

UNIT 8 | SESSION 2

DEBORAH LED ISRAEL

JUDGES 4-5



KEY PASSAGE: 2 Chronicles 7:14

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What is repentance? Repentance is turning away from sin and turning to Jesus.

CHRIST CONNECTION: God used Deborah to lead Israel in victory over their enemies, and God received the glory. God sent Jesus to reign victorious over sin and death. Jesus is worthy of all honor, glory, and power (Revelation 4:11).

STORY POINT: God used Deborah to lead and rescue His people.



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

Judges 4 and 5 reveal God’s heart for delivering His people despite the consequences their sin deserved. Again, the Israelites sinned by committing evil in the sight of the Lord. Even still, God provided victory for His people against Sisera and his army.

How did Deborah’s leadership bring glory to God? Why is Jesus worthy of all glory?

In the prophecy she shared with Barak, Deborah revealed that God had already promised the Israelites victory in battle. Deborah rallied Barak to lead Israel’s army against Sisera. Even though Barak was hesitant to go without Deborah, he eventually led 10,000 troops to fight the enemy army. The Lord threw Sisera’s army into confusion, demonstrating His promised power. Forced to flee, Sisera died in an unsuspecting tent of a woman named Jael. On that day, Deborah and Barak praised God in song for the victory He alone accomplished.

Deborah and Barak’s song of praise revealed a right response to God’s rescue: worship. God was glorified because He alone provided rescue. Likewise, Jesus alone is worthy of worship for how He has provided the only way for sinners to be saved. God has exalted Jesus above every name because of His humble obedience to die on the cross for sinful people. One day, every knee will bow, and every tongue will confess Jesus as Lord.

We, like the wayward Israelites, are sinners who deserve punishment for our sins against God. Yet, by choosing to put our faith in Christ and in His perfect obedience and finished work on the cross, we receive the gift of everlasting life in place of the condemnation we deserve. In His goodness, God made the way for us to receive the grace we did not earn and allowed for His Son to bear the consequences our sin deserves. May it likewise be true for the boys and girls who hear this story and place their faith in our greatest deliverer—Jesus.



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



WELCOME

10-15 MINUTES

Greet kids and open the session



LEARN

25-30 MINUTES

Teach kids the story of the gospel



LOVE

15-20 MINUTES

Lead kids to love the God of the gospel



LIVE

15-20 MINUTES

Lead kids to live out the mission of the gospel



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- "What's Changed?" activity page

Session Starter (Option 1)

- empty cardboard tubes, 1 per kid
- green construction paper

Session Starter (Option 2)

- plastic tablecloths
- wet wipes
- paper towels
- baking sheets, 1 per group
- washable paint
- marbles, 1 per kid



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 2)

- worship music

Reflection and Prayer

- Bible Story Coloring Page (optional)



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- countdown video
- Story Point Poster

Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- "Deborah Led Israel" video
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Bible story props (optional)

Questions from Kids

- "Unit 8, Session 2" Questions from Kids video

Missions Moment

- "Barber Family Photo" printable

Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- "If My People (2 Chronicles 7:14)" song
- worship song of your choice (optional)
- note cards, 1 per kid



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

SAY 🗨️ When was a time someone challenged you to do something that was hard? Did you accept the challenge? How did it make you feel? 🗨️

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “What’s Changed?” activity page.

SAY 🗨️ Today, we will see how God called a woman named Deborah to judge Israel. We’ll learn how Deborah challenged a man named Barak to battle Israel’s enemies. 🗨️

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: STORY POINT PALM TREE



Provide each kid with an empty cardboard tube, green construction paper, markers, and scissors. Using a brown marker, lead kids to draw criss-crossing lines on the cardboard tube to create the ridges on the trunk of a palm tree. Then guide kids to draw four palm leaves on their green construction paper. On one leaf, assist kids in writing the story point: **GOD USED DEBORAH TO LEAD AND RESCUE HIS PEOPLE.**

Direct kids to cut four ½ inch slits at the top of their cardboard tube. Guide kids to cut out the leaves and slide them into each slit, forming the top of the palm tree.

