

Christian MONTHLY

DEDICATED TO THE PROCLAMATION
OF THE WORD OF GOD



for Children

Psalm 119:105
Thy word is a lamp unto my feet,
and a light unto my path.

Autumn 2017

Gideon

The Man of Valor

Judges 6

THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL HAD DONE EVIL IN THE LORD'S SIGHT, and the Lord let the people of Midian take over Israel. God's people hid in caves to escape from their enemies, and their crops and animals were stolen. They were very unhappy and they cried out to the Lord for help. The Lord sent a prophet to tell Israel that He had delivered them from bondage in Egypt, and had protected them from their enemies. The Lord said, "I told you that I am the Lord your God, and not to fear the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you live. But you have not obeyed My voice."

One day, the angel of the Lord came and sat under a tree in Ophrah. Gideon, the son of Joash, was threshing wheat in the winepress, trying to hide from the Midianites. The angel appeared to Gideon and spoke to him:

"The Lord is with you, O mighty man of valor!"

Gideon said to the angel, "Oh, my Lord, if the Lord is with us, then why has all this happened to us? Where are all the miracles that our fathers told us about, saying, 'Didn't the Lord bring us up from Egypt?' But now the Lord has forsaken us and given us into the hand of Midian."

Then the Lord looked at Gideon and answered, "Go in your might, and you will save Israel from the hand of Midian. Haven't I sent you?"

Gideon said, "Please, Lord, how can I save Israel? My family is poor in the tribe of Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house."

The Lord said to Gideon: "I will surely be with you, and you will strike the Midianites as one man."

Then Gideon said, "If I have found favor in Your sight, then show me a sign that You are speaking with me. Please don't leave here until I come with a present for You."



The Lord agreed to stay, so Gideon hurried home and prepared a meal—meat in a basket, broth in a pot, and unleavened cakes. When Gideon brought the meal and presented it, the angel of God told him to set the meat and cakes on a large rock, and to pour the broth over the top.

Gideon obeyed, and the angel of the Lord reached out with his staff, touching the wet meat and cakes. Immediately, fire rose up out of the rock and consumed the meat and cakes. Then the angel of the Lord disappeared.

Now Gideon understood that this was an angel of the Lord, and he cried out, "Alas, O Lord God! Now I have seen the angel of the Lord face to face!"

But the Lord said to Gideon: "Peace be unto you. Do not fear; you will not die." Then Gideon built an altar there to the Lord, and called it JEHOVAHSHALOM, which means THE LORD IS PEACE.

Toddlers

Through Three Years



Peek-A-Boo!

Do you like to play peek-a-boo with Mommy and Daddy? It's a fun game that little ones like to play.

Mommy might hide her face behind her hands and then peek out at you. Daddy may cover his head with a blanket and then pull it off and say, "Peekaboo!" Or maybe you cover your eyes and then pop out and shout, "Peekaboo!" while laughing joyfully.

Mommy is still there when she is hiding behind her hands. Daddy is still there when his head is covered with a blanket. Just because you can't see them for a minute, they are still real, the same as when you can see them. They aren't gone away.

God our Father is real, even though we can't see Him. He is there, and He never goes away. He loves you, even more than Daddy and Mommy love you.

When the Lord sent Gideon to fight a battle against the armies of Midian with only 300 men, Gideon was afraid until he was shown that **the LORD Himself** would win the battle for Israel.

The Lord Saves

God sent Gideon to spy on the camp of Midian. When he crept to the edge of camp, Gideon saw that the Midianite army was huge, with so many men and camels that Gideon couldn't count them all! He overheard one soldier telling a friend about his dream.

The Midianite dreamer said, "Look, I dreamed a dream. A round loaf of bread rolled into our camp and bumped hard into a tent. The tent turned over and fell down flat!"

