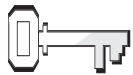


Women Take the Lead



References

Judges 4, 5;
*Patriarchs and
Prophets*, p. 545



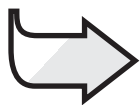
Memory Verse

“Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king” (1 Peter 2:17, NIV).



Objectives

The children will:
Know that God has put certain people in places of authority.
Feel respect for those whom God places in positions of authority.
Respond by trusting the people that God has placed in their lives.



The Message

We respect leaders
God has placed in authority.

Monthly Theme

We learn what is important in life.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Once again the Israelites, God’s chosen people, begin worshipping idols. King Jabin and his general, Sisera, oppress Israel for 20 years. Afraid of Sisera’s 900 iron chariots, the Israelites cry out to God for deliverance. God chooses Deborah to be a judge for the people of Israel. The people respect Deborah’s advice. By following her advice, the people are victorious over Sisera. God still places people in leadership today. He asks us to respect them and what they do for Him.

This is a lesson about community.

The Israelites accepted Deborah’s leadership and followed her guidance. The result was harmony and freedom for God’s people. God still guides our church leaders today. The whole community benefits when we cooperate, support, and work together with them.

Teacher Enrichment

Deborah was the fifth judge of Israel, the only woman and the only judge mentioned as possessing the prophetic gift.

Sisera may have been king of the city of Harosheth, which was 16 miles northwest of Megiddo. Here the plain of Jezreel linked to the coastal plain of Acre which was ideal for his 900 iron chariots.

Mount Tabor is a hill (1,929 ft.; 588 m.), about 5.5 miles (8.8 km) east of Nazareth. Its central location made it a natural rallying place for the northern tribes, and its height made it easy to defend.

A common Oriental practice among Bedouins was that whoever had eaten or drunk in a house was entitled to protection, even if it was the house of an enemy. By giving Sisera food, Jael lulled him into a false sense of security. (Summarized from *The SDA Bible Commentary* on Judges 4.)

Room Decorations

Bulletin board suggestions include the following:

1. Church structure. How the local church and the worldwide church are structured. Include pictures of church leaders.
2. Bible-times map. Each week mark the places mentioned in the story.
3. Display a variety of lights. Entitle it: “Let your light shine.”

Create a basic outdoor scene. Draw a palm tree or have a potted palm tree or bring in branches and “plant” them in pots. Put a bench near the tree.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>Building Bridges</i> B. <i>Living Leaders</i> C. <i>Leaderless</i>	three stickers leaders such as pastor, teacher, police officer, head deacon/deaconess, school principal, etc. board game (see activity)
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> offering container large sheet of paper or chalkboard, marker or chalk
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	Bible-times costumes, tape recorder (optional) beanbag, chalkboard, chalk Bibles, paper, pencils
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Respecting Leaders</i>	basket, paper, pencils
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Leader Greeting</i>	card stock, crayons/markers

***Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.**

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Listen to last week’s memory verse and encourage the children to share any experiences from last week’s lesson study. Have them begin the readiness activity of your choice.



Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- three stickers

A. Building Bridges

In advance, place a sticker on the bottom of the seat of each of three chairs. Say: **Three people who have a sticker under their chair are each going to lead an expedition.** Divide the remaining children into three groups. **Imagine that our room is a wide river. Each team is to think of ways to get your team across the river without getting wet. The leader will decide to accept or reject your ideas. The only thing you have to help you is a rope that is just the width of the room.** Allow time for discussion, then ask each group to explain/demonstrate how they would get across.

Debriefing

Ask: **How easy was it to work together?** (easy, difficult, impossible) **Did you always listen to your leader? Why? What does it mean to be a leader?** (to listen, guide, direct) **God calls some people to be leaders. Their job is to help others. We can help them by supporting and respecting them. Today’s message is:**



WE RESPECT LEADERS GOD HAS PLACED IN AUTHORITY.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- leaders such as pastor, elder, head deacon/deaconess, school principal, teacher, police officer, etc.

B. Living Leaders

Prior to Sabbath School ask the invitees to be prepared to talk about the following:

- their work
- what it means to be a leader
- what part God plays in their life
- how the children can show respect

Say: **This morning we have some special guests. I am going to ask them some questions about what they do. Then it is your turn to ask questions.** Allow time for the children to ask their questions.

Debriefing

Thank the guests for coming. Ask: **What did you learn about our guests? What does it mean to be a leader? Is everyone asked to be a leader? Why? In our lesson today we will learn about a woman leader. Let’s say today’s message:**



WE RESPECT LEADERS GOD HAS PLACED IN AUTHORITY.