SAY 🗨️ Today, we will learn how God called a woman named Deborah to be a judge over Israel. Deborah would sit under a palm tree and listen to the people’s problems. Then she would help them work out their disagreements. We’ll also see that Deborah helped lead a battle plan to rescue God’s people from their enemies. 🗨️

OPTION 2: PAINTING WITH MARBLES

Before the activity, cover tables with plastic tablecloths and place wet wipes and paper towels at each table. Form kids into groups of four or five and provide each group with a baking sheet, paper, and a few different colors of washable paint. Then distribute a marble to each kid.

Direct groups to lay their paper on their baking sheet. Then explain that each kid will drop a marble in some paint. After, kids will place the paint covered marble on the paper. Direct kids in each group to take turns picking up the tray and moving it so the marbles roll around on the paper. Once kids have all had a turn, direct them to use the wet wipes and paper towels to clean their hands.

SAY 🗨️ What happened when you rolled the marbles around the paper? [Allow responses.] It created a mess of colors! The marbles ran into each other and overlapped their colors. This reminds me of what happened to an enemy army in today’s Bible story. God caused Israel’s enemy to panic, and they fled in confusion. Let’s get ready to hear how God received praise for His powerful victory. 🗨️

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)



Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ Welcome, kids! My name is [your name], and I’m happy you’re here today! Together, we get to study true stories from the Bible. The Bible is God’s Word. By reading our Bibles, we come to know who God is, how He loves us, and how He has made the way to rescue us from our sin through Jesus. If you have your Bibles with you, please hold them up high. [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.] Today, we will continue to learn about the judges God sent to rescue His people from their enemies.

As we hear our story, we’ll learn how God’s people were captured by an enemy army. But God was faithful to His people, even though they kept sinning against Him. We’ll see how **GOD USED DEBORAH TO LEAD AND RESCUE HIS PEOPLE.** [Display the Story Point Poster.] Let’s prepare our hearts to hear our Bible story. Pray with me: ‘Dear God, please open our ears to listen and our eyes to see the truth from Your Word. Give us hearts to listen, learn, and obey. In Jesus’ name, amen.’ ”



Worship

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

Display the Big Picture Question Poster.

* Firm Foundation
* Good, Good Father
* offering

SAY “ Does anyone remember our big picture question? [Allow responses.] What is repentance? What is the answer we’ve learned? [Allow responses.] Repentance is turning away from sin and turning to Jesus.



What does it mean when we say turn away from sin? [Allow responses.] Sometimes sinful actions seem easier, more fun, or right in the moment. But they will always lead us away from God and toward death. God wants for us to choose Him and His way over sinful actions. When we sin, we should seek repentance. Today, we will see how God’s people sinned and faced the consequences of their sin. But in God’s kindness, He sent Deborah to judge His people and help rescue them from their enemies. God’s kindness leads us to repentance. God was kind to send Jesus to save us from our sin once and for all. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the Giant Timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ The people of Israel continued to sin against the Lord. Because of their sin, God gave them consequences. The people would cry out to God to save them from their enemies. And God showed kindness by sending a judge to rescue them. The people promised to follow God, but then they eventually turned away from Him again. Today, we will see how God used Deborah to encourage Barak and lead God’s people to victory over their enemy. ”



LEARN the Bible Story



1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Judges 4–5. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Deborah Led Israel.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

DEBORAH LED ISRAEL

“God’s people again did what was evil in God’s eyes. As a consequence, they were captured by King Jabin and Sisera, the commander of Jabin’s army.”

After 20 years of being treated badly by King Jabin, the Israelites cried out to the Lord for help. God sent Deborah, a prophetess and judge, to lead and help them.

Deborah would sit under a palm tree and listen to the people’s problems. She called for **Barak**, a leader of Israel’s army, and said, “Hasn’t God already commanded you to take the army to fight against Sisera and King Jabin’s army? He has promised to hand you the victory.”