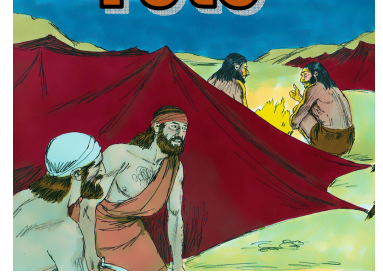
His soldier friend said, "This is nothing but the sword of Gideon, son of Joash, a man of Israel. God has delivered Midian and all the army into his hand."

After Gideon heard this, he fell down and worshiped God. He went back to the camp of Israel and said, "Arise! The Lord has delivered Midian into your hand!"

The Lord saved Israel, and He has saved you. He sent Jesus to earth to fight the battle for your soul. Jesus has won in the war against sin, death, and the devil.

Four-Six Years

Tots



When Gideon gathered 32,000 men to fight against the Midianites, the Lord said, "You have too many people for Me to give Midian into your hand. Israel might boast and say, 'My own hand has saved me!' Tell the men that whoever is afraid should hurry home."

So 22,000 frightened soldiers left the battlefield. That left 10,000 ready to fight.

The Sword of the Lord

The Lord told Gideon, "There are still too many! Take them down to the water. I will test them. If I say, 'This one will go with you,' then he will go, but if I say, 'This one will not go with you,' then he won't." So Gideon brought them down to the water. The Lord said, "Those who lap the water with their tongues, like a dog, set aside in a group. Do the same with whoever kneels down to drink." 300 men lapped the water, bringing their hands to their mouths. All of the rest knelt down to drink the water. The Lord said, "With the 300 men who lapped the water, I will save you from the Midianites. Let the others go home."

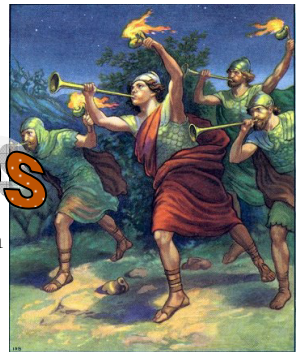
Gideon kept the 300 with him and sent the rest away. He divided the men into three groups, and made sure each one had a trumpet and an empty clay jar with a lighted torch inside. He told them, "Watch me, and do the same thing. When I reach the edge of camp, do what I do. When I blow the trumpet, and everyone with me, then blow the trumpets on every side of the camp and shout, 'The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon!'"

In the middle of the night, Gideon and the men surrounded the camp of Midian. They smashed the clay jars in their hands so the light shone out brightly. They shouted, "The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon!" The Midianites thought they were being attacked from all sides. They were so frightened, they screamed and started to run. When Israel blew the 300 trumpets, the Lord turned the sword of Midian on itself, through the whole army, and the Midianites destroyed themselves in the confusion.

With 300 men who carried jars, lights, and trumpets, the Lord defeated the armies of Midian. The people of Israel had no reason to boast and brag. They knew the hand of the Lord had saved them, and not their own hand.

Tykes

Ages Seven-Ten

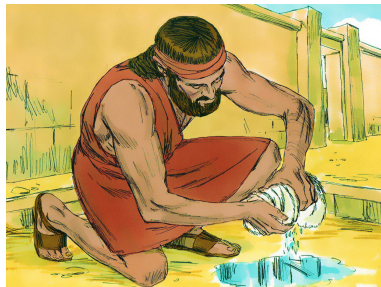


Tweens

Eleven-Twelve Years

The Midianites came to fight against Israel, and the Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon. He blew a trumpet and called the family of Abiezer to follow him. Gideon sent messengers to gather the warriors from other tribes; and they came to join him. But Gideon was worried, so he asked God for a sign.

Gideon said to God, "If You will save Israel by my hand, as You have said, then, look, I'm setting a piece of wool fleece on the threshing floor. In the morning, if there is dew on the fleece only, and the ground around it is dry, then I will know that You will save Israel by my hand, as You have said." And it happened. When Gideon woke the next morning, he squeezed water out of the fleece, enough to fill a bowl!



