

Resource: Translation Guide (FIA)

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Translation Guide (FIA)

EXO

Exodus 1:8-14

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 1:8-14 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 1:8-14 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 1:8-14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This passage continues the story of the Israelites in Egypt.

The previous passage tells us the names of all the sons of Jacob, also called Israel, and their families. They went to live in Egypt when Joseph, their brother, brought them. Then the passage tells us that Joseph and his generation died and the Israelites multiplied and grew in number. This is the first time Jacob's descendants are called Israelites.

This passage happens many years later, and it marks the beginning of a new part of the Israelites' story in Egypt. Several generations have passed since the death of Joseph. The new king of Egypt, also called Pharaoh, did not know Joseph.

The new king makes an important announcement. He announces a new strategy for the Egyptians against the Israelites. He is worried about how big the Israelite population is. The Israelites are now "a people" as they are more than just one family.

The king believes that the problem is urgent. He acts like many rulers act who want to destroy a people group—he accuses them of wanting to overthrow the Egyptian government. If there is a war, the king thinks that the Israelites might join the enemies to fight against Egypt. The original language is unclear if the king is afraid that the Israelites will then leave the country, or if he is afraid that they will rise up and conquer Egypt.

Some scholars believe that the king, or Pharaoh, during the time of Joseph was from a dynasty of foreign rulers. After many years, they were overthrown by a dynasty of Egyptian rulers who forced the foreign rulers to leave Egypt. These new rulers did not like foreigners. The foreigners were treated as enemies. The Israelites probably lived near these foreigners.

When Joseph was alive, he had a special agreement with the foreign king at that time. This new king, many years later, does not know about this agreement or he doesn't care about the agreement.

So the king made the Israelites into slaves and treated them cruelly. The king commanded harsh slave masters or taskmasters to oppress the Israelites and give them hard work to do. The taskmasters probably used heavy whips on the Israelites. The heavy work humiliated them and they were treated as less than human.

Stop and discuss the following question: how do leaders in your area treat foreigners or people groups differently than themselves? Pause the audio here.

The Egyptians forced the Israelites to build store cities for the king, who Moses calls Pharaoh here for the first time. The Israelites built Pithom and Rameses as store cities for Pharaoh. Rameses can also be another name for "Goshen." It's both a city and an area name. Goshen is the area in the North of Egypt where the Israelites lived.

Stop and show a map of Egypt. Look at the area of Rameses and Pithom. Pause the audio here.

The store cities were special cities or villages with high walls around them. The Egyptians would store grain and other things in them.

Stop and discuss this question: How do you store things in your culture? Also look at a photo of what an ancient store city might have looked like. Pause the audio here.

The Israelites' population grew in spite of the slave labour. Normally, the slave labour would keep Israelite families apart as different members of the family had to be away to work, or it would destroy their health and make them unable to have as many children. The Egyptians were in dread of the Israelites. They began to hate and fear the Israelites. The Egyptians were worried that the number of Israelites continued to increase. So the Egyptian taskmasters worked the Israelites even harder. The taskmasters forced the Israelites to make bricks and mortar and to work in the fields. This may have included farming and other forms of outdoor labour. The Israelites had bitter, or very difficult, lives.

People constructed the buildings with bricks and mortar. They made bricks of mud strengthened with straw and pressed into a mould. They stuck the bricks together with mortar. They crushed limestone and mixed it with water to make mortar.

Stop and look at a picture of a mud brick. Pause this audio here.

Stop and discuss: How do you construct buildings in your country? How are the building materials made? And what kinds of people do construction work?

Also discuss: What work is there in your culture that is this hard? Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 1:8-14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: After many years, there is a new king in Egypt who does not know Joseph. He is worried that the Israelites are too numerous.

In the second scene: The Egyptians forced the Israelites to build store cities. The Israelites continued to increase.

In the third scene: The Egyptians made the Israelites work even harder as slaves, making bricks and working in the fields.

The characters in this passage are:

- Pharaoh-king of Egypt
- Egyptian taskmasters
- The Egyptians
- The Israelite workers

As a group, pay attention to how the Egyptians and Israelites feel about one another throughout the whole passage.

