

Deborah and Barak

BIBLE PASSAGE: Judges 4–5

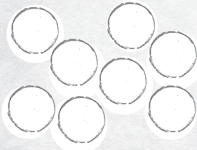
MAIN POINT: God's people needed someone to rescue them from their enemies.

KEY PASSAGE: Isaiah 33:22

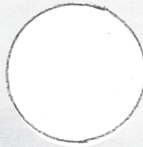
BIG PICTURE QUESTION: How does God accomplish His plan? God uses people for His glory and our good.

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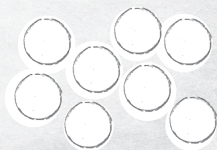
SMALL GROUP OPENING
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LARGE GROUP BIBLE STUDY
(25–30 MINUTES)
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SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES
(25–30 MINUTES)
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Leader BIBLE STUDY

The time of the judges continued after the death of Ehud. The Israelites fell into a continuous cycle of sin, bondage, deliverance, and peace. The people of Israel were oppressed by the king of Canaan. At this time, Deborah was the judge of Israel. Deborah sent for Barak and encouraged him to take up an army and fight the army of Canaan and its leader, Sisera.

Deborah reminded Barak that God would hand Sisera and his troops over to him. (Judg. 4:6-7) Barak agreed to go, but only if Deborah went with him. Deborah went, but she informed Barak that he would get no glory for the battle; God was going to use a woman to defeat Sisera.

When Barak went down from Mount Tabor with 10,000 men, “The Lord threw Sisera and all his army into confusion with the sword before Barak” (Judg. 4:15). Everyone in the army died, but Sisera escaped on foot.

Sisera fled to the tent of Jael, who invited him inside and gave him a drink. While Sisera slept, Jael drove a tent peg through his temple and he died.

Judges 5 records a victory song Deborah and Barak sang on that day, praising God for defeating the Canaanites. The land had rest for 40 years.

The Israelites’ sin had resulted in 20 years of defeat. God fought for the Israelites and used Deborah, Barak, and Jael to accomplish the Israelites’ victory over Canaan. As you teach kids this week, highlight the actions of Deborah and Barak, who willingly served God and used their gifts for His glory.

Use the Christ Connection to emphasize that God uses people and events to save us not only from our enemies, but to bring about our ultimate good: salvation through His Son, Jesus Christ.



MINISTRY GRID
training made simple

Additional resources for each session are available at gospelproject.com. For free training and session-by-session help, visit www.ministrygrid.com/web/thegospelproject.

The BIBLE STORY

Deborah and Barak

Judges 4–5

Ehud and Shamgar had been judges over Israel. After they died, the Israelites forgot about God. So God allowed the king of Canaan to overtake them. The commander of the king's army was named Sisera (SIS uh ruh). Sisera was cruel to the Israelites for 20 years. God's people remembered how good they had it when they loved and obeyed God. They cried out to God, "Save us!"

Deborah was the judge over Israel at this time. One day, Deborah called for Barak and said, "God wants you to gather 10,000 men. Lead them to Mount Tabor. God will help you defeat Sisera there."

Barak said to Deborah, "I will go if you will come with me. If you won't come, I'm not going."

"I'll go," Deborah said. "But you will receive no honor for the battle." So Deborah, Barak, and 10,000 men went to Mount Tabor. Sisera heard that Barak was at Mount Tabor, and he took his 900 chariots and all his men to fight.

"Barak, go! God will help you defeat Sisera today," Deborah said. Barak and his 10,000 men moved down the mountain toward Sisera and his army. The Lord confused Sisera and all of the army. Barak chased the chariots and the army, and everyone in the army was killed by the sword. None of them survived, but Sisera had escaped!

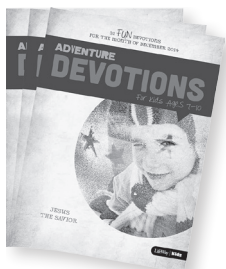
Sisera went to the tent of Jael (JAY uhl) because he and Jael's husband were friends. Jael said, "Come in. Don't be afraid." Jael gave Sisera something to drink and covered him with a rug. Sisera was so exhausted that he fell into a deep sleep.