But he still wasn't sure, so Gideon said, "Please don't be angry with me! Let me speak again, and please let me test with the fleece one more time. Let only the fleece be dry in the morning, and all the ground around it be wet." In the morning, it had happened again. The fleece was completely dry, and the ground around it was wet with dew. Gideon was finally willing to lead the people into battle against Midian.

But... was asking for a sign from God a good thing to do?

The Lord had told Gideon that he was sent to save Israel. God had promised to be with him. When Gideon asked for a sign, He waited while Gideon made a meal, and He consumed the meat, cakes, and broth with fire! The Word of the Lord had come to Gideon, but he couldn't quite believe it.

Here's Your Sign

Sometimes this happens today. You may wonder if God is with you. You may wonder if you really believe the Word of the Lord FOR YOU, that Jesus has come to earth to die for YOUR sins. You might even wish for a sign to be sure that God has chosen you as His child.

He's given a sign you can look back on: the waters of your baptism. When you were baptized, the Word of the Lord was spoken by the pastor, and your sins were washed away. You were made a member of Christ's body, the Church. Even as a baby, when you heard the Word of truth—the Good News of your salvation in Christ—and believed in Him, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit as a down payment of your inheritance in heaven. The Spirit of the Lord came to live within you.

May you always trust the Word of the Lord. May you rest in your baptism, knowing you can believe the sign the Lord has given you. He is trustworthy!

When the children of Israel entered Canaan, the Promised Land, they were commanded to drive out the nations that lived there and to utterly destroy them and their places of worship to false gods. Israel was not to marry with them, because they would turn Israel away from following God to serve other gods. Israel was special, set apart, chosen by God.

Teens

*When the Lord thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, **the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites**, seven nations greater and mightier than thou; And when the Lord thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them: Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly. But thus shall ye deal with them; ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire. For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.*

Deuteronomy 7:1-6

All The -Ites

Some of Israel's twelve tribes obeyed God's command to drive out the locals, but other tribes allowed some of the inhabitants of the land to live and dwell among them.



They didn't destroy the altars, groves and images, and they allowed marriages with the non-Jewish people.

All the -ites did exactly what God had foretold: they drew Israel away from serving the one true God. This was the situation when God raised up Israel's first judge, Othniel:

*The children of Israel dwelt among **the Canaanites, Hittites, and Amorites, and Perizzites, and Hivites, and Jebusites**: And they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons, and served their gods. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and forgot the Lord their God, and served Baalim (false gods!) and the groves.*

Judges 3:5-7

We may think it was cruel that God told Israel to destroy the peoples of the land they entered, but we know that God is always just and right. God's judgment against those who serve false gods is certain. Remember the meaning of the First Commandment in the Catechism: "We should fear, love and trust in God above all things." Let us depend wholly on God, for the sake of Christ. May we worship and serve Him only. He is the only worthy One.

What Evil?

the Backstory

What evil had the children of Israel done to anger God?

After the Lord had brought the children of Israel out of slavery in Egypt, He gave the Law to Moses on Mount Sinai. God wrote the Ten Commandments in stone tablets with His own finger.

The First Commandment is:

I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt have no other gods before Me.

The children of Israel were to worship and serve only the one true God. They were not to bow down to idols, images, or statues of false gods. They were not to build temples for false gods, or sacrifice on altars for false gods. They were not to trust in money or possessions, in governments or countries. They were not to trust in their own ability to think or reason. They were supposed to remain faithful to the Lord alone, whose name is Jealous.

Exodus 34:14 For thou shalt worship no other god: for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God:

The Lord's name is Jealous?! What does this mean? Isn't jealousy a bad thing? For example, if you are "jealous" because someone has a nicer bike than you have, isn't that sin? The ninth and tenth commandments say: *Thou shalt not covet...* To "covet" is to want and/or try to get your neighbor's wife or possessions. The Lord's jealousy is a little different than this.

The Lord is very protective of His glory and authority, and He will allow nothing to be in a higher place than He is. He wants Israel (and us!) to trust Him completely for every. single. thing. in our lives. He wants us to worship and serve Him in obedience, thankfulness and praise. He will punish the children for the sins of their parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate Him, but He will show mercy and love to thousands of generations of those who love Him and keep His commandments. The Lord is serious about His exclusivity. He is God ALONE, and He will allow no competition for that title.