C. Leaderless

In advance, set up the game. If it is a game that some of the children may know, leave out some of the pieces (or mix in pieces from another game). Say: **I have a new game, but I am not too sure how to play it. Can you help me?** Let the children make suggestions.

Debriefing

Ask: **What was the problem with this game?** (No rules. Do not know how to play it. Missing pieces.) **Why can't we play this game?** (missing pieces) **What is missing?** **How do you feel when you do not know what to do?** (confused, frustrated) **In our lesson today God sent the Israelites a leader to tell them what to do. God gives us leaders today to guide us. Let's say today's message together:**



WE RESPECT LEADERS GOD HAS PLACED IN AUTHORITY.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- board game with several pieces missing and no directions

Prayer and Praise



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing from last week's lesson study and review last week's memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

- "Jesus Bids Us Shine" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 133)
- "We Are His Hands" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 129)
- "The Family of God" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 139)
- "Teach Me, Lord" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 110)
- "Come Into His Presence" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 14)



Mission

Share a story from *Children's Mission*. Emphasize community.



Offering

When we give our offering, God guides our leaders to spend it wisely. This quarter the money is going to (name special projects).



Prayer

Say: **Let's list leaders or people in authority you think of.** (Include all levels of leadership from the local church to the government.) **Let us pray for each of these leaders.** Invite each child to say a sentence prayer for a leader. Use this list for the rest of the month.

You Need:

- offering container

You Need:

- large sheet of paper or chalkboard
- marker or chalk

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- Bible-times costumes
- tape recorder (optional)

Experiencing the Story

Characters: Deborah, Barak, Isrealites/soldiers, Jael, Sisera, voice of God

Encourage the children to act out the story as you read or tell it. It will be helpful to have another adult lead the children in the actions. The children can mime coming to Deborah under the palm tree, and then put on swords or helmets to represent joining Barak's army. Record God's words in advance, or have another teacher read them.

Setting the scene:

Say: **God gave Deborah a special job—to lead Israel. It was a hard job. The people did not obey God, and they had been worshiping idols. Twenty years earlier King Jabin had attacked Israel and made the people his slaves. Now everyone lived in fear of the king and his general, Sisera, who had 900 chariots of iron.**

Read or tell the story.

[Begin with Deborah sitting under the palm tree.] Deborah was a judge. She did not have a place in a courthouse, but sat outside under a palm tree. When people had a problem, they came to her to help them find a solution. *[Children come to Deborah and mime waiting in line, presenting a problem. Deborah listens carefully.]* They asked her for advice. Again and again she heard how the people were sorry for turning their backs on God and for worshiping idols. *[People look sad, say "Sorry."]* They asked Deborah to teach them to worship the true God. *[Deborah looks happy and points up to heaven. Leads*

people in prayer.]

One day God spoke to Deborah. "I have heard the prayers of My people. I will deliver them from slavery." *[Deborah looks startled and "listens."]* Deborah listened to God's instructions. *[Send someone to get Barak.]* She passed on the instructions to Barak. *[She looks as if explaining something to Barak.]*

"God commands you to take 10,000 men to Mount Tabor. He will lead Sisera into your hands."

Barak was afraid. *[He looks fearful and shakes head.]* He knew how cruel Sisera's army was. They had attacked his town. But Barak respected Deborah and knew that God spoke through her. *[Nod slowly in agreement.]*

"If you will go with me and my army, I will go," Barak replied to Deborah.

When Deborah agreed to go with him, God gave her a second message for Barak. *[Deborah nods in agreement.]*

"Because you want me to go with you, you will not have the honor of winning the battle. That honor will go to a woman." *[Army assembles behind Deborah and Barak and marches around the room.]*

Deborah, Barak, and the 10,000 soldiers did very little fighting. As Barak and his men went out to meet Sisera, God intervened. Sisera and his soldiers left their chariots and ran away. Barak and his men caught them and destroyed the army. *[Chase after imaginary army.]* In the confusion Sisera escaped.

Sisera traveled until he came to the tent of Jael. *[Run looking over shoulder and approach Jael fearfully.]* Her husband was one of his friends. Sisera thought he would be safe there for a while. Sisera asked Jael for something to eat and a place to hide while he rested. *[Sisera "eats," looking around; finally lies down.]*

Jael knew that Sisera was a wicked

man. While he slept she took his life. [Pretend to hammer something through a head.] Thus it was that Deborah's prophecy came true. A woman, Jael, defeated Sisera just as Deborah had said.

