

10. Deborah (Judges 4:4-16)

He did what was right in the LORD'S eyes. (2 Kings 22:2)



PLAN

Session Outline

1. Gather

Greeting
Follow or Don't
Making Decisions
Transition to Explore

2. Explore

Sacred Conversations
Hear and See the Bible Story
Interact with the Bible Story
Say the Bible Verse
Transition to Respond

3. Respond

Loving God,
Loving Neighbor
Deborah and Her Palm Tree
Deborah the Judge
Transition to Bless

4. Bless

Inviting
Praising
Blessing
At Home with God

Supplies

Basic Supplies: Tape | Stickers | Markers | Crayons | Pencils | Glue | Paper | Scissors

Gather: No additional supplies needed

Explore: Deep Blue Kids Bible

Respond: *Invite a special visitor: Female Judge or Leader*

Bless: No additional supplies needed

Before You Teach

If you follow the story of the Israelite people through the Old Testament, you will notice a pattern. First, the Israelites are oppressed by and living under the rule of an enemy. Then, the Israelites call out to God for help. Next, God identifies a strong leader and rescues the Israelites from oppression. Finally, a period of peace follows during which the Israelites fall away from God and the cycle begins again.

In the fourth chapter of Judges, we learn that the Israelites have been living under the rule of the Canaanites. Sisera, the commander of the Canaanite army had been cruelly oppressing the Israelites for twenty years. Predictably, the Israelites cried out to God for help.

Enter Deborah, described as a prophet and leader of Israel. Deborah delivers a message from God to Barak, commanding him to gather his tribe and two other tribes and fight the Canaanites. Deborah assures Barak that God will deliver Sisera into his hands and the Israelites will be victorious. Barak says he will only go into battle if Deborah will go with him. Deborah agrees to his request. Barak and Deborah led the Israelites into battle and God goes with them.

The story of Deborah and Barak is told twice in the Book of Judges. In chapter four, the story is told in narrative form. In chapter five, the same story is told in a poetic form similar to a ballad. Deborah's song in chapter five is considered by most scholars to be one of the oldest pieces of literature in the Old Testament.

As with many Old Testament stories, aspects of this story can be troubling to those of us who long for peace and who resist against violence. These issues cannot be easily resolved. As you teach today's story, focus on Deborah as a leader and one who helped others follow God's call.

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GATHER

Greeting

Before class: Display the Attendance Chart (Class Kit—pp. 15–18) at eye level. Put together the model of the school and the figures of Mr. Maxwell, Rachel, and Armen (Class Kit—p. 9).

- Play, “Be a Leader” (Annual Music CD or Adventure DVD) as you welcome each child.
- Show the children where to place their offerings.
- Help each child mark the Attendance Chart with a sticker or permanent marker.
- Place the Deep Blue Shores Map (Class Kit—p. 11) and the school and the Mr. Maxwell, Rachel, and Armen figures (Class Kit—p. 9) on a table or on the floor for the children to play with and explore. If available, add the Deep Blue Shores Maps, buildings, and figures from previous quarters.

TIP: *Have a quiet space in your room with books and soft toys for children who are not quite ready to join in an activity when they arrive.*

A—Follow or Don’t (Game)

SAY: We’re going to play follow the leader. For some extra fun, we will add some new rules. I will choose the first leader. When I say “Follow,” everyone should do exactly what the leader is doing. When I say “Don’t,” everyone should do the opposite of what the leader is doing. Pay attention, because if you follow when you should not, or do the opposite when you should follow, you will be out of the game. The last person standing will get to be the next leader.

- Choose the first leader and play according to the instructions above. Make sure to alternate between saying “Follow” and “Don’t.” Play until each person who wishes to be leader has had the opportunity, or play as time and interest allows.

OR

B—Making Decisions (Game)

- Have the children stand in the center of the room. Place a piece of paper with the letter **A** on one side of the room, and a piece of paper with the letter **B** on the other side of the room.

SAY: Making decisions can be hard. I’m going to give you some tough situations, and ask you to decide what you would do. You will choose an option and move to one side of the room, **A** or **B**. If you are unable to decide, you may stay in the middle.

- Create scenarios such as, *A: Spaghetti and meatballs* or *B: Chicken and rice*, or *A: Go swimming* or *B: Go bike riding*. Continue as long as the children show interest. You may wish to pause from time to time and ask if anyone wants to explain his or her decision, but do not force anyone to share.
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Transition to Explore

- Have the children line up and follow you to the Bible story circle. You may wish to lead them by walking in silly ways.