The Lord is also protective of His relationship with His chosen people. God often spoke to Israel as a husband speaks to his wife, with terms of love and affection. When Israel was unfaithful to God, it was like a wife being unfaithful to her husband and breaking her marriage vow. The Lord was faithful to Israel, and He wanted them to be faithful and obedient to Him.

Because the Lord is jealous of Israel, they were told not to marry the people of the lands they were entering. God told them to remain pure and separate from the people who didn't worship and serve the one true God. When Israel disobeyed the Lord by serving false gods and marrying the non-Jewish people of the lands, their enemies would conquer them and make their lives miserable. Each time Israel was unfaithful, God would send a prophet to call His people out of disobedience and back to Himself. Then Israel would cry out to the Lord for help, and He would deliver them again. This cycle was repeated often.

Gideon Destroys the Altar of Baal

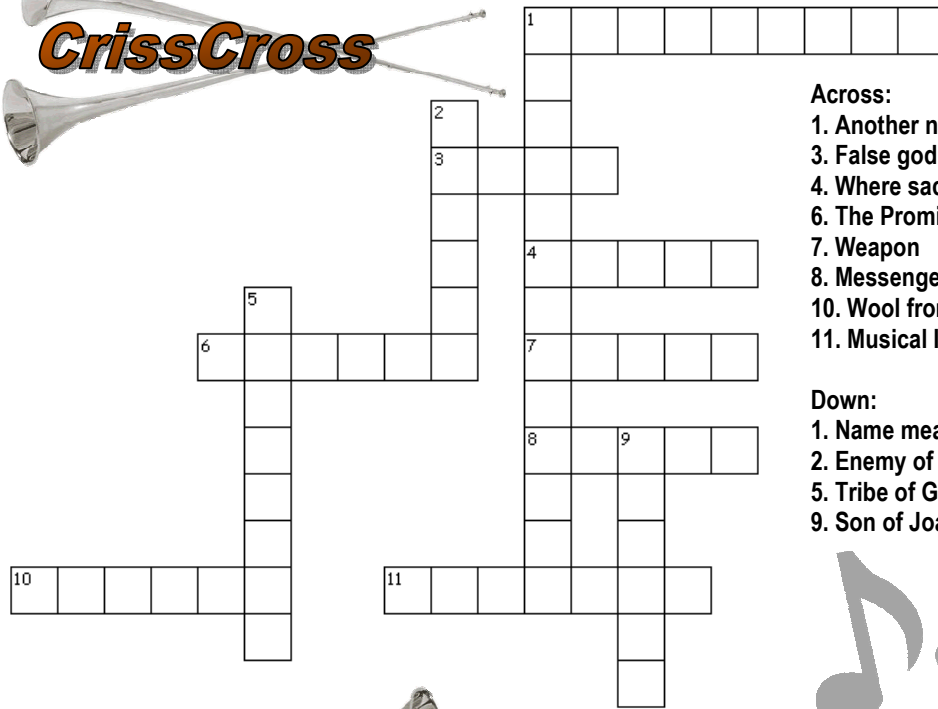
At the time of Gideon, Israel was again worshipping idols. Gideon's own father had an altar to Baal, a false god!

The angel of the Lord had come to Gideon and promised to deliver Israel. That night the Lord told Gideon to take his father's young bull and tear down his father's altar to Baal, and to cut down the grove where the false gods were worshipped. Gideon was to build an altar to the Lord God there, and to offer his father's bull on the altar. Gideon took ten servants and did as the Lord commanded, but he did it at night because he was afraid of his family and the men of the town.