Jael knew that Sisera was an evil man, an enemy of God. She took a tent peg and a hammer, and **she killed him while he slept.**

Barak arrived, looking for Sisera. Jael greeted him and said, “I will show you the man you are looking for.” Barak went into her tent and saw Sisera lying dead with a tent peg through his head.

That day, God allowed the Israelites to defeat the Canaanites. The Israelites had won the battle! Deborah and Barak sang a victory song. They praised God for helping them beat the Canaanites. The land was peaceful for 40 more years.

Christ Connection: God does what is for His glory and our good. (Psalm 115:3; Romans 8:28) God fought for the Israelites and used Deborah, Barak, and Jael to defeat Canaan. In a similar way, God uses people and events to not only save us from our enemies, but to bring about our ultimate good: salvation through His Son, Jesus Christ.



**WANT TO
DISCOVER
GOD'S WORD?
GET
BIBLE EXPRESS!**

Invite kids to check out this week's devotionals to discover that judges like Deborah led the people to love and serve God by obeying His Word. Later, David asked God, "Guide me in Your truth and teach me" (Ps. 25:5). Order in bulk, subscribe quarterly, or purchase individually. For more information, check out www.lifeway.com/devotionals.

Small Group OPENING

SESSION TITLE: Deborah and Barak

BIBLE PASSAGE: Judges 4–5

MAIN POINT: God’s people needed someone to rescue them from their enemies.

KEY PASSAGE: Isaiah 33:22

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: How does God accomplish His plan? God uses people for His glory and our good.

Welcome time

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. As kids arrive, invite them to share about a time they were afraid to do something alone.

Activity page (5 minutes)

- “Cross It Out” activity page, 1 per kid
- pencils or markers

Invite kids to complete “Cross It Out” on the activity page. Instruct kids to cross out every third word and then unscramble the remaining words to find the answer to the big picture question: *God uses people for His glory and our good.*

SAY • How does God accomplish His plan? God uses people for His glory and our good.



Session starter (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Would you go?

Instruct kids to sit in a circle. Begin the game by saying, “I’d go on an adventure, even if I saw ...” and then describe something such as “tigers” or “killer bees” or “a wild dingo.”

Then invite the next kid to repeat what you said and add on something of his own. For example, “I’d go on an

adventure, even if I saw tigers and a rattlesnake!

Then the third kid will repeat the first two responses and add his own. Continue around the circle. Help kids recall the previous responses.

SAY • I'm not sure I am brave enough to go on adventure if I were going to see all *those* types of things! Today we are going to hear a story from the Bible about a man who did not want to go into battle unless someone else went with him. Let's find out more.

OPTION 2: You be the judge!

Make two signs to label opposite sides of the room: *Agree* and *Disagree*. Guide kids to stand in the middle of the room. Ask for two volunteers. Explain that you will announce an opinion. One volunteer will make the case to disagree with the opinion, and the other volunteer to agree.

- paper
- markers
- tape

The rest of the kids should listen carefully to the points and move to a side of the room to indicate their opinion. Point out that kids can move a little or a lot toward one side to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement.

Sample statements:

- Kids should be paid for doing chores around the house.
- Kids should be required to walk a mile every day.
- If a kid is caught cheating, he should have to repeat a grade level.

SAY • Was it hard to decide, or judge, what is right and wrong? Today we will hear about someone who was a judge over Israel. Her name was Deborah.

Transition to large group

Large Group LEADER

SESSION TITLE: Deborah and Barak

BIBLE PASSAGE: Judges 4–5

MAIN POINT: God’s people needed someone to rescue them from their enemies.

KEY PASSAGE: Isaiah 33:22

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: How does God accomplish His plan? God uses people for His glory and our good.

Countdown

• countdown video

Show the countdown video as your kids arrive, and set it to end as large group time begins.

Introduce the session (3 minutes)

• leader attire
• Bible

[Large Group Leader enters wearing khaki pants, a solid-colored shirt, an apron, and a hat. Leader carries a Bible.]

LEADER • You’re back! This is wonderful. I am just going on my break. I am expecting two trainees today! They should be here later. Their names are Debbie and Jay—both girls who are very interested in the restaurant business. I hear they have some ideas for starting a restaurant of their own. What do you think about that? If you could open a restaurant, what would you serve? *[Allow volunteers to respond.]*

Very interesting. *[Hold up the Bible.]* So, who is ready to dive back into our study about Israel’s judges? You know, isn’t it amazing that God gives us His Word, the Bible, so that we can know Him? By hearing these stories of what God has done in the past, we can understand what God is like and we can trust Him with the future. I am so glad!

