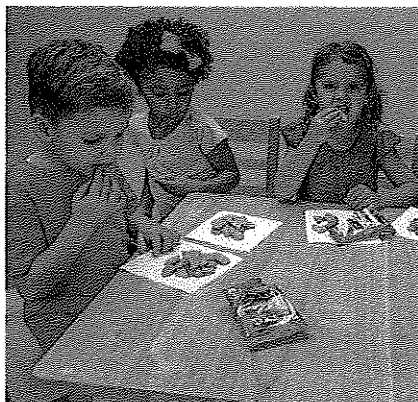
**Supplies:** snack, napkins, hand cleanser, *Music CD*, media player

- Give a napkin to a friend and say, **"God is patient."** (*Thanks, God!*)

 **"God, You Are So Good"**  
(*Music CD track 3*)

- Eat snack together.
- 🕒 **When we pray, we talk with God. Who has something we can talk with God about?**
- Pray together.

**God is patient. (Thanks, God!) Thanks for patiently waiting for everyone to eat their snack. Now let's clean up!**



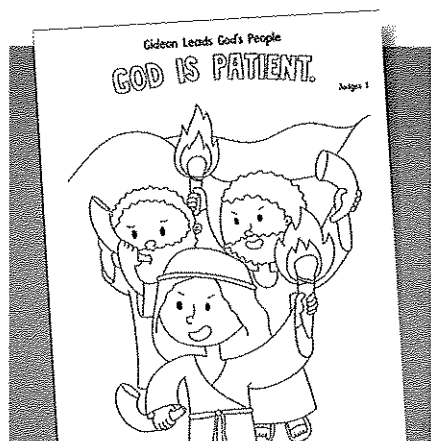
## Coloring Creation

**Supplies:** "Gideon Leads God's People" Coloring Creation pages (1 per child), crayons, yellow and orange tissue paper, glue sticks, child-safe scissors, *Music CD*, media player

**God is patient. (Thanks, God!) He was patient while Gideon learned to trust that God would take care of the Israelites.**

- Talk about what kids see in the picture.
- Color the picture.
- Cut small rectangles of tissue paper, and help kids use glue sticks to cover the fire torches with it.
- Play music as kids create.

 **"The Lord Is Merciful"**  
(*Psalm 145:8*)  
(*Music CD track 5*)





# Goodbye Circle

It's almost time to say goodbye! Let's sing our goodbye song as we join hands and make one big circle!

 "Goodbye, My Friends" (Music CD track 4)

**God is patient.** (Thanks, God!) He wants everyone to trust him and be friends with him. That's why he sent his only Son, Jesus, to earth. Jesus makes it so we can be friends with God.

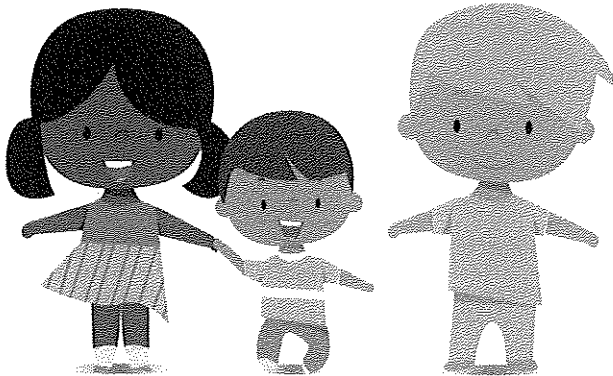
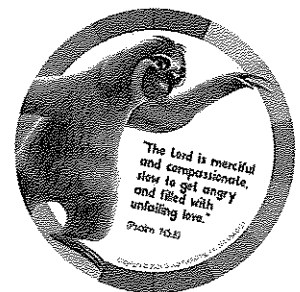
- Show the Bible Memory Buddy poster, and remind kids that Moe helps us remember **God is patient.** (Thanks, God!)
- Invite Crew Guides to give each child a Moe sticker by holding it between their pointer and middle fingers like a sloth claw and saying, "[Child's name], **God is patient.**"

 "The Lord Is Merciful" (Psalm 145:8) (Music CD track 5)

- Do Bible Memory Verse motions and move to the music!

## Supplies

- Music CD
  - "Goodbye, My Friends"
  - "The Lord Is Merciful" (Psalm 145:8)
- media player
- Moe Bible Memory Buddy stickers (1 per child)



Saying each child's name in a loving way helps kids simply experience God's love through you!



# Gideon Leads God's People

# GOD IS PATIENT.

Judges 7



**“The Lord is merciful and  
compassionate, slow to get angry  
and filled with unfailing love.”**

(Psalm 145:8)

Moe