In the morning, the men saw their destroyed altar and grove, and the new altar where a bull had been offered. They asked around, and found that Gideon, son of Joash, had done it. They demanded that Joash bring his son to be punished and killed. Joash said, "Will you plead for Baal? Will you save him? If he's a god, let him plead for himself because his altar is destroyed." That day, Joash called Gideon by the name **JERUBBAAL**, which means **LET BAAL PLEAD AGAINST HIM**, because he destroyed the altar of Baal.



CrissCross



Across:

1. Another name for Gideon
3. False god
4. Where sacrifices were offered
6. The Promised Land
7. Weapon
8. Messenger of the Lord
10. Wool from a sheep
11. Musical Instrument

Down:

1. Name meaning THE LORD IS PEACE
2. Enemy of Israel
5. Tribe of Gideon's family
9. Son of Joash



Three Things

1. What three foods did Gideon prepare for the meal?
2. What three signs did Gideon ask the Lord for?
3. What three items did Gideon's men bring with them?

The Man of Valor

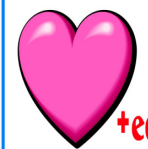
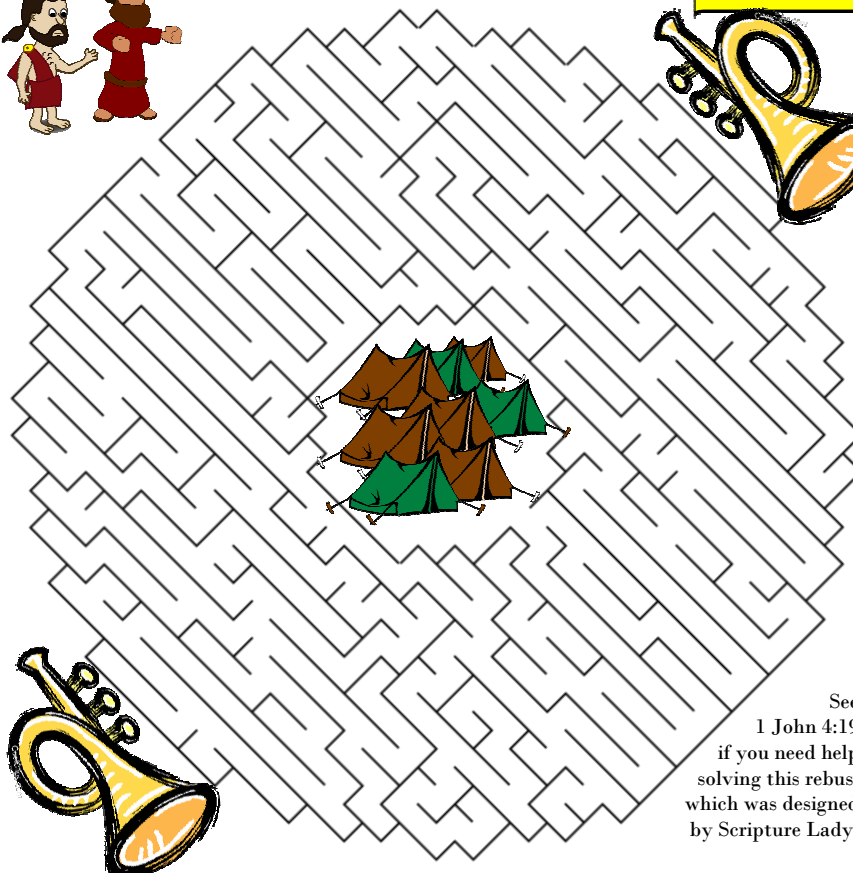
Puzzle Fun

Answer Key: page 7

Follow Gideon and his servant to the camp of



How many
trumpets
are on this page?



See
1 John 4:19
if you need help
solving this rebus,
which was designed
by Scripture Lady.

1 John 4:19



Gideon and the Angel of the Lord
A Picture to Color

Trumpets in the Bible

There were different kinds of trumpets mentioned in the Bible. Some were made of ram's horn, some of metal. They had different purposes.

