



Session 6



DEBORAH AND BARAK

Judges 4–5

The Book of Judges lays out for the reader a consistent cycle of sin, repentance, and rescue. Not unlike our compulsion to sin and thus need for repentance, the nation of Israel would continually forget God, get into trouble with a neighboring power, and God would graciously send a judge to rescue Israel from oppression. The first three chapters of this book highlight some of the earliest judges God chose and how those men were used to rescue Israel.

Chapters 4–5 begin the first of some more detailed looks at some of the judges in Israel. Deborah—a woman—is introduced to us as a prophetess, and a judge, and we see her eventually as the military leader of Israel when she lays out the battle plan to defend Israel against the Canaanites. Apart from Moses and Samuel, Deborah is the only other person in Scripture given authority in all three areas—prophecy, judgment, and military leadership.

As a prophetess, Deborah received a word from God questioning whether or not a military leader named Barak was going to fight against the forces of Sisera, the commander of the Canaanite army. God had given Barak instructions to go, and it seemed that Barak was a bit apprehensive to go. When Barak was summoned by Deborah, he agreed to go fight, but only if Deborah would go fight with him.

From the time Israel moved into the promised land, they were never the strongest military power around. The Canaanites were the ruling super power at that time and they possessed one of the elite military vehicles of the ancient world—iron chariots. The Canaanites had 900 of these chariots that would have been impervious to stones and other weapons most powers used at that time.

Barak, with 10,000 men, came down the slopes of Mount Tabor and pursued Sisera and his army. Sisera was defeated as he and his army were confused by the Lord, rendering their chariots useless and ending the reign of Canaan over Israel.

SESSION FOCUS

BIBLE PASSAGE: Judges 4–5

MEMORY VERSE: Ephesians 2:8-9

BIBLE VERSE: Psalm 119:34

TEXT TRUTH: Good leaders obey God.

BIBLE SKILLS SPOTLIGHT: Pronounces some of the names of Bible people, places, and things mentioned in the Bible. Knows some of the names of the people in the Bible. Knows the Bible teaches people how God wants them to live.

BIBLE STUDY

(35 MINUTES)

- ☐ **Jump In:** “Palm Leaf” (Printable), marker, Bible Timeline for Kids, “Daggers” (Slide)
- ☐ **Examine the Text:** “Good Leader” (Poster Pack), “What Makes a Good Leader?” (Printable), painter’s tape, Bibles, “Text Truth 6” (Slide), Family Cards
- ☐ **Play the Video:** Explore the Bible on Location video
- ☐ **Memory Verse:** one color of construction paper, scissors, marker, “Ephesians 2:8-9” (Poster Pack)
- ☐ **Prayer:** none

APPLY THE TRUTH

(20 MINUTES)

- ☐ **Explorer Guides:** Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens
- ☐ **Review:** 2 colors of painter’s tape
- ☐ **Tech Connect** (Optional): a device with the LifeWay Kids app

ACTIVITIES

(20 MINUTES)

- ☐ **Bible Skills:** playground ball, painter’s tape, copy paper, “Bible Books” (Books of the Bible Posters)
- ☐ **Move:** none
- ☐ **Make:** variety of leaves (different size and shape), inexpensive paper plates, washable paint, heavyweight paper, permanent marker, “Allergy Alert” (Printables)
- ☐ **Explore:** “Fasolino Family Photos” (Printables)

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DEBORAH AND BARAK

Judges 4–5

Once again Israel sinned. They did not love and worship only God. God allowed Jabin, the king of Canaan, to rule over the people. The commander of Jabin's army was named Sisera. Jabin had many iron chariots and he treated the Israelites very, very badly for 20 years.

The Israelites called to God for help. At this time, Deborah was a prophetess and a judge in Israel. She would sit under a palm tree and the Israelites would come to her for help.

One day, Deborah sent for a man named Barak [BAY rak]. Deborah asked Barak, "Didn't God tell you to take soldiers to Mount Tabor and defeat Sisera?"

Barak told Deborah that he would go if she would also go.

Deborah agreed, but she told him, "You will not receive the honor for the battle. A woman will defeat Sisera."

Barak gathered 10,000 soldiers. Barak and Deborah traveled with the soldiers to Mount Tabor. Sisera heard the news that Barak had gone to Mount Tabor. He gathered all of his iron chariots and all of his soldiers.

Deborah told Barak to take his men and go to fight Sisera. Suddenly, God caused Sisera, all of his chariots, and all of his soldiers to be confused. Sisera ran away from the battle. He traveled to the tent of a woman named Jael. Jael offered Sisera some milk to drink and she hid him under a rug. When Sisera fell asleep, Jael killed him.

Barak had been chasing Sisera and arrived at the tent to find that Sisera was dead. God had delivered the Israelites from Jabin and his army. Later, the Israelites completely defeated Jabin. Deborah and Barak sang a song of praise to God for all that He had done.

"May those who love God be like the rising sun in its strength," they sang.

There was peace in Israel for 40 years.

CHRIST IN CONTEXT:

The Book of Judges highlights the consequences of sin and our need for a Savior. The judges were temporary deliverers rescuing the Israelites from their enemies. Jesus is the sinless deliverer who, through His death on the cross and resurrection, has defeated our enemy, Satan.

DON'T FORGET TO SEND HOME THESE FAMILY RESOURCES EACH WEEK:

- "Explore the Bible at Home" (Printables)
- Explore the Bible: Kids Family Cards

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Jump In: "Palm Leaf" (Printable), marker, *Bible Timeline for Kids*, "Daggers" (Slide)
- Examine the Text: "Good Leader" (Poster Pack), "What Makes a Good Leader?" (Printable), painter's tape, Bibles, "Text Truth 6" (Slide), Family Cards
- Play the Video: Explore the Bible on Location video
- Memory Verse: one color of construction paper, scissors, marker, "Ephesians 2: 8-9" (Poster Pack)
- Prayer: none

Need an Opening Activity? Choose one of the activities in the *Activities* section and adapt it to introduce the session.

