

Deborah

Judges 4:1-23

MEMORY VERSE

JUDGES 5:2

“When leaders lead in Israel, When the people willingly offer themselves, Bless the LORD!”

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

Enough paper cups for all of the children in your class, cut apple cubes and one potato cube.

“God’s Blindfold” template (enclosed with lesson), enough sheets of construction paper for the children in your class and string.

Enough regular blindfolds for at least half of the number of children in your class.

ATTENTION GRABBER!

Stand Up

It is sometimes hard to stand up *alone* for the truth, even in a friendly setting. Pass out a paper cup containing one or two apple cubes to all the children but one. Have mixed in with the other cups a cup containing a potato cube (it should look just like the apples). Give this cup to the remaining child.

Ask the kids to do a tastetest for you. If their apple tasted like an apple, ask them to please stand up. Then have them sit down. If their apple didn’t taste like an apple, ask them to please stand up. See if the one child stands. (The one child may be too embarrassed to stand.) If they do not stand, you can tell the kids that one of the cubes was a potato and that maybe whoever had it could not tell the difference!

It is hard to stand up for truth, even among friends; yet God desires us to take a stand for Him, and He will enable us. **Let us trust in God, even when others do not.**

LESSON TIME!

In our lesson today, we will learn about Deborah—a woman of faith and courage. Before Israel had kings, they had judges. These were men or women chosen by God to lead His people, Israel. They would listen to the problems of the people, pray, and then give them counsel.

There were some good judges and some evil judges. Whenever Israel had an evil judge, they always got into trouble. Before Deborah became a judge, Ehud was judge. He was an evil judge and a terrible leader. During the time of Ehud, God allowed Israel to become captives to a Canaanite king.

JUDGES 4:1,2

When Ehud was dead, the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD.

So the LORD sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor. The commander of his army was Sisera, who dwelt in Harosheth Hagoyim.

God continuously raised up judges to deliver Israel; and although Israel would follow God for a time after their deliverance, they soon turned back to doing what was right in their own eyes. (This pattern is repeated over and over again in the book of Judges.) Here, we find Israel doing evil in God's sight once again. God was patient with Israel; but after a long time of disobedience, His people would suffer the results of their sin. How sad! For, God's desire is to bless His people. God's response to His people's disobedience was to allow them to be ruled over by a Canaanite king.

If we choose to turn away from God, living in disobedience and rebellion, we will reap what we sow. Just as the Israelites experienced the hardships of slavery to the nation that conquered them, so our sins will bring us into bondage and slavery. Sin is a harsh master.

When the Israelites turned back to God, He was always faithful to forgive them and help them. If we turn from our rebellion and ask God's forgiveness through faith in His Son Jesus Christ, He will forgive us (1 John 1:9) and restore us into fellowship with Himself.

JUDGES 4:3-5

And the children of Israel cried out to the LORD; for Jabin had nine hundred chariots of iron, and for twenty years he harshly oppressed the children of Israel.

Now Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, was judging Israel at that time.

And she would sit under the palm tree of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the mountains of Ephraim. And the children of Israel came up to her for judgment.

After 20 years of Jabin's rule, the Israelites once again cried to God for help.

Deborah was the judge at that time, and all of Israel came to her with their problems. God told Deborah that He would deliver Jabin to Israel in battle. Deborah called a man named Barak to gather ten thousand men to go fight. Barak, afraid of the mighty army of Jabin, would not go unless Deborah accompanied him; Deborah agreed to go, and they both headed to Kedesh for the battle.

Deborah was a woman of faith and courage. Though Barak and the children of Israel feared Jabin, their powerful enemy, God had spoken to Deborah, and she trusted Him. The might of Jabin, the enemy, did not dissuade her. **Let us trust in God, even when others do not.**

Sisera, commander of Jabin's army, heard that Barak had gathered an army, and he prepared his army to move into the battle against Israel.

JUDGES 4:12-16

And they reported to Sisera that Barak the son of Abinoam had gone up to Mount Tabor.

So Sisera gathered together all his chariots, nine hundred chariots of iron, and all the people who were with him, from Harosheth Hagoyim to the River Kishon.

Then Deborah said to Barak, "Up! For this is the day in which the LORD has delivered Sisera into your hand. Has not the LORD gone out before you?" So Barak went down from Mount Tabor with ten thousand men following him.

