Preschool–Grade 6

Deborah and Barak

Sunday School Lesson for Kindergarten to 2nd Grade, 45 minutes

Main point: God goes before us, so we can obey Him with courage.
Bible passage: Judges 4:1–24. Read it before class.
Memory verse: "And Deborah said unto Barak, Up; for this is the day in which the LORD hath delivered Sisera into thine hand: is not the LORD gone out before thee? So Barak went down from mount Tabor, and ten thousand men after him." *Judges 4:14 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible, 7 paper strips, a marker, tape, a few chairs, pillows or boxes, crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: write the memory verse on the 7 paper strips (see part 4). Set the chairs, pillows or boxes in a twisty path across the room. Put bookmarks in your Bible at Judges 4:8 and Judges 4:14.

1. Opening game: I'll Go First (5 minutes)

Kids line up at the start of the twisty path. Walk the path first, slowly, showing the way around every chair and pillow. The kids follow right behind you. Then ask: *Was it easier to go because I went first and showed you the way?* Say: "Today we will hear about a time when God went first, ahead of His people."

2. Bible story: God Goes Before Barak (10 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to Judges 4, so the kids can see the story comes from God's Word. Tell it in your own words:

The children of Israel stopped obeying God and did evil again (Judges 4:1). So God let a king named **Jabin** rule over them. The captain of Jabin's army was a man named **Sisera** (4:2). Sisera had 900 **chariots** of iron. A chariot is a cart with wheels, pulled by horses, for battle. For 20 years, Jabin was very hard and cruel to Israel. So the children of Israel cried out to the LORD for help (4:3).

At that time a woman named **Deborah** judged Israel. That means she led God's people and helped them settle what was right (4:4). Deborah was a **prophetess**, a woman who told people God's words (4:4). She **dwelt**, or lived, under a palm tree, called the palm tree of Deborah, in the hills of mount Ephraim. The people came to her there to help them decide what was right (4:5).

Deborah sent for a man named **Barak**. She told him what God had commanded: Barak must take ten thousand men to mount Tabor. God would bring Sisera and his chariots to the river Kishon, and God would give Sisera into Barak's hand (4:6–7).

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The story continues: **Read Judges 4:8 from your Bible.** Barak said, "If thou wilt go with me, then I will go: but if thou wilt not go with me, then I will not go." Say: "Barak would only go if Deborah went too!" Deborah said, "I will surely go with thee" (4:9). But she told him that God would give Sisera into the hand of a woman (4:9). So Deborah went with Barak (4:9–10).

Sisera came with all 900 chariots to the river Kishon (4:13). **Read Judges 4:14 from your Bible.** Deborah said, "Up; for this is the day..." and "is not the LORD gone out before thee?" Say: "That means, 'Get up and go! God has already gone out ahead of you!'" So Barak went down from mount Tabor, with ten thousand men behind him (4:14).

And the LORD **discomfited** Sisera. That means God made Sisera's army all mixed up and beaten (4:15). Sisera jumped down off his chariot and ran away on his feet (4:15)! Barak chased the army (4:16). Sisera ran to the tent of a woman named **Jael**. He hid there, and he died there (4:17, 4:22). It happened just as God had said: Sisera was given into the hand of a woman (4:9). That day God **subdued**, or beat, king Jabin before the children of Israel (4:23).

3. Questions to ask (5 minutes)

1. Where did Deborah sit when people came to her? *(Under the palm tree of Deborah, Judges 4:5)*
2. How many chariots of iron did Sisera have? *(900, 4:3)*
3. What did Barak say he would do if Deborah did not go with him? *(He would not go, 4:8)*
4. Who went out before Barak? *(The LORD, 4:14)*
5. Who won the battle? *(The LORD beat Sisera's army, 4:15, 4:23)*

4. Memory verse: March Up the Mountain (5 minutes)

Tape the 7 strips up in order: *And Deborah said unto Barak, / Up; for this is the day / in which the LORD hath delivered / Sisera into thine hand: / is not the LORD gone out before thee? / So Barak went down from mount Tabor, / and ten thousand men after him. Judges 4:14.* Explain the old words: **up** means get up and go; **delivered Sisera into thine hand** means God has given you the win over Sisera; **gone out before thee** means gone ahead of you. Read the verse together, marching in place. Then take one strip away and read it again. Keep taking strips away, one each time, until the kids can say the whole verse by themselves.

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5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "God went before Barak, and God goes before us too. God loves you very much. But everyone has done wrong things. The Bible calls that sin: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means none of us is as good as God. Jesus is God who came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus died for our sins, He was buried, and He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! The Bible tells us how to obey the gospel, the good news about Jesus: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) To **repent** means we are sorry for our sin and we turn away from it. We are **baptized**, buried all the way under the water, in Jesus' name, so our sins are washed away (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). **Remission** means God takes our sins away. And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, His own Spirit, and we speak in other tongues, words God gives us, just like the believers did in the Bible (Acts 2:4)."
Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.
This week: when you have to do something hard that is right, say, "God goes before me!" Then do it.

6. Activity (10–15 minutes)

Choose one: the **Deborah word search** (vbshq.com/puzzles/deborah-word-search), crossword, maze or worksheet, the craft (vbshq.com/crafts/deborah-craft), or **Up to Mount Tabor:** pick one corner of the room to be mount Tabor and one to be the river Kishon. Kids wait on "mount Tabor." Ask a question from part 3. When a child answers, everyone shouts, "Up!" and marches down to the "river Kishon" and back up again.

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You that You go before us. Help us obey You with courage, even when it is hard. Thank You for loving us and coming to save us in Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a child asks how Sisera died: answer simply. The Bible says he hid in Jael's tent and died there (Judges 4:17, 4:22). Judges 4:21 tells how; it is not told to young children here. God gave Israel the victory, just as He said (4:9, 4:14).

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