The first scene starts with a word that tells us that this story begins many years later.

A new king now rules Egypt. Several generations have passed since the time of Joseph. This new king does not remember the kindness and the agreement between the Israelites and the Egyptians and he does not like foreigners.

Stop and discuss as a group: how will you begin this story to show that many years have passed? Pause this audio here.

This new king is worried by how many Israelites there are. The king makes an important announcement. He uses a word to get the attention of his listeners and to show them that what he is about to say is very important.

Stop and discuss as a group: When a leader wants to get the attention of his listeners before he makes an important announcement, what does he or she say? What words or phrases do they use to start their announcement? Pause the audio here.

The king wants to make a plan to oppress the Israelites to stop them from multiplying. If war breaks out, he is worried the Israelites will join his enemies and rise up. Sometimes "rise up" can mean "overcome." We do not know if the king is worried that the Israelites will conquer his people or if he is worried that they will leave the country. You may follow whichever interpretation nearby translations follow.

In the second scene, the king is urgent in his command to appoint taskmasters to oppress the Israelites.

Stop and discuss the question: How do you create a sense of urgency? What word do you use? Pause the audio here.

The taskmasters forced the Israelites to make bricks and mortar to build store cities for the king. The Egyptians stored grain and army supplies in the store cities. The taskmasters also made the Israelites work in the fields. The taskmasters were harsh and used whips. The work made their lives very hard and bitter and they humiliated them.

Stop the audio here. Look at a picture of a mud brick again if needed. Pause the audio.

In the third scene the Israelites still continued to grow in number so the taskmasters worked them harder.

The Egyptians dreaded the Israelites.

As the hard work increased, the population increased. As this happened, the Egyptians became more and more afraid of the Israelites, and they probably hated them as they became afraid of them. They were in "dread" of them.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story about when people both hated and feared someone or a group of people. Listen for the words you use as you describe how they felt about each other. Discuss as a team how you will translate the idea of both being afraid of a people group and hating them at the same time. Pause the audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 1:8–14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Pharaoh-king of Egypt
- Egyptian taskmasters
- The Egyptians
- The Israelite workers

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Act out a new king coming to power.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like, "Worried about what the new king will do," or "Scared about what the new king might do-he doesn't remember the promises made to Joseph by his ancestors." [!end] Continue the drama.

Act out when Pharaoh is worried about how many Israelites there are.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Egyptians, "What are you feeling or thinking?" They might answer things like, "We agree with Pharaoh. We need to stop the Israelites multiplying," or "We are worried the Israelites will fight against us if there is a war." [!end] Continue the drama.

Act out the Pharaoh giving orders to his people to oppress the Israelites.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the taskmasters, "What are you feeling or thinking?" They might answer things like, "It is difficult to be so harsh to the Israelites," or "We need to oppress the Israelites so we need to force them to do really hard work."

Ask the people playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" They might answer things like, "Scared. They are making us work so hard building storage cities," or "The storage cities of Pithom and Rameses are huge. We are forced to make bricks to build these cities. The work is exhausting and never ending." [!end] Continue the drama.

Act out the Israelites making bricks and the taskmasters forcing them to work even harder.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the taskmasters, "What are you feeling or thinking?" They might answer things like, "The Israelites are still multiplying-it is very worrying. If we work them even harder, maybe this will stop them," or "We have to stop the Israelites getting bigger. We must force them to work harder." [!action] Continue the drama.

Act out the Egyptian people dreading the Israelites.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 1:8–14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The king of Egypt is also called Pharaoh. Pharaoh is a title, not a name. The **Pharaoh** is a key character in this narrative. No particular Pharaoh is named but we know that it is a different Pharaoh to the one that acted kindly to Joseph.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for Pharaoh. Look up Pharaoh in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

In the passage the king ordered taskmasters, or slave masters, to oppress the **Israelites**, the descendants of Jacob, or Israel. Use the same word for Israelites as you have used in the previous passage. The word **slave** here means forced labour. The Egyptians oppressed the Israelites and forced them to work with harsh labour.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for slave. Look up slave in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

The slave masters worked them ruthlessly so that they would "crush their spirits." This means they would make their lives extremely difficult. The Egyptian slave masters were really taskmasters. They were different to the Hebrew foremen or supervisors mentioned later in Exodus. They would have used whips to oppress the Israelites even harder.