When Barak and his men came, Jael showed them that Sisera was dead. [Jael leads Barak to "dead" Sisera.] Everyone knew now that they were free from Sisera's cruel ways, and they praised God for the victory. [Form a procession and march around the room, shouting "Praise God, Praise God!"]

Debriefing

Ask: **How would you have reacted if Deborah had asked you to fight a powerful enemy who had ruled you for 20 years?** (afraid)

Why do you think Barak agreed to go? (He respected Deborah and knew that God was with her.)

How do you think Barak felt when he saw the enemy running away? (Ashamed that he had been afraid. In awe of God.)

God is still with our leaders today. Just as Barak respected Deborah, so we should respect our leaders. Let's say our message together:



WE RESPECT LEADERS GOD HAS PLACED IN AUTHORITY.

Memory Verse

Have the children stand in a circle. Write the memory verse where it can be seen easily by everyone.

Throw the beanbag to a child and say the first word of the memory verse. That child throws it to the next person and says the next word. Continue throwing the beanbag until the memory verse has been repeated several times. Remove a

You Need:

- beanbag
- chalkboard
- chalk

word from the chalkboard. Continue until all the words have been removed. Large group: form several groups and provide a leader for each. The memory verse is: **"Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king" (1Peter 2:17, NIV).**

Bible Study

Form six small groups. Team non-readers with a reader. (Adults assist as necessary.) Give each group a text. Say: **Look up your text. Each text will tell you something about Deborah. When you have read your text, rewrite it in your own words.** Allow time for each group to share their work.

Judges 4:4 (She was a prophetess, wife of Lappidoth, leader in Israel.)

Judges 4:5 (She held court and settled disputes—judged.)

Judges 4:6 (She sent Barak a message from God.)

Judges 4:9 (She went to battle with the army.)

Judges 4:14 (She encouraged Barak.)

Judges 5:3 (She praised God for saving them.)

Debriefing

Ask: **What did Deborah's work as a leader involve?** (She gave advice; helped people understand God's will; worked beside people; encouraged people; led people in praising God.)

If some of the leaders are still in your Sabbath School, ask them how this compares with their work today.

Can you think of leaders who do this today? Let's say today's message together:



WE RESPECT LEADERS GOD HAS PLACED IN AUTHORITY.

You Need:

- Bibles
- paper
- pencils

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- basket
- paper
- pencils

Respecting Leaders

Give each child a slip of paper.

Say: **On your piece of paper write the title or name of a leader. It can be one that we mentioned during our prayer time, such as the pastor, a police officer, teacher, or someone else. When you have written the name, fold your paper and put it in the basket.**

Mix the papers. Form small groups. Let each group pick one or two names.

Pick one or two names and see how many ways you can think of to show respect to this leader.

Is there anything you can do to help others show respect to this leader? Allow time for group discussion.

Debriefing

Ask: **Why should we show respect to people in authority?** (God places people in authority so they can help others.)

What should we do if we think leaders are not following what God wants us to do? Allow discussion time. **Let's look up Acts 5:29.** Read the text aloud.

We should always follow God rather than people. What can we do to help our leaders listen to God's voice?



(Pray for them.)

Let's say today's message together.

WE RESPECT LEADERS GOD HAS PLACED IN AUTHORITY.

4

Sharing the Lesson

Leader Greeting

Say: **God gives people authority to help others.**

Being a leader is not always easy. One way we can support our leaders is to pray for them.

Let's make a card and send it to a leader to tell them we are praying for them and to say thank you for their leadership.

Distribute the supplies and allow time. Collect the cards and send them yourself, or help the children address envelopes, if appropriate.

Debriefing

Ask: **To whom are you sending your card? Why did you choose that person?**

What do you think your leader needs you to pray about? Allow discussion time.

Let's say today's message together:



WE RESPECT LEADERS GOD HAS PLACED IN AUTHORITY.

Closing

Gather the children in a circle. Place the cards in the middle. Pray that God will bless the leaders who will receive them and help the children to respect people in authority.

You Need:

- card stock or construction paper
- crayons/markers

Women Take the Lead

References

Judges 4, 5;
Patriarchs and
Prophets, p. 545

Memory Verse

“Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king” (1 Peter 2:17, NIV).

The Message

We respect leaders God has placed in authority.

