



LESSON 1 FOR LEADERS

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Can Work through Unlikely People

SCRIPTURE: [Judges 4–5](#)

WORD OF WONDER: [From Joshua 1:9](#)

As a “girl dad” four times over, I’m always intrigued by the biblical stories that highlight women of faith. Now, don’t get me wrong—I love football, red meat, and Gladiator just as much as the next guy. But I do have a soft spot for the heroines of Scripture.

There was nothing soft, however, about Deborah. Check out [Judges 4–5](#). This woman was a lean, mean, judgin’ machine! As the only female judge in the book of Judges, she thrived in a male-dominated society and proved she was just as capable—and often more so!—than the men of her era. And after her resounding victory over Canaanite king Jabin’s army, it was Jael, another woman, who dealt the final blow to Jabin’s fleeing general with a tent peg!

Deborah and Jael were unlikely heroines because women had far less social clout in this time. But choosing those who might seem unsuitable is God’s *modus operandi*. He loves working through unlikely people.

Aren’t you glad for that? Because it’s so easy to dismiss ourselves as unfit for service in God’s kingdom.

I’m not gifted enough.

My sins and shortcomings are too great.

I’m just so ... regular.

If you’ve ever felt like that (and we all have), you’re qualified to serve the Lord! He displays His power most prominently through weak human vessels ([2 Corinthians 12:9](#)). He puts His perfect wisdom on display in situations that seem impossible to us ([1 Corinthians 1:25](#)).

If you’re feeling pretty unlikely this week ... get ready. Because God will work through you!

—Josh Cooley

Children’s Minister and Author

Contributor to Wonder Ink

10:45 Service

LESSON 1 FOR LEADERS

DEBORAH AND BARAK

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

Deborah was a judge and prophet who led Israel after Ehud. Barak was a commander summoned by Deborah to fight Jabin, a Canaanite king, and his general Sisera. Jael was the wife of Heber the Kenite. Kenites were nomadic people descended from Moses' brother-in-law Hobab.

WHAT?

Jabin oppressed the Israelites after God's people continued to do evil in God's eyes. They cried out to God, who raised up Deborah and Barak to confront Sisera, Jabin's commander. God worked through Jael, a Kenite, to defeat Sisera, breaking Jabin's hold on the Israelites and bringing peace.

WHERE?

Mount Tabor was located well north of Jerusalem and west of the southern tip of the Sea of Galilee. It overlooked an important crossroads in the Jezreel Valley, so many people coveted control of the area. Jael lived near Kedesh, south of the Sea of Galilee.

WHEN?

The time Judges describes comes after the Israelites entered the Promised Land and before their first king. During this time, "everyone did as they saw fit" ([Judges 21:25, NIV](#)). God would raise up leaders (judges) to deliver His people, who would soon return to evil after each leader died.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

[Judges 4–5](#) highlights how God works through unlikely people to fulfill His promises. God faithfully does this throughout His big story. Jesus' own genealogy is full of wayward, broken people. But this imperfect line leads to a baby in a manger who is the Messiah.



Curiosity

LESSON 1 **EARLY CHILDHOOD**

Spark curiosity, encourage exploration, and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

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Activity: Musical Instruments

SUPPLIES: toy musical instruments

Set out toy musical instruments. Greet the kids warmly and welcome them to church.

Welcome! Today we're going to learn that God gave His people victory! That means they won! When they won the battle, they celebrated with a victory song. Let's have some fun with musical instruments and celebrate God.

Let the kids play with the musical instruments and encourage them to say, "Yay, God!"



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Belief

LESSON 1 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Guide kids into knowing God more deeply, exploring His big story, and marveling at His wonder.

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Prayer of Invitation

Before entering into God's big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use the prayer here or your own words: **God, please help us listen to what You have to say to us today. We invite You to open our hearts and minds as we learn from Your Word. May the unlikely people You chose in today's story remind us of what You can do and how You care. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

God's Big Story

Pull out the Bible

Ask: What is this called? The Bible

Ask: Why is the Bible important? Because it is God's word. Everything in it is true. It really happened.

Tell the Bible Story

The Beginner's Bible, pages 136-139 Deborah

Leads the Way

Word of Wonder

WORD OF WONDER

**Be strong and brave. Do not be afraid. God
will be with you wherever you go.**

— Joshua 1:9

Encourage the kids to do the motions and say the verse with you.

Gather kids to discuss these questions:

- **When are times that we might feel afraid and need to remember that God will be with us?**
- **How does God help us be strong and brave?**



Identity

LESSON 1 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Create space for God to remind kids they are known, loved, led, and their lives can tell of God's wonder.

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Activity: Where is Sisera?

SUPPLIES: Sisera figure used in God's Big Story activity

In God's big story, God worked through the unlikely people of Barak and Deborah to find Sisera, the enemy's army leader, and win victory over him. Let's play a game where we try to find Sisera.

Hold up the toy person you used to represent Sisera during the God's Big Story activity, then hide him somewhere around the room when kids aren't watching. Let toddlers take turns finding Sisera and bringing him back to you to hide again.

Prayer and Blessing

After the kids finish their activity, pray together, thanking God for working through us as unlikely people.

God, thank You for working through unlikely people in incredible ways. Help us to always be willing to do what You ask, to help in ways You want us to help, and to say the things You want us to say. We love You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Encourage the kids to hold their hands out in front of them, with palms up, as if their hands were open to receive something. Tell them to listen and receive the blessing as you speak it over them.

Blessing: May you always remember to do what God asks you to do—to help in ways God asks you to help and to speak in ways God wants you to speak. Remember that God can work through unlikely

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people to do great things!