Giant timeline (1 minute)

LEADER • Can anyone tell me the name of one of the first judges to rule over Israel? (*Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar; Judg. 3:7-31*)

• Giant Timeline

After Moses and Joshua died, God's people turned away from Him to worship false gods or idols. So God chose men and women to be judges over Israel. A woman named Deborah was a judge. We will learn more about Deborah today.

Big picture question (1 minute)

LEADER • Before we listen to the Bible story, do you remember the answer to our big picture question?

How does God accomplish His plan? God uses people for His glory and our good. As you listen to the story of Deborah and Barak, think about how God used them to bring about His glory and the good of His people.

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Judges 4–5. Tell the Bible story in your own words, or show the Bible story video “Deborah and Barak.”

LEADER • After Joshua died, God's people turned from God to worship idols. God let their enemies overtake them, and the Israelites cried out for help. So God sent judges to lead His people. The first three judges over Israel were Othniel, Ehud, and Shamgar. But every time a judge died, God's people turned from Him to worship idols. When that happened, God let their enemies take over.

• Bibles
• “Deborah and Barak” video
• Big Picture Question Poster
• Bible Story Picture Poster

In today's story, the Israelites' enemies were the Canaanites. A man named Sisera was the commander of the Canaanite army. He was mean to the Israelites for 20 years! How did God help them?

God wanted a man named Barak to go fight the Canaanites, but Barak did not completely trust God's promise to give His people victory. Barak told Deborah that he would only go if Deborah went too. Deborah agreed, but she said that Barak would not receive honor for the battle. Instead, a woman would get the honor.

God was with the Israelites, and they defeated the Canaanite army. But Sisera got away! Where did he hide? (*in Jael's tent*) Sisera probably thought he would be safe there, but while he was sleeping Jael killed him! The Israelites were at peace once again.

God fought for the Israelites and used Deborah, Barak, and Jael to defeat Canaan. ***How does God accomplish His plan? God uses people for His glory and our good.*** God's plan was even greater than just saving His people from physical enemies; He saves us from sin. God had a plan to bring about our ultimate good: salvation through His Son, Jesus.

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me (optional)

Use Scripture and the guide provided with this session to explain to boys and girls how to become a Christian. Assign individuals to meet with kids who have more questions.

Encourage boys and girls to ask their parents, small group leaders, or other Christian adults any questions they may have about becoming a Christian.

Tip: Provide *I'm a Christian Now* for new Christians to take home and complete with their families.

Key passage (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together Isaiah 33:22.

LEADER • Perfect. This verse tells us four things about God.

Raise your hand if you can tell me what those four things are. (*He is our Judge, lawgiver, and King. He will save us.*)

That's right. Last time we learned that a judge is someone who has authority and makes decisions about what is right and wrong. God chose people to be judges over Israel. We know that, ultimately, God is our Judge.

Can you think of a time in the Old Testament when the Israelites received laws? [*Allow kids to answer.*] Yes, Moses gave the Ten Commandments and other laws. Did these laws come from Moses? No. God is our lawgiver. He spoke through Moses. ***How does God accomplish His plan? God uses people for His glory and our good.***

Guide kids to read the verse again. Then lead them in singing “He Will Save Us.”

- Key Passage Poster
- “He Will Save Us” song

Discussion starter video (4 minutes)

LEADER • When we hear stories from the Old Testament about the Israelites worshiping false gods, it might seem obvious that they were making wrong choices. Is it always easy to recognize a fake instead of the real thing? Check out this video.

Show the “Unit 9, Session 2” discussion starter video.

LEADER • Do you think it was a good decision to pass up playing on a real game system to look at a picture of one? [*Allow kids to respond.*] God's people turned

- “Unit 9, Session 2” discussion starter video

from Him to worship idols. These idols were false gods. They were not real. Only Yahweh, the one true God, deserves our worship.

Guide kids to discuss things they might worship instead of the one true God. Prompt them to consider how they spend their time, what they think about most, what makes them most happy, and what motivates their actions.