Barak said, “I will go if you go with me. If you don’t go with me, I won’t go.”

“I will gladly go with you,” **Deborah** replied. “But because you failed to obey this command on your own, you will receive no honor for the victory. The commander **Sisera** will be defeated by a woman instead of by you.”

Barak and Deborah gathered ten thousand men from Israel and attacked **Sisera** and his troops. The Lord caused the enemy army to panic, and all of them were defeated except for **Sisera**, who ran away in fear.

Sisera fled to the tent of a friend named **Heber**. **Heber** was not there, but his wife **Jael** (JAY uhl) came out and greeted him. She gave him milk and covered him with a blanket so that he could sleep. **Sisera** thought he was safe, but he was not. **Jael** picked up a tent peg and killed **Sisera** with it. The words of **Deborah** came true: a woman defeated **Sisera** instead of **Barak**.

Deborah and Barak sang a song of praise to God for the victory:

“LORD, may all your enemies perish just as **Sisera** did.

But may those who love God

Be like the rising of the sun in its strength.”

The Israelites had peace for the next 40 years.

Christ Connection: God used **Deborah** to lead Israel in victory over their enemies, and God received the glory. God sent **Jesus** to reign victorious over sin and death. **Jesus** is worthy of all honor, glory, and power (Revelation 4:11). ”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Use props: As you tell the story, show people figures for **Deborah**, **Barak**, **Sisera**, and **Jael**.

Pause for effect: Use brief silence between paragraphs to capture kids’ attention.



2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY ☞ Once again, the people of Israel disobeyed God and suffered the consequences of their sin. God allowed His people to be captured by King Jabin and the leader of his army, Sisera. For twenty years the people suffered under this king, but then, as they had done before, they called out to the Lord to help them. Who did God send as a judge to help His people? [Allow responses.] **GOD USED A JUDGE NAMED DEBORAH TO LEAD AND RESCUE HIS PEOPLE.**



Who did Deborah call to lead Israel's army into battle against Sisera? [Allow responses.] Deborah said God told Barak to lead the troops. Barak waited to see if Deborah would go with him. Deborah said she would go, but Barak would not receive the honor in defeating Sisera. Who did defeat Sisera? [Allow responses.] Jael killed Sisera when he came to her tent. Jael displayed faith in God when she killed Israel's enemy. God is always worthy of our trust.

Deborah and Barak responded to this victory by praising the Lord for who He is and all that He has done. God used Deborah to lead Israel in victory over their enemies, and God received the glory. God sent Jesus to reign victorious over sin and death. Jesus is worthy of all honor, glory, and power (Revelation 4:11). ☞

3 GOSPEL DISCUSSION

SAY ☞ Jael defeated Sisera with a tent peg. Jesus defeated sin and death by being nailed to a cross and rising again. Everyone who trusts in Jesus is saved from their sin forever. Because of what Jesus has done for sinful people, we give Him all the praise. Have you praised Jesus for dying for your sin? Have you trusted in Him for forgiveness? ☞

(Tip: Create an environment where kids are welcome to ask questions about what it means to follow Jesus.)



Gospel poster

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the "Unit 8, Session 2" Questions from Kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. When we grow up, how can we tell what God's will is for our lives?
2. Why is following God's plans for our lives better than following our own plans? How does God receive glory when we follow His plans?





LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Display the “Barber Family Photo” as you tell the kids about the church planters. Tell kids that Ricardo and Menya Barber are missionaries who have started a church in Portland, Oregon. Ricardo is originally from Jonesville, Louisiana, but God called him to Portland to start a new church in July 2019. Eventually, the Barbers connected with an existing church who partnered with the Barbers to start One HOPE (Helping Open People’s Eyes) Fellowship.

SAY 🗣️ One HOPE Fellowship wants to be a place where all people feel like they belong and where people of different ethnicities, ages, and personalities feel welcomed and loved. They want people to grow their faith in Jesus and be a church that tells many people about the good news of Jesus. One HOPE Fellowship also wants to be a church that sends out teams to start other churches in Portland, and beyond the city to other places. Pray for the Barbers and One HOPE Fellowship as they help people in Portland know about Jesus. 🙏

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the Key Passage Poster. Lead kids in reading aloud 2 Chronicles 7:14 together.

