

# 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 very 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. It is hard to know if that child will stand if they are the only one. They may be embarrassed. But if they don’t stand, you can tell the kids that one of the cubes was a potato, and that maybe whoever had it couldn’t tell the difference!

It is hard to stand up for truth even among friends. But God gives us strength to trust Him even when no one else will. **God wants us to trust in Him even when no one else will.**

## **LESSON TIME!**

In our lesson today we are going to learn about a faithful woman by the name of Deborah. 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 counsel to them as to what they should do.

There were some good judges and some evil judges. Whenever Israel had an evil judge they always got into trouble. This is where we find Israel in this lesson. Ehud was an evil judge and wasn't a good leader. So God allowed Israel to become captives to a Canaanite king.

But after 20 years, God raised up Deborah to deliver his people. Deborah loved the Lord and was obedient to Him. Deborah found that she could stand up for what is right in her nation even when no one else was willing to. **God wants us to trust in Him even when no one else will.**

### **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 they would follow God for a time, they soon turned back to doing what was right in their own eyes. Here we find Israel doing evil in God's sight once again. God was patient with His people, but after a

long time of disobedience His people would have to suffer the results of their sin. This made God sad because it wasn't necessary. God's response to His people's disobedience was to allow them to be ruled over by a Canaanite king.

We see this pattern over and over again in Judges. The people would turn away from God and they would have to suffer because of that. Whenever we decide to follow after sin and disobedience to God then we will have all kinds of problems because we are reaping what we are sowing. In fact, being enslaved to the Canaanite king for Israel is like when we sin and become enslaved to that sin or to the world. There are a lot of people who choose to sin and wind up becoming a slave to that sin.

But God was always faithful to His people and when they turned back to Him He always helped them. If we turn to God and ask forgiveness when we do things wrong, then God will forgive us (1 John 1:9). **God wants us to trust in Him even when no one else will.**

#### 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.

So Israel once again cried to God for help after 20 years of Jabin, the Canaanite king, ruling over them. As we mentioned earlier,

Jabin represents what sin will do to us if we allow it to rule over us. If we give ourselves to a life of disobedience to God, we will find that we become slaves to sin. And sin is a very harsh master. It may look good for a time, but really it is a terrible thing to be a slave to.

Deborah was the judge at that time, and all of Israel came to her with their problems. Deborah heard from God that He would deliver Jabin to Israel in battle. Deborah called a man named Barak to gather ten thousand men to go fight, but he would not go unless Deborah did. So they both headed to Kedesh for the battle.

#### 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 was Jabin's commander and he brought 900 chariots to fight the Israelites. God helped Israel win against Sisera and his chariots even though they had only men with swords. Barak chased all of the chariots and killed all of Jabin's men except Sisera who ran away on foot.

It is interesting that God is always faithful. Even though the Israelites had turned away from Him, He still helped them in this battle. And the Lord fought this battle against all odds. The enemy had 900 iron chariots. The Israelites had no horses or great weapons, only swords. It was the Lord who gave the victory.

It is also interesting to see Deborah in this story. She heard from the Lord what He had planned to do and she trusted in Him. When she called Barak and told him what the Lord planned to do, he was still afraid and wanted Deborah to come with him. The nation of Israel was afraid of Sisera and his 900 chariots. But Deborah was willing to stand up, all alone if she had to and put her trust in what the Lord said to do.

In fact, when it came time to attack, it was Deborah who stood up and said it is time to go. She was not afraid, but put her full trust in the Lord. How we need more boys and girls to grow up to become men and women like Deborah who are willing to stand up for what is right in our world today!

Sometimes it seems like we are going against a strong enemy. Maybe he is stronger than us. But our God is much stronger than any enemy that could ever face us. Even with 900 iron chariots. If God is on our side then we can win any battle. **God wants us to trust in Him even when no one else will.**

## 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

ours eyes and jump off of a cliff. He asks us to open our eyes and see 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 couldn't 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.

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

Deborah is an example of someone who trusted God. Even though her people had turned away from God, she followed Him still. She heard from the Lord and trusted Him to do what He had told her. She even went to battle because she knew God would prosper them.

Sometimes it can seem like no one else in the world believes in God except us. But if we believe He can still use us and do great things through our lives, then He will certainly do it. We just have to follow God and listen like Deborah did. **God wants us to trust in Him even when no one else will.**

When just one person follows God, God can do great miracles just like He did in the battle with Sisera. To us it may seem like the odds are against us but God can turn any situation around. God can help us do anything we commit to Him. He can help us at



school, give us courage, heal us, protect us, or use us to help others. No one can defeat God and if we are on God's side and submit to Him, God can work even the bad things into good for His children. Maybe there are some Deborahs in our class today who the Lord will use mightily in this time. **God wants us to trust in Him even when no one else will.**

## **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. Not all of the kids must participate, but all must watch so the comparison may be drawn.

How are the blindfolded and seeing partners like us following God? When we don't 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 to do so.

Template - God's Blindfold

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