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EXPLORE

Sacred Conversations

SAY: This month we are hearing stories about great leaders from the Old Testament part of the Bible. I wonder who we will hear about today.

ASK: I wonder:

- How many friends are here with us today? Who is missing?
 - How do you feel today?
 - What's one thing that happened in your community this week that you really liked?
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Hear and See the Bible Story

SAY: Today our Bible story is about a woman named Deborah who was a great judge.

- Tell the children the story from the *Deep Blue Kids Bible*, Judges 4:4-16. This story is not included in the *Deep Blue Bible Storybook*.
- Watch the Deep Blue Adventure for Session 10 (Adventure DVD) with the children.

ASK: Who helps you solve problems?

Interact with the Bible Story

- Give each child a copy of "Deborah" (Bible Story Sheets—Session 10).
 - Read the story with the children, encouraging them to read the words in blue.
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Say the Bible Verse

Before class: Post the Bible Verse Poster—Unit 3 (Class Kit—p. 7) on a wall or bulletin board.

- Point to the Bible Verse Poster. Say the Bible verse for the children, and then repeat it together.
 - Teach the children signs from American Sign Language for some of the words in the Bible verse (Leader Guide—p. 93 and www.deepbluekids.com/This-Sunday).
 - Watch the Unit 3 Bible Verse video (Adventure DVD) with the children.
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Transition to Respond

- Have the children line up and follow you to the next activity. You may wish to lead them by walking in silly ways.

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RESPOND

Loving God, Loving Neighbor

Before class: Post "All Are Welcome" (Class Kit—p. 2) on a wall or bulletin board.

Invite a guest to join your class who is a female judge or other leader. Share with the guest before the session that she will be explaining her job and how she learned to be a good leader with God's help. Share that the children will be invited to ask the guest questions.

- Play, "All Are Welcome" (Annual Music CD or Adventure DVD). Sing along and dance to the music.

SAY: Deborah was a great leader and judge. Today our guest is going to tell us a little about what being a leader means to her.

- Introduce your guest and invite her to describe her job and the ways that she has learned to be a good leader with God's help. Invite the children to ask the guest questions.

PRAY: Thank you, God, for (visitor's name). Please be with her as she helps others in her role as a leader. Help her to be a good leader and to remember that you are always with her. Amen.

A—Deborah and Her Palm Tree (Activity Sheets)

- Give each child a copy of Activity Sheets—Session 10, a piece of paper, and glue or tape.
- Encourage the children to create scenes according to the instructions.

OR

B—Deborah the Judge (Coloring)

Before class: Make a copy of "Deborah the Judge" (p. 66) for each child.

- Give each child a copy of "Deborah the Judge."
 - Invite the children to imagine what the people coming to Deborah for advice may have been asking about. Have the children draw or write their thoughts in the speech bubbles.
 - Invite the children to color their pictures.
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Transition to Bless

- Have the children clean up. Then instruct them to line up and follow you to the Bible story circle. You may wish to lead them by walking in silly ways.

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BLESS

Inviting

Before class: Cut out the mural pieces from the bottom of the Unit 3—Bible Story Mural (Class Kit—p. 23) and place them in an envelope or zip-top bag. Post the Unit 3—Bible Story Mural on a wall or bulletin board.

- Gather the children around the mural. Invite a child to tape the Deborah advising others image to the mural.

ASK: What do you remember about the Bible story we heard today? What do you think we can learn about community from this story?

Praising

Before class: Display “Singing Together” (Class Kit—p. 31) on a wall or bulletin board.

- Sing together, “Camping in God’s Shade” (Class Kit—p. 31).

TIP: *If time permits, invite the children to choose more songs to sing.*

Blessing

- Invite the children to stand in a circle.
- Turn to one of the children and say, “(Child’s name), God loves you!”
- Invite that child to turn to the child next to him or her and say, “(Child’s name), God loves you!”
- Continue around the circle until every child has had a turn to speak and hear a blessing.

PRAY: Dear God, thank you for leaders like Deborah and like (visitor’s name). Help us to be good leaders too. Thank you for always being with us no matter where we go. Amen.

At Home with God

ASK: What’s one thing about our time today that you can tell your family?

- Give each child a copy of Bible Story Sheets—Session 10. Look at “Family Faith Activities” together.

ASK: Which of these activities are you most excited to try this week?

- Send home the Bible Story Sheets—Session 10 with each child.

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Deborah the Judge