Sing (4 minutes)

• “All for Your Glory” song

LEADER • God’s people needed someone to rescue

them from their enemies, so God sent judges like Deborah to lead them. After the Israelites’ victory, Deborah and Barak sang a song to praise God. We can praise God together by singing, too. Will you sing with me?

Sing together “All for Your Glory.”

Pray (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to small groups. Praise God for His faithfulness even when we are unfaithful.

Thank Him for sending Jesus as the true and final Judge to rescue people from sin.

Dismiss to small groups

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.



God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.



We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)



God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.



Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:19.



We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus.

Small Group LEADER

SESSION TITLE: Deborah and Barak

BIBLE PASSAGE: Judges 4–5

MAIN POINT: God’s people needed someone to rescue them from their enemies.

KEY PASSAGE: Isaiah 33:22

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: How does God accomplish His plan? God uses people for His glory and our good.

Key passage activity (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster
- ball
- “All for Your Glory” song

Show the key passage poster and guide kids to read it aloud two or three times. Then instruct kids to stand in a circle.

Give one player a ball. Play the song “All for Your Glory” and tell kids to begin passing the ball around the circle, one player at a time. Randomly stop the music. The kid holding the ball must say the key passage. If he cannot, he is out. Play additional rounds as time allows.

Bible story review & Bible skills (10 minutes)

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- Main Point Poster

Form two or three groups of kids. Provide Bibles, paper, and pencils. Ask the following review questions and supply the reference. Instruct teams to find the answer in the Bible, but encourage them not to shout it out. Each group should write down the answer on a piece of paper.

Call for groups to hold up their answers. Award a point for each correct answer.

1. Name one of the first three judges to rule over Israel.
(*Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar; Judges 3:7-31*)
2. What nation took over Israel after Shamgar died?
(*Canaan, Judges 4:2*)
3. Who was the commander of the Canaanite army?

Option: Retell or review the Bible story using the bolded text of the Bible story script.

(Sisera, Judges 4:2)

4. How many years was Sisera cruel to the Israelites?
(20 years, Judges 4:3)
5. Who was judge over Israel at this time? (Deborah, Judges 4:4)
6. How did God call to battle the Canaanites? (Barak, Judges 4:6)
7. How many chariots did Sisera take to the battle?
(900 chariots, Judges 4:13)
8. Sisera fled to whose tent? (Jael's tent, Judges 4:17)
9. Who killed Sisera? (Jael, Judges 4:21)
10. What was Sisera doing when he was killed?
(sleeping, Judges 4:21)
11. Who does whatever is for His glory and our good?
(God; Ps. 115:3; Rom. 8:28)
12. **How does God accomplish His plan? God uses people for His glory and our good.**

SAY • God's people needed someone to rescue them from their enemies. When they cried out to Him for help, God fought for the Israelites and used Deborah, Barak, and Jael to defeat Canaan. In a similar way, God fights for us, not only to save us from our enemies, but to bring about our ultimate good: salvation through His Son, Jesus Christ.

Option: Review the gospel with boys and girls. Explain that kids are welcome to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions.

Activity choice (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Simon says

Lead kids in a game of Simon Says. Explain that kids must listen carefully to your instructions. Instruct players to turn to the right, left, front, or back.

Try to trick the players by how you move your body. For example, you might say "Simon says, "Turn to the left,""



while you turn your body to the right.

Kids who move when you do not say “Simon says,” or who turn the wrong direction are out. Allow kids who are out to return to the game by stating the main point, answering the big picture question, or reciting the key passage.

SAY • The Israelites turned away from God, so God let their enemies rule over them. **God’s people needed someone to rescue them from their enemies.**

When we sin, we are turning from God by disobeying Him. Sin separates us from God. We need someone to save us from sin, and that’s why God sent His Son, Jesus. Jesus died to save people from sin and those who trust in Him are forgiven.

OPTION 2: Chariot race

Form teams of three kids. Allow two teams to compete at a time. Instruct two of the players to hold onto the front corners of the blanket and the third player to sit on the blanket, facing the opposite direction. The first two players will pull the third player across the room on the blanket.

Challenge teams to race. Say, “Go!” and guide teams to pull their chariots to one side of the room and back.