JUMP IN

- *Before group, print off and copy the "Palm Leaf" template on green paper. Write the numbers from 500 to 10,000, counting by either 500 or 1,000.*

- Welcome your kids as they enter the room. Ask your kids how their week went and if they did anything fun this week?
- Spread the leaves around the playing area and ask your boys and girls to work together to put the numbers in order.
- Begin: "Last week, we celebrated Easter and finished our study of the Book of Matthew. This week, we are going to study a judge of Israel. Which book of the Bible do you think we are going to study? Today, we are going to learn from the Book of Judges. Is Judges in the Old or New Testament? The Old Testament. Let's look at our timeline and find Judges."
- Refer to the timeline. Continue: "Our timeline tells us that the judges were deliverers sent by God to help Israel overcome their enemies. Who does it say were some of the most well-known judges? Deborah was one of the most well-known judges. She would sit under a palm tree and help the people of Israel."
- Display the "Daggers" slide.
- Say: "Our image today is a collection of weapons. In our story today, Deborah asked a man named Barak to gather soldiers to defeat a man named Sisera. How many soldiers do you think Barak gathered? It was one of the numbers on our palm leaves. Yes, Barak gathered 10,000 soldiers. We are going to learn that **good leaders obey God**. Our image is a great reminder that God wants us to be good leaders."

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Display the "Good Leader" poster. Give each child a "What Makes a Good Leader?" prompt. Ask each child to read his prompt and discuss with your group what makes a good leader. If a child has a suggestion for a good leader, ask him to attach it to the "Good Leader" poster.
- Begin: "We have been discussing what makes good leaders. Good leaders should be good listeners. They should be loyal. **Good leaders obey God**. Today, we are learning from the Book of Judges. Let's take our Bibles and find Judges 4. Remember, Judges is found in the Old Testament."
- Continue: "Earlier, I told you that Deborah asked a man named Barak to gather an army of 10,000 men to defeat Sisera." Ask a volunteer to read Judges 4:8. "Did Barak do what Deborah asked him to do? No, he said he would only go if Deborah would go."

- Ask a volunteer to read Judges 4:9. “Did Deborah go with Barak? She did go with him, but he would not get honor from the battle. **Good leaders obey God.**”
- Continue telling the Bible story in your own words. A Bible story page has been provided for you to use as a guide.
- Display the Text Truth. Conclude: “Deborah was a well-known judge of Israel. God used her to help the people of Israel. God asked Barak to lead an army of soldiers against Sisera, but Barak did not obey God. Barak would only go if Deborah went with him. **Good leaders obey God.** God has a special job for each of us. We need to listen to God and make sure we obey Him.”
- Give each kid a Family Card. Encourage your kids to talk about the questions on the back of the card with their family this week.
- Remind your kids that when they see the daggers image this week to be obedient to God, their parents, and their teachers. Remind them that **good leaders obey God.**

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the Session 6 video.
- Ask: “What location did Joel visit? What does the word *valor* mean? Who was a good leader in today’s Bible story?”

MEMORY VERSE

- ☐ *Bonus Verse Option: The Memory Verse activity each week is focused on the monthly Memory Verse, Ephesians 2:8-9. If your kids quickly memorize the Memory Verse, you may opt to challenge them to learn an additional weekly Bonus Verse. This week’s Bonus Verse is Psalm 119:34.*
- ☐ *Use one color of construction paper to make 4-5 different shapes about the size of ¼ sheet of copy paper. Each shape should represent one team. Cut enough copies of each shape so that you can write a section of the Memory Verse on each one, including the reference. Make enough sets of the verse for as many groups as you need. Mix up all the shapes and hide the verses all around the room.*
- Display “Ephesians 2:8-9” on a focal wall. Say the verse in short segments and ask your boys and girls to repeat it after you. Form groups of 3 to 4 kids. Encourage each group to find all the pieces of their verse and to put the verse in order. Encourage kids to use the “Ephesians 2:8-9” poster for help. Assist as needed. Repeat the verse together at the end.
- Say: “God caused confusion for Sisera’s army. I caused confusion by having the same color paper but using different shapes. God’s Word helps us follow the right path, so that we aren’t confused. **Good leaders obey God.**”

PRAYER

- Ask your kids to share prayer requests. Allow your kids to pray silently for a few minutes. Close by praying aloud when most of the kids have finished praying.

APPLY THE TRUTH (20 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Explorer Guides: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens
- Review: 2 colors of painter's tape
- Tech Connect (Optional): a device with the LifeWay Kids app

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Distribute the Explorer Guides and help kids locate today's pages, "Deborah and Barak."
- Choose a volunteer to read "What's in a Name?"
- Ask another kid to read the information about milk in "Did You Know ...?"
- Help kids think of answers to complete "What Makes a Good Leader?"
- Review today's object, the "Daggers."
- Conclude by inviting kids to quietly complete the activity, "Help Me Obey."

REVIEW

- Tape two lines of painter's tape horizontally on the floor, using different colors. Instruct your kids that you will make a true or false statement about today's Bible story. Instruct your kids that one color will be true, and the other color will be false. Make a statement about the story and have children hop to the color line that they believe to be the correct answer. Play until you have made as many statements about the story as possible.

TECH CONNECT (OPTIONAL)

- Prior to Small Group, download the LifeWay Kids app. Use the activity labeled "Explorer Plus" in the Explore the Bible: Kids section of the app.