

IN THE WORLD



John 17:9-19

LESSON 1
June 7, 2026

Connect timeless truths with today's news.

BENCH PLAYERS STEP UP

The NBA playoffs are in full swing, with sixteen teams competing for the NBA title and the Larry O'Brien trophy. But injuries to key players have reshaped several teams' paths to the championship. The spotlight has shifted to reserves and bench players. During the first round of the playoffs, after two starters for the Minnesota Timberwolves were injured, reserve guard Ayo Dosunmu scored a career-high 43 points in a win over Denver. In the Western Conference Finals, guard Alex Caruso came off the bench for Oklahoma City and made history, becoming the first player to record more than 40 points and 10 three-pointers over a two-game span. Teams rely on their stars to lead, but the strongest teams also know when to trust their role players. Sometimes an overlooked player becomes the one to step up.

TWO WOMEN STEP UP

Under Sisera's military leadership, the Canaanites oppressed the tribes of Israel for years. Deborah, the prophet and judge of Israel, summons Barak and informs him that God wants him to assemble an army to confront Sisera. Although God promises victory, Barak hesitates and agrees to go only if Deborah accompanies him. She agrees, but prophesies that the honor of victory will pass instead to a woman. After the conflict, Sisera flees to the tent of Jael, the wife of a Kenite leader. While he sleeps, she drives a tent peg through his head, killing him. An overlooked woman—the wife of a local tribal leader—is the one who receives honor for Israel's deliverance.

1. When have you seen a team or group succeed because an overlooked person stepped up?
2. Why does God often work through people who are not obvious leaders?
3. What encouragement could you give to an unexpected leader this week?

Additional Resources

Any videos or web materials are for your personal use. If you play any media files in class, be sure to have the necessary rights to do so.

Playlists

[Contemporary Worship Weekly](#)
[Echoes Worship Weekly](#) (featuring African-American music artists)
[Traditional Worship Weekly](#)

Study Resources

Commentary: [Lisa Wolfe's "Commentary on Judges 4:1-7"](#)
Commentary: [Thomas L. Constable's "1. the Victory Over Jabin and Sisera Ch. 4"](#)
Devotion: [Theology of Work on "Deborah: An Ezer Woman Equipped to Lead \(Judges 4-5\)"](#)

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