SAY 🗣️ God is kind to act when His people cry out to Him. God shows us His kindness through Jesus, who died for our sin. 🙏

Provide each kid with a note card and a Bible. Assist kids in finding 2 Chronicles 7:14. Then guide kids to copy the verse from their Bible on their note card. Encourage kids to take their note cards home and use it to help memorize the key passage.

~~Lead kids to sing “If My People (2 Chronicles 7:14).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.~~

7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY 🗣️ God, thank You for forgiving our sins when we repent and turn to Jesus. Thank You for being kind to us and for hearing our cries for help. In Jesus’ name, amen. 🙏

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the Old Testament Kingdoms Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Judges 5. Tell kids that the author of Judges is not named. Explain that Judges shows us how Israel goes in a downward spiral of sin and how people cannot save themselves. Share how Judges helps us see how people need a Savior.

Consider pointing out the location of Mount Tabor (C5) on the Old Testament Kingdoms Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Judges 5:31 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verse aloud.

SAY *Deborah and Barak sang praises to God and asked God to defeat all His enemies. Before we place our trust in Jesus, we are all enemies of God. Yet God loved us even while we were His enemies, and He sent His Son Jesus to save us. Through faith in Jesus, we become part of God's family forever, no longer His enemies. Christians have hearts that love God, and they will reign in victory with Jesus for all eternity.*

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY *Do you think following God means facing hard times? Why?*

Discuss how Deborah, Barak, and Jael faced hard times. Tell kids how they didn't cower in fear, but trusted God to give them victory. Share how Christians will face hard times as well because we live in a sinful world. Encourage kids to remember they can always trust God and follow Him in obedience.

SAY *Who received the praise and glory for Israel's victory over their enemies?*

Remind kids that God received the praise and glory because He defeated Sisera's army. Discuss how God used the efforts of Deborah, Barak, and Jael, but the ultimate victory was His since He is in control of all things. God's plan also included sending Jesus to die for our sin. Jesus received all the glory and praise for His obedience to the Father and for reigning as King.

SAY *Does God want to include us in His plans? Why?*

Guide kids to see that God doesn't need our help to do anything, but He lovingly includes us in His plans for our good and His glory. Discuss how God uses His people to share the gospel, encourage others, warn others, and serve one another. We are blessed by the chance to participate in His plan to rescue sinners and glorify Him.

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: YOU BE THE JUDGE



Invite kids to judge if a statement is right or wrong. Guide kids to respond with thumbs up if the statement is right or a thumbs down if it is wrong. Consider using the statements below or create your own.

- Friends always give the best advice.
- People are good enough to get to heaven on their own.
- Repentance is turning away from sin and turning to Jesus.
- Following Jesus will always be easy.
- Jesus lived a perfect life in our place.
- Only trusting in Jesus can save us from our sins.

SAY “ Deborah was a judge who helped people solve their problems. When we are faced with a problem, like knowing what is right from what is wrong, we can turn to God’s Word to help us. God will always lead us in truth. We can trust His Word to guide us to Jesus and help us know how to live for Him. ”

OPTION 2: GIVE GOD THE GLORY

Provide kids with markers and paper. Invite kids to draw a picture of how they can show their thanks to God for all the ways He has shown His love to them. Remind kids of how His plan to rescue sinners through His Son, Jesus, is the ultimate demonstration of His love. Play worship music while kids complete their drawings. Then invite them to share their drawings with the group.

SAY “ God does everything for His glory. This means He does everything to show how great and holy and wonderful He is. In our story, God received the glory for how He saved His people from their enemies. God deserves our praise, because without His plan to send Jesus to rescue us from sin, we would have no hope of salvation. The Bible tells us that one day, every knee will bow and every tongue will praise Jesus. ”

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids. If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.