



## 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

9:00 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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## Play Stations

**SUPPLIES:** musical instruments, coloring utensils

**Wonder Ink RESOURCES:** [Deborah and Barak Coloring Sheet](#) (1 per kid)

Greet kids warmly as they arrive and briefly explain the play stations. Invite them to play at any of the play stations.

**Welcome to church!** While we're getting ready to start, you can play at any of these stations to help get ready for our lesson today. Do you have any ideas of what we'll be learning about today?

### Play Station: Victory Song Music

**Set-up:** Set out different musical instruments for kids to play with.

**Play:** Encourage kids to play with the different musical instruments. Ask them what they think a victory song might sound like and see if they can play a victory song with the different instruments.

### Play Station: Deborah and Barak Coloring Sheet

**Set-up:** Print one copy per kid of the [Coloring Sheet](#). Set out the [Coloring Sheets](#) and coloring utensils.

**Play:** Let the kids color. The kids can also turn the sheet over and draw a picture of someone who has helped them.



9:00 Service

## 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

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- **Deborah:** What was Deborah’s job? *(a prophetess and judge for God’s people)*
- **Deborah:** Have you ever had an unlikely person help you?
- **Barak:** Was Barak brave at first, or did he hesitate? *(He hesitated.)*
- **Barak:** Can you think of a time you weren’t brave?
- **King Jabin:** Was King Jabin a powerful or weak king? *(powerful)*
- **King Jabin:** Can you think of a time that God helped you be brave?
- **Sisera:** What did God make Sisera’s army do? *(become scared and worried)*

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- **Sisera:** How might God work through you to help someone?

Even though Deborah and Barak seemed like unlikely people to help God, God chose them to help achieve victory for God's people. God can work through unlikely people.

### 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?**



## Faith

### LESSON 1 EARLY CHILDHOOD

*Help kids see the wonder of God's story and how it connects to their own story.*

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#### Game: Pair Relays

**SUPPLIES:** chair, large plastic hoops (2), plastic eggs (2, optional), spoons (4, optional), inflated balloons (2, optional)

**God chose Deborah and Barak together to help Him win the victory! We're going to play a game where you will work in pairs to win a victory.**

Divide the group into two smaller groups and then ask kids to pair up with another kid in their group. Make sure there are the same number of pairs in each group. Ask kids to line up. Each group should stand in one line, with pairs standing side by side. Set out a chair on the other side of the room.

**For the first relay, you and your partner must roll a hoop down and around the chair before rolling it back. Both of you must keep one hand on the hoop, and the hoop must be continually touching the floor. When you get back to your team, you can pass the hoop to the next pair. The first team to have all of their pairs successfully move the hoop down and back will win. If a pair lets go of a hoop, that pair has to come back to the starting line and begin again.**

Play other relays as time permits such as:

- Two-person egg relay: pairs cross the room holding a plastic egg between two spoons.
- Over/under relay: pairs cross the room by alternating crawling under their partners' legs.
- Wheelbarrow relay: pairs cross the room as "wheelbarrow" and "wheelbarrow pusher" (one kid walks on her hands while the other kid holds up her feet).
- Balloon sandwich relay: pairs cross the room holding a balloon between their backs.

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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**Responding in Worship: Watercolor Response**

**SUPPLIES:** watercolors (several trays for kids to share), paintbrushes (1 per kid), paper (1 sheet per kid), cups of water (several for kids to share), paper towels

Set out watercolors, paintbrushes, paper, cups of water, and paper towels. When ready to begin the activity, give each child a paintbrush and a sheet of paper.

**God can work through unlikely people. God even works through people like us! Let's spend some time thinking about how God might work through unlikely people like us! I'm going to give you some paper and watercolors, and then I'll ask you some questions. As I ask a question, you can paint a picture of your answer.**

**The first question is: when you think of a hard situation in your life—like a fight with a sibling, or trouble obeying parents, or something you're worried about or scared of—what do you think God might ask you to do?** Give kids time to process and think about this answer and then encourage them to paint on their paper what they think God might ask them to do.

After a few moments, ask kids the second question and give them time to paint their responses.

**Our next question is: as you think of the same situation, what do you think God might ask you to say? Paint a picture of what God might ask you to say.**

After a few moments, ask kids the third question and give them time to paint their responses.

**The last question is: what do you think He might ask you to help with? Paint a picture of how God**



## 9:00 Service

might ask you to help in this situation.

**You did a great job painting! We never know how God might work through us! Even if you feel like you are an unlikely person, God can do things through you in ways you can't even imagine!**

**Leader Tip:** If kids struggle with thinking of responses or painting pictures, help them brainstorm. Remind them that their worshipful responses don't have to be particular or fully-defined: they can be abstract. They can simply paint colors and lines and swirls while thinking about their answers to the questions!

### 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 people to do great things!