

# JUDGES

## **“Deborah the Judge – Barack the General”**

Series Objective:

Students will learn:

- The story of how God used Deborah to save God’s people
- The story of how Samson defeated the Philistines
- The story of Ruth and Naomi
- The story of Ruth and Boaz

Series Theme Verse: “The Lord will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples in his faithfulness.” – Psalm 96:13

Lesson Objective: For students to understand that God is the one who rescues us, and that God used Judges to rescue the people of God.

Lesson Passage: Judges 4:1-16

Materials Needed: Bibles, Series Theme Verse on poster, a picture of a palm tree, a picture of a chariot, roll of toilet paper, masking tape, newspaper

Lesson Plan: Remind students that God would choose people to lead God’s people as they grew together as the community of God. We have talked about Moses and Joshua, but after Joshua’s death, we turn to the stories of a group of people who were called Judges. God would choose Judges to lead Israel whenever Israel had been taken over by groups of people who did not love God, kind of like how the Egyptians made the Israelites into slaves and God used Moses to free Israel from Egypt. Today we are going to look at the story of one of the best Judges who helped save Israel from Canaanites.

Talking Points: Judges 4:1-16

- When Israel did bad things in the eyes of God, who did God allow to take over Israel? (The Canaanites)
- When the people of Israel were in slavery to the King of Canaan, what was their response? (They cried out to God, they asked God to save them)
- How many chariots did the king of Canaan have? (900! You might show the kids a picture of a chariot on your phone or preprinted out)
  - It would be impossible for the people of Israel to win a battle against 900 chariots, right?!
- How long was Israel under the rule of Canaan? (20 years)
- God used a Prophetess to be the next leader or Judge of Israel, what was her name? (Deborah)
  - A Prophetess was someone who spoke for God. God would speak to Deborah and she would tell the people what God said.

- Where did Deborah judge or settle disputes of the people from? (Under a palm tree. You might show the kids what a palm tree looks like and the shade it would give Deborah)
- God tells Deborah how to defeat the Canaanites and save the people of Israel from their slavery, who does Deborah summon or call to explain the plan to? (Barak)
- What was the plan? (10,000 soldiers of Israel would march to a mountain. When the Canaanite commander heard Israel's troops were marching he would come out with his 900 chariots to attack Israel, but God would give Barak and Israel the victory over Sisera and the Canaanites)
- Was Barak confident in God's plan? (No, he said he would not lead the army unless Deborah went with him)
  - Invite a volunteer up. Wrap the roll of toilet paper around their wrist to bind the wrists together with just one loop of toilet paper.
  - Ask them to break out of their binding...they can do it easily.
  - Now wrap their wrists again, looping the toilet paper numerous times so that they cannot breakout.
  - Ask them to break out of the binding.
  - Just like the toilet paper was stronger the more there was, Barak's faith was strengthened when he was accompanied by Deborah.
  - Sometimes, we need the help of others to strengthen our faith in God.
- Does Deborah go with Barak? (Yes, but because of his lack of faith in God's plan, Barak would no longer get the glory for the victory)
- What did Sisera, the leader of the Canaanite army do when he was told that Israel's army was marching to the Mountain of Tabor for war? (He summoned all his chariots and army to the river by the mountain to fight Israel)
  - 10,000 soldiers for Israel against 900 chariots AND an army for the Canaanites...who do you think will win?
- Who told the Israelite army to attack (vs 14), was it the leader of the army, Barak, or Deborah? (Deborah)
- How did the battle happen? (Israel charged down the mountain at the iron chariots, they had no chance of winning, but God was fighting with Israel and the chariots were overrun by the Israelites. In fact, they army of Sisera fled on foot because they were losing so badly. The Bible says God and Israel routed or totally destroyed the army of the Canaanites. Sisera got away, but not for long, he would be caught and die as his troops did.)
  - Some people believe that God used a great storm and the mud by the river to bog down the heavy chariots and cause them to be stuck so Israel would not have to fight against the chariots. (Judges 5:20-21)

#### The Story Retold:

- Remind students that Barak refused to go fight without Deborah accompanying him.
- Remind students that sometimes our faith is lacking like Barak's, but we need to look for support from our Christian friends.
- Have students group in pairs or trios behind a line of masking tape in the room.
- Give each pair or trio two sheets of newspaper.

- Explain to students that they must get across the room and back as a team, but the catch is they can only stand on newspaper.
- Let them figure out how to get across the room and back as a team using only two sheets of newspaper.
- If a student on a team ends up touching the carpet, make them start over.
- Once the relay is completed, remind students that we need each other as we grow in our faith journeys.
- Barack needed Deborah to go with him and though he did not receive the glory for the victory, he saw God help Israel win a battle that should have been impossible to win.
- His faith grew because Deborah went with him and he led the battle.

#### The Story and Me:

- Have the memory verse for the unit written on a piece of poster board.
- Have the students sit in a big circle on the floor.
- Read the memory verse to the students.
- Explain to students that the memory verse tells us that God is our judge and we need to live faithfully to God.
- Ask students ways they can live faithfully to God?
- Now have the group say the memory verse together.
- Have the boys say the verse together.
- Have the girls say the verse together.
- Go around the circle and have each individual child say the memory verse.