Have you any special jobs you do at home? Does your Mom or Dad ask you to do things? God has special work for each of us. He never asks us to do things that are too hard for us. Let's discover more about one person to whom God gave a special work.

God gave Deborah a special responsibility—to lead Israel. It was hard work! The people did not obey God. They worshiped idols instead.

Twenty years earlier King Jabin had attacked Israel. He won the battle and made the Israelites his slaves. Now everyone lived in fear of the king and his general, Sisera, who had 900 chariots of iron.

Deborah was called a judge. She did not have an office in a courthouse as judges do today. She sat outside under a palm tree. When people had a problem, they came to her to help them find a solution. They asked her for advice. Again and again she heard how the people were sorry for turning away from God and for worshiping idols. They asked

her to teach them to worship the true God.

One day God spoke to Deborah. “I have heard the prayers of My people. I will deliver them from slavery.”

Deborah listened to God's instructions.

She passed on the instructions to Barak: “God commands you to take 10,000 men to Mount Tabor. He will lead Sisera into your hands.”

Barak was afraid. He knew how cruel Sisera's army was. They had attacked his town. But Barak respected Deborah. He knew that God spoke through her.

“If you will go with me and my army, I will go,” Barak replied.

When Deborah agreed to go with him, God gave her a second message for Barak. “Because you want me to go with you, you will not have the honor of winning the battle. That honor will go to a woman.”

Deborah, Barak, and the 10,000 soldiers did very little fighting. As Barak and his men went out to meet Sisera, God intervened. Sisera and his army left their chariots and ran away. Barak and his men caught them and destroyed the army. But in the confusion, Sisera escaped.

Sisera traveled until he came to Jael's tent. Jael's husband was one of his friends. So Sisera thought he would be safe there for a while. Sisera asked Jael for something to eat and a place to hide while he rested.

Jael knew that Sisera was a wicked man. While he slept she killed him. And that is how Deborah's prophecy came true. A woman, Jael, killed Sisera; Barak didn't.

God uses a variety of people as leaders in His church: men and women, old and young, rich and poor. Children can be God's leaders too. The Bible says that in heaven “a little child will lead them” (Isaiah 11:6, NIV).

We need to listen to God's chosen leaders so we can gain *all* of the blessings He has in store for us. When God asks us to do something, we want to be ready to obey Him.



Daily Activities

Sabbath

- If possible, go for a walk with your family. While you are walking, play follow the leader. Take turns in leading the family along the path.
- Find a quiet place and read your lesson together.
- See how many church leaders your family can think of. Pray for one of them.

Sunday

- Fan-fold a piece of paper. Draw the outline of half a person. Be sure to go to the edge of the paper. Cut out the half person, but do not cut the folds at the hands and feet. When you open the folds, you should have a line of people.
- Find 1 Peter 2:17 and copy it onto the line of people. Put it where you can see and read it during the week.
- Pray for a leader in your school.

Monday

- For family worship, read and discuss Judges chapter 4. Name three people God used to defeat Israel's enemies.
- Find out three facts about palm trees. Then use clay or paper to make a palm tree.
- During family worship see how many other stories you can find that mention a palm tree.
- Pray for a leader in your local community.

Tuesday

- Deborah was the only woman judge during Bible times. Look up Exodus 15:20 and Esther 4:15, 16 to learn about other women leaders. How many other women leaders in the Bible can you name?
- Where would you go to see a judge today?

Find out five facts about what judges do today.

- Plan to visit your town hall or a courthouse with your parents.
- Pray for the judges in your community.

Wednesday

- Make a list of four ways to show respect to people in your family.
- Ask your Mom to help you make cookies. Use a people-shaped cookie cutter or shape the dough into people shapes. Share the cookies with a friend and explain why it is important to respect people in authority.
- Review your memory verse; then pray for the leaders in your family.

Thursday

- During family worship today, read and discuss Judges 5. Deborah and Barak sang a song to celebrate God's victory. Make up a song about how God has led you, or about Deborah and Barak. Share your song during family worship.
- Pray for the leaders of your country.

Friday

- For worship today, act out the story of Deborah with your family.
- Make a small circle on a piece of paper to represent your family. Make a bigger circle around it for your church family. Continue to make bigger circles around it for the different levels of authority in the church: your conference, union conference, division, and the General Conference. See how much you can find out about these different levels. Be ready to share what you have learned in Sabbath School.
- Pray for the leaders of our world church family.