

# Deborah's Courage

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Wednesday Plan

SCRIPTURE

Judges 4–5

MEMORY VERSE

Judges 4:14

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*God uses whoever trusts him, not whoever looks the part.*

## For the Teacher

Wednesday night reinforces what the kids learned on Sunday. Don't re-teach the whole lesson — they heard it. Your job tonight is to make it stick through review, movement, and prayer.

### KEY TRUTH

God uses whoever trusts him, not whoever looks the part.

**Same bottom line as Sunday, by design.** Wednesday uses the exact same sentence the kids heard on Sunday. Repeat it. Have them say it back. Don't paraphrase or soften it — the repetition is the point. A kid who hears the same sentence twice in three days will remember it.

**Tonight is kinetic.** Sunday was reading and discussion. Wednesday is hands. The whole back half of class is a chain-building game where the kids physically write out who God used and why, and pass encouragement to each other the way Deborah passed it to Barak. Don't try to make this quiet.

**What to skip.** Don't re-read all of Judges 4. The kids did the heavy lifting Sunday. Tonight you'll re-read 4:6–9 (Deborah and Barak) and 4:14 (the memory verse). If a kid wasn't there Sunday, give them a one-sentence catch-up ("Israel was being crushed by an enemy. God raised up a woman named Deborah to lead them. She picked a general named Barak who was too scared to go without her, and a foreign woman named Jael ended the war"), then move on.

**Energy management.** The encouragement chain gets loud — kids will be writing, calling things out to each other, taping links together. That's fine. Bring them back down for the closing prayer and take-home card.

### MATERIALS

- Bibles for every student
- Whiteboard or large paper, markers
- Strips of colored paper, roughly 1 inch by 8 inches (about fifteen per student)
- Tape or stapler
- Pencils
- **Whoever Trusts** prayer cards (printed in advance from this week's activities)

## 1. Gather

Welcome the kids back. Tell them:

### SAY

*On Sunday we learned one big idea, and we're going to learn it again tonight. I want you to say it with me: God uses whoever trusts him, not whoever looks the part.*

Have them say it back. Then again, louder. Then in a whisper.

Write it on the board.

Tell them tonight is going to be different from Sunday — they're going to use their hands, not just their mouths. But first, a quick review.

## 2. The Story

**Quick Review**

ASK

*Who can tell me the names of the three people God used in Sunday's story?*

Let two or three kids answer. Steer toward: *Deborah, Barak, Jael*. Write the three names on the board.

ASK

*Why was each of them a surprising choice?*

You're looking for: *Deborah was a woman, and women didn't usually lead armies. Barak was a general but he was scared. Jael wasn't even an Israelite — she was a foreign woman in a tent*. Help them get there.

**Re-Read Judges 4:6–9**

Have everyone open to Judges 4. Pick a confident reader.

**Judges 4:6–9**

ASK

*What did Barak say he would do, and what did he say he wouldn't do? And how did Deborah respond?*

*Barak would go if Deborah went with him; he wouldn't go if she didn't. Deborah didn't refuse — she went with him. The whole story is two people who needed each other to be brave.*

**The Memory Verse**

Have everyone turn to Judges 4:14. Pick a confident reader and have them read it slowly.

**Judges 4:14**

ASK

*What did Deborah say to Barak right before the battle started?*

*"Up! The LORD has given Sisera into your hand. Does not the LORD go out before you?"*  
Write the last line on the board:

**"Does not the LORD go out before you?"**

ASK

*Whose strength was going to win the battle? Barak's? Deborah's? The ten thousand soldiers'?*

*God's. The LORD goes out before them. That's why they could fight. That's why they won.*  
Say the bottom line again, with them: *God uses whoever trusts him, not whoever looks the part.*

**3. The Work****The Encouragement Chain**

Tell the kids that Deborah's job, more than anything else, was to *encourage* — to put courage *into* the people God called. Barak wouldn't have gone without her. The whole battle was won because one person kept telling another person *the LORD goes before you*.

Tonight they're going to do what Deborah did.

Hand each kid a stack of paper strips, a marker, and tape (or use one stapler at the front).

### Round 1 — The three names.

Have each kid write three strips, one each:

1. **Deborah trusted God. God used her.**
2. **Barak was scared. God used him anyway.**
3. **Jael wasn't an Israelite. God used her.**

As they finish each strip, link them into a chain — loop a strip through the previous link before taping it closed. By the end of this round each kid has a three-link chain.

#### NOTE

Walk around helping the younger kids tape their loops without the chain falling apart. The wording on the strips matters more than neat handwriting — don't slow them down to fix lettering.

### Round 2 — Encouragement.

Now have each kid write five more strips. On each strip, they write one sentence they could say to a friend who was scared to do the right thing. Examples to put on the board:

- *God goes before you.*
- *You can be brave because God is with you.*
- *God uses people who trust him.*
- *You don't have to be strong — God is.*
- *I'll go with you.*

As they finish each strip, they add it to their chain. The chain keeps growing.

### Round 3 — Trade.

When everyone has a chain of at least eight links, tell them to *pull off two of their encouragement links* and trade them with two other kids. They give two away; they receive two. Now their chain has links other kids wrote — encouragement passed from one person to another, like Deborah did with Barak.

### Bringing It Back

Gather the kids back together with their chains. Ask:

#### ASK

*Did somebody hand you a link tonight that you needed? Read one out loud.*

Let three or four kids read a link from their chain. Then say:

#### SAY

*Deborah's job was to put courage into Barak. Your job — the whole rest of your life — is to put courage into the people God puts near you. The kid at school who's scared. The friend who knows what's right but is afraid to do it. The little brother who needs somebody to say God goes before you. That's what Deborah did. That's what God uses people for.*

## 4. The Point

### Whoever Trusts Prayer Card

Hand out the **Whoever Trusts** prayer cards. Have each student fill in the prompt:

*God, use me to encourage \_\_\_\_\_ this week.*

Tell them to put a real person's name in the blank — somebody at school, in their family, or at church. They'll take the card home and put it somewhere they'll see it during the week.

**NOTE**

While they fill out the cards, walk around. If a kid is stuck, ask them: "Who do you know who needs to hear that God is with them?" Help them put a name on it.

**Memory Verse and Closing**

When they're done, have everyone come back together and turn to Judges 4:14:

**SCRIPTURE**

*Judges 4:14*

*And Deborah said to Barak, "Up! For this is the day in which the LORD has given Sisera into your hand. Does not the LORD go out before you?"*

Read it together once. Then say the bottom line one final time, with the kids:

**SAY**

*God uses whoever trusts him, not whoever looks the part.*

Close in prayer:

**PRAY**

*God, you used Deborah and Barak and Jael — three people nobody expected. Use us this week. When we feel like we're the wrong person, remind us that you don't pick the way we pick. Make us brave enough to trust you, and brave enough to put courage into somebody else. Amen.*