The Egyptians forced the Israelites to build Pithom and Rameses as **storage cities** for the king. These were special cities or villages with high walls around them. The Egyptians store grain and army supplies in these storage cities.

Stop here and look at a photo as a group of an ancient storage city. Pause this audio here.

The passage explains that their hard labour was in mortar and bricks.

They used bricks to build walls. Mortar is moist like mud. They applied it between the layers of the bricks to bind them together.

The Egyptians probably used a limestone mortar. They burned limestone into a powder, then they mixed the powder with water to make a paste. They applied the mortar between the bricks to hold them together. As the mortar dried, it hardened.

The mud brick was the most common material used by the Egyptians. The Egyptians usually forced prisoners or slaves to make the bricks. To make the bricks, firstly workers gathered mud from the Nile river. Then they mixed it with water and straw by trampling it in a pit. Then they poured it into a mould, turned it out and left it to dry in the sun.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **mortar** and for **brick**. Look at the photo of a mud brick again if needed. Pause the audio here.*

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 1:8–14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 1:8-14

Audio Content

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Exodus 1:15-22

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart (Exodus 1:15-22)

In this step, hear Exodus 1:15-22 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 1:15-22 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause the audio here

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause the audio here
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause the audio here
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause the audio here
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause the audio here
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause the audio here
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage? Pause the audio here

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 1:15–22 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage the Israelite numbers were growing and they were getting too strong. Pharaoh, the King of Egypt, wanted to oppress them. He wanted their numbers to decrease. So he made them slaves and worked them hard. He hoped this first plan would stop them from increasing. We know from the book of Genesis that the Israelites lived in an area called "Goshen." Pharaoh probably lived in Rameses, close to the Nile River.

Stop and look at the map of Egypt showing these areas. Pause this audio here.

This passage then continues the story.

Pharaoh's plan had failed and the Israelites were still growing in number. The Israelites are called "Hebrews" in this passage for the first time. In the Old Testament, when an Israelite wanted to distinguish himself from a person of another ethnic group, he called himself a "Hebrew." Also, when a foreigner wanted to distinguish himself from an Israelite, the foreigner called him a "Hebrew."

Pharaoh told the Hebrew midwives to kill all male babies immediately after they were born.

A midwife is a woman who helps women give birth.

In the passage, Pharaoh summoned the midwives to give them orders. Shiphrah and Puah, two midwives, went to that meeting with Pharaoh. The story names the midwives, which gives them special honour. The midwives were courageous heroes for the Hebrews.

There were a lot of Hebrew women giving birth so it is unlikely that there were only two midwives. Some believe that Shiprah and Puah supervised the other midwives. They are likely to be older and more experienced.

Pharaoh told the midwives that when they helped deliver Hebrew babies, they should kill all the male babies immediately after they were born. Some English translations mention the birthstool that many women in that culture used during the birthing process. The exact translation here is unclear. You might want to say that Pharaoh asked the midwives to look at the child when they delivered it.

Stop and discuss this question as a group: What happens in your culture at childbirth? Who are the people who help them? What do they call them? How do you speak about childbirth in a public setting? Pause this audio here.

It is not clear if Pharaoh actually spoke to the midwives directly or whether he sent the command through his advisers. It implies that the midwives had no choice. If they disobeyed the Pharaoh, he would kill them. This would be normal in this culture.

He was asking them to kill the male babies secretly-as soon as they came out.

Some scholars believe that Pharaoh chose to kill the male children because, in this culture, men were those who fought in wars. The boys would grow to be able to fight, so this would be bad for the Egyptians.