Award one point to the winning chariot. Then give the winning team an opportunity to say the main point or answer the big picture question. The winning team may answer correctly to earn a point, or they may pass the challenge to the opponent.

If the opponent answers correctly, they earn a point. If not, the winning team earns a point. Play again with two more teams. Continue as time allows.

- large blankets, 2
- Bible

Note: Supervise for safety.

SAY • God’s people needed someone to rescue them from their enemies. God would have been right to allow their enemies to destroy them, but He raised up a judge to save them. Deborah went with Barak to battle the Canaanite army. The army commander, Sisera, came to the battle with 900 chariots.

Open your Bible and read Judges 4:14-16 aloud. Point out that God gave Israel the victory.

Journal and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Prompt kids to write a short prayer or poem, confessing their sin to God and asking for His forgiveness. Then invite them to pray with you as you lead.

SAY • Lord God, we thank You for Your mercy. You saved Your people, the Israelites, over and over when they turned away from You. Like them, we do not deserve Your love but You love us anyway. We praise You because You are in control. You work all things together for Your glory and our good. We trust You and love You. Amen.

As time allows, lead kids to complete “Who Am I?” on the activity page. Kids will match each description to the person from the Bible story.

You may choose to review the answers together:

- Barak—God called me to go to battle.
- Sisera—I was the commander of the Canaanite army.
- Deborah—I ruled as judge over Israel.
- Jael—I killed an enemy of the Israelites.

- pencils
- Journal Page
- “Who Am I?” activity page, 1 per kid

Tip: Give parents this week’s *Big Picture Cards for Families* to allow families to interact with the biblical content at home.

Journal Page

God Judges His People

Key Passage: Isaiah 33:22

Big Picture Question: How does God accomplish His plan? God uses people for His glory and our good.

Session 1: The First Judges

Judges 3:7-31

God's people turned from Him to worship idols.

Session 2: Deborah and Barak

Judges 4-5

God's people needed someone to rescue them from their enemies.

Session 3: Gideon

Judges 6-8

God used Gideon's weakness for His glory.

Session 4: Samson

Judges 13-16

God gave Samson power.

Session 5: Ruth and Boaz

Ruth 1-4

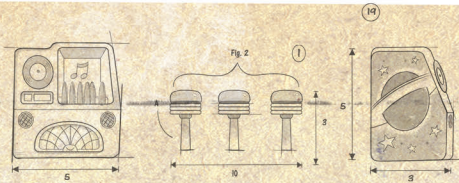
God provided a redeemer for Ruth.

Session 6: Eli and Boy Samuel

1 Samuel 1-3

God called Samuel to share God's plan.

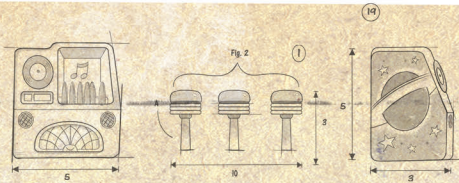




The LORD is our
Judge, the LORD is
our lawgiver, the
LORD is our King.
He will save us.

Isaiah 33:22

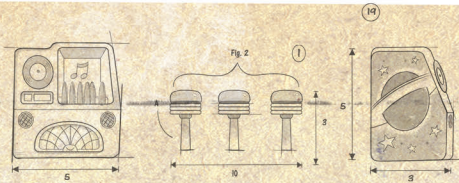




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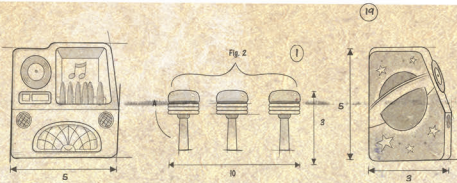




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judge; the LORD is
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Isaiah 33:22





**The LORD is our
judge, the LORD is
our lawgiver, the
LORD is our king; it is
he who will save us.**

Isaiah 33:22



God's people
needed someone
to rescue them
from their
enemies.





Journal Page

Write a short prayer or poem, confessing your sin to God and asking for His forgiveness.

FAMILY DISCUSSION STARTERS

- Who was responsible for the victory? (See Judges 4:6-7.)
- What does it mean to give glory to God? (*to acknowledge His greatness and to honor Him*)
- What do we need to be rescued from? Whom did God send to rescue us?