And the LORD routed Sisera and all his chariots and all his army with the edge of the sword before Barak; and Sisera alighted from his chariot and fled away on foot.

But Barak pursued the chariots and the army as far as Harosheth Hagoyim, and all the army of Sisera fell by the edge of the sword; not a man was left.

Sisera, Jabin's commander, brought 900 chariots into battle against the Israelites. In an amazing victory, Israel, with only swords with which to fight, defeated Sisera. Barak chased all of the chariots and killed all of Jabin's men except Sisera who ran away on foot.

God is faithful. Although the Israelites had turned away from Him, Again, He delivers them from their enemies. With God on their side, there are no circumstances too difficult. The enemy had 900 iron chariots; the Israelites had no horses or great weapons (only swords); yet, the Lord gave the victory.

Note, when it was time to attack the enemy, Deborah stood up and prompted Israel to action. "Up! For this is the day in which the LORD has delivered Sisera into your hand. Has not the LORD gone out before you?" May we, like Deborah, have the faith and courage to take a stand for the Lord.

Like Deborah and the children of Israel, we may face enemies much stronger than us. May we not measure difficulty by our own ability, but remember that God is much stronger than any enemy we could ever face us--even an enemy with 900 iron chariots. If God is on our side, we can win any battle. **Let us trust in God, even when others do not.**

God's Blindfold

Has God asked us to trust Him blindly? No! He has shown us His faithfulness and given us His Word. He has not asked us to close our eyes and jump off a cliff. He asks us to open our eyes, remember His faithfulness, and trust in Him. Deborah knew of God's faithfulness through the lives of Moses and Joshua.

Let the kids fold and cut out “God’s blindfold.” Use various colors of construction paper and yarn or string to tie them. Notice the difference with these blindfolds (they have holes in them so the children can see). These could be decorated with scripture references of God’s faithfulness in the Bible.

JUDGES 4:17-20

However, Sisera had fled away on foot to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite; for there was peace between Jabin king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite.

And Jael went out to meet Sisera, and said to him, "Turn aside, my lord, turn aside to me; do not fear." And when he had turned aside with her into the tent, she covered him with a blanket.

Then he said to her, "Please give me a little water to drink, for I am thirsty." So she opened a jug of milk, gave him a drink, and covered him.

And he said to her, "Stand at the door of the tent, and if any man comes and inquires of you, and says, 'Is there any man here?' you shall say, 'No.'"

As Sisera fled the battle on foot, he came across a tent. There he met Jael and asked her to hide him in the tent. So she gave him milk and he fell asleep under a blanket. But Sisera could not hide from God or His people.

JUDGES 4:21-23

Then Jael, Heber's wife, took a tent peg and took a hammer in her hand, and went softly to him and drove the peg into his temple, and it went down into the ground; for he was fast asleep and weary. So he died.

And then, as Barak pursued Sisera, Jael came out to meet him, and said to him, "Come, I will show you the man whom you seek." And when he went into her tent, there lay Sisera, dead with the peg in his temple.

So on that day God subdued Jabin king of Canaan in the presence of the children of Israel.

Jael was on Israel's side; she killed Sisera and presented him to Barak. King Jabin's power was weakened, and Israel subdued him.

Perhaps, there are some today, who will be like Deborah—full of faith and courage and willing to take a stand for God when others are not. May we be willing to stand *alone*, if necessary, believing in God's awesome ability to defeat our enemies. **Let us trust in God, even when others do not.**

Let us remember that, though the odds seem to be against us, God can turn any situation around. In Romans 8:31 we read, "...if God is for us, who can be against us?" He can help us at school, give us courage, heal us, protect us, or use us to help others. God can turn even the bad things into good for His children.

Obstacle Course

Have the kids work together to set up an obstacle course. Form pairs and give each pair a blindfold. Let the "seeing" partner lead the blindfolded partner through the course. The "seeing" partner may move an obstacle or lead the other around it at his discretion. All the children, whether or not participating, should watch and help a comparison to be drawn.

How are the blindfolded and seeing partners like us following God? When we do not trust God, it would be like the blindfolded partner telling the "seeing" partner what to do.

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of commitment to trust in the Lord no matter what, even when others refuse to follow Him. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the Gospel, give them opportunity.

Template - God's Blindfold