- Two silver trumpets were used to call the children of Israel to gather together, and for traveling.
And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Make thee two trumpets of silver; of a whole piece shalt thou make them: that thou mayest use them for the calling of the assembly, and for the journeying. Numbers 10:1-2
- The Feast of Trumpets began on the first day of the seventh month.
And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation. Leviticus 23:23-24
- Seven priests blew seven ram's horn trumpets before the ark of the Lord when they marched around the city of Jericho seven times on the seventh day.
And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of rams' horns: and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets. Joshua 6:4
- Trumpets were used to praise God.
Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise. Sing unto the Lord with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm. With trumpets and sound of cornet make a joyful noise before the Lord, the King. Psalm 98:4-6
- John saw seven angels with seven trumpets in the Revelation.
And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets. And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings, and an earthquake. And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound. Revelation 8:1-6

Ancient Trumpets



Bible History Online

Puzzle Answer Key

How Many?

There are 10 trumpets on the puzzle page.

Three Things

1. Clay jar, torch light, trumpet
2. Meat, bowl of broth, cakes
3. Meal, fleece wet, fleece dry

Crossword

Across:

1. Jerubbaal
3. Idol
4. Altar
6. Canaan
7. Sword
8. Angel
10. Fleece
11. Trumpet

Down:

1. JEHOVAHSHALOM
2. Midian
5. Manasseh
9. Gideon

Dear Father,

You are the holy One who reigns over the heavens and the earth. Thank You for calling Gideon to deliver the children of Israel from the hand of the Midianites. Thank You for using normal people like Gideon to accomplish Your will. Let us be used for Your purpose, Lord, though sometimes we doubt and fear like Gideon did.

Thank You for our families and homes, for life and breath. Every good thing comes from Your hand. We praise You for Your care and love, for the blessings that we so often take for granted.

Thank You, most of all, for Jesus. Give us grace to trust in Him. Let us spread the Good News of salvation wherever we go. Help us point others to the Lamb of God, to the Light of the world.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

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For Parents:

The Lord Is With Thee

And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him, and said unto him, The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour. Judges 6:12

When we look at the story of Gideon, we may wonder how the angel of the Lord can call Gideon a “mighty man of valor.” At that moment, Gideon was threshing in the winepress, hiding from the Midianites. After hearing the message, Gideon questioned it. Next, he reflected on the poorness of his lineage. Then he asked for a sign. When commanded to destroy his father’s altar to Baal, Gideon was afraid of the people so he went under cover of darkness. After he had gathered a huge army, Gideon again asked the Lord for a sign (twice!) that Israel would be victorious in the battle against Midian. When his army was downsized to 300 men, Gideon was afraid, although the promise of the Lord was that Midian would be delivered into his hand.

How can Gideon be a mighty man of valor? This man who questioned and feared, who demanded sign after sign?

In our lives as parents, the task at times can seem overwhelming. We may question and fear. We may ask for a sign when we need direction. We may see our own sinful nature as an insurmountable obstacle in our ability to parent well.

Maybe the first statement of the angel of the Lord defines the second. His first words to Gideon were: “The Lord is with thee...” Gideon would need the Lord to fulfill this task. He knew that he was unable, by his own strength, to perform it. The job was overwhelming! But in the strength of the Lord, and at His command, Gideon would lead Israel to defeat Midian.

Gideon is mentioned briefly in the New Testament, in the 11th chapter of Hebrews. After recounting numerous acts that by faith were accomplished in the Old Testament, the writer of the book of Hebrews says, “What more shall I say? Time would fail me to tell you of Gideon, of Barak, of Samson... who through faith, subdued kingdoms...”

When Joshua was to lead the children of Israel after the death of Moses, the Lord told him: *Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest. (Joshua 1:9)*

When Gabriel came to tell Mary she would bear the Savior of the world, the angel said: *Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee... (Luke 1:28)*

Augustine wrote: “And my whole hope is only in Thy exceeding great mercy. Give what Thou commandest, and command what Thou wilt.” Our hope is in the Lord’s great mercy. Remember the first words to Gideon: “The Lord is with thee...”