FOLD



Deborah and Barak

Judges 4-5

MAIN POINT: GOD'S PEOPLE NEEDED SOMEONE TO RESCUE THEM FROM THEIR ENEMIES.

Ehud and Shamgar had been judges over Israel. After they died, the Israelites forgot about God. So God allowed the king of Canaan to overtake them. The commander of the king's army was named Sisera. Sisera was cruel to the Israelites for 20 years. God's people remembered how good they had it when they loved and obeyed God. They cried out to God, "Save us!"

Deborah was the judge over Israel at this time. One day, Deborah called for Barak and said, "God wants you to gather 10,000 men. God will help you defeat Sisera."

Barak said to Deborah, "I will go if you will come with me. If you won't come, I'm not going."

"I'll go," Deborah said. "But you will receive no honor for the battle."

"Barak, go! God will help you defeat Sisera today," Deborah said. Barak and his 10,000 men moved down the mountain toward Sisera and his army. The Lord confused Sisera and all of the army. Barak chased the chariots and the army. None of them survived, but Sisera had escaped!

Sisera went to the tent of Jael. Jael gave Sisera something to drink and covered him with a rug. Sisera was so exhausted that he fell into a deep sleep. Jael knew that Sisera was an evil man, an enemy of God. She killed him while he slept.

That day, God allowed the Israelites to defeat the Canaanites. The Israelites had won the battle! Deborah and Barak sang a victory song. They praised God for helping them beat the Canaanites. The land was peaceful for 40 more years.

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Cross It Out

Cross out every third word. Then unscramble the remaining words to find the answer to the big picture question.

How does God accomplish His plan?

and	glory	Lord	our
people	plan	uses	for
battle	good	His	not

God

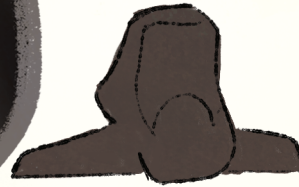


Who Am I?

Match each description to the person from the Bible.



Barak



Sisera



Deborah



Jael

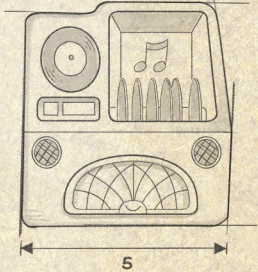
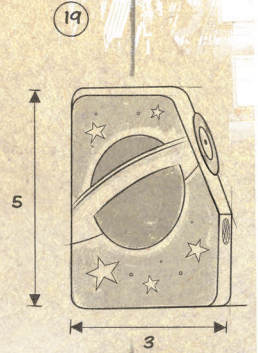
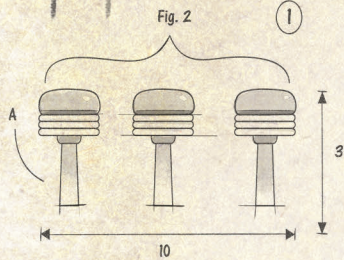
I ruled as judge over Israel.

God called me to go to battle.

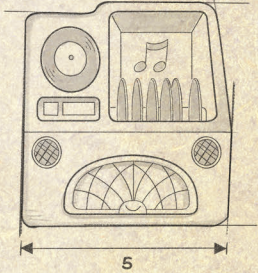
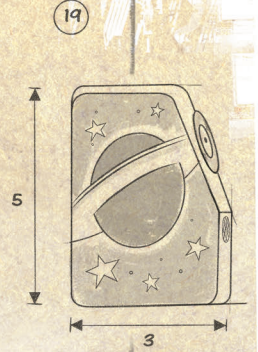
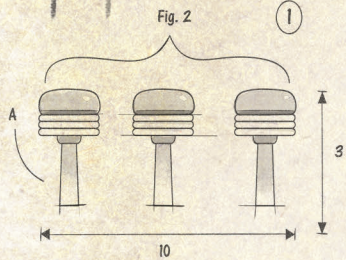
I killed an enemy of the Israelites.

I was the commander of the Canaanite army.

How does God accomplish His plan?



How does God accomplish His plan?



God uses people for His glory and our good.





God's people forgot about God.



God let Israel's enemies defeat them.



God's people cried out to Him for help.



God sent a judge to help His people.



God gave His people peace.