This was Pharaoh's next plan to try to control the Hebrew population. It was a long-term plan. Pharaoh was thinking about what would happen when the babies grew up. If there were fewer boys, there would be fewer soldiers to fight in 20 years.

The story continues some time later, and Pharaoh realised that the midwives had not carried out his orders as the Hebrews were still increasing in number. We do not know how long it was before Pharaoh realised this.

The midwives did not obey Pharaoh. The Hebrew midwives feared, or obeyed, God and let the male children live.

The midwives had no formal teaching about God, but they would have understood right and wrong and that there was a divine creator and a life after death. Killing the babies would have gone against the created order and would have been wrong. So fearing God for these women meant that they feared what God could do to them after death more than what Pharaoh could do to them.

So Pharaoh sent a messenger to call the midwives to come to him and asked them about why they had let the male babies live. It is likely that he did actually speak to them directly. They said the Hebrew women were "vigorous" and gave birth before they were able to get there. "Vigorous" means strong, full of energy. So they would have found it difficult to kill a Hebrew baby without someone noticing.

It is likely that Hebrew women were more involved actively in the birth of their own children than the Egyptian women. The Hebrew midwives probably helped Egyptian women as well as Hebrew women, so would understand the differences between them.

Pharaoh would know what happened at childbirth for the higher class Egyptian women.

Whether they were lying to Pharaoh or not, the midwives were fulfilling the overall plan of God-to make the Israelites into a strong nation. God honoured and rewarded them for this. God protected them from Pharaoh. He rewarded them by giving them families of their own. Moses names the midwives so their courage and faithfulness is recorded forever.

Often, Israelite midwives did not have children of their own. Women who did not have children were more able to spend time visiting homes to help with childbirth. People thought that it was shameful for women to not have children. God takes away this shame when he gives the midwives families of their own.

Then Pharaoh tries his next plan. He now involves *all* the Egyptians, the whole population, in his plan to kill the Hebrew baby boys. He tells them to throw all male Hebrew babies into the Nile.

Stop and discuss this question as a group: Why did Pharaoh involve the whole Egyptian people in his plan? Also, talk about a time when you've heard of a culture or people group who are all involved in persecuting another people group. Pause this audio here.

Throwing the babies into the Nile River would be easy and simple. It left no evidence and took the problem away.

So we see in this whole passage that God is responsible for the growth of Israel in Egypt. No plan and no force can succeed in ending or even slowing that growth. So we can be certain that none of Pharaoh's plans will work.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 1:15–22 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

In the first scene: Pharaoh commands the midwives, Shiprah and Puah, to kill the Hebrew babies who were male.

In the second scene: The midwives feared God and did not obey Pharaoh.

In the third scene: Pharaoh calls the midwives and asks them to explain why they haven't obeyed him. They reply that the Hebrew women are "vigorous" and give birth before they arrive so there is no time to kill the male babies.

In the fourth scene: Pharaoh commands all his people to throw all Hebrew baby boys into the Nile.

The characters in this passage are:

- Pharaoh
- Shiprah
- Puah
- Egyptian people
- Pharaoh's messenger
- Hebrew mothers

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Pharaoh is trying to decrease the population of Israelites as they were growing in number and Pharaoh felt threatened.

In scene one Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, spoke directly to the midwives and commanded them to kill all the Hebrew baby boys as soon as they are born. Some translations include "on the birthing stool," which refers to the time when the women give birth. The original language is unclear here, but what we know is that the Hebrew midwives were commanded to look to see if the baby was a boy or a girl, and if the baby was a boy, they were supposed to kill him immediately. This means they had to kill them as soon as they were born.

Stop and discuss: Egyptian women probably knelt on two stones while giving birth. What do women in your culture do? Also share with each other any stories of when someone you know had a baby that dies. Describe how you or other people in your family felt. Pause the audio.

The original language interrupts the storyline here to show us that the storyteller is honouring these women because they are very important and brave.

Stop here and discuss: In your language, how do you show that a character in a story is important? Do you give their names? When you tell their names, how do you do it? Tell a short story where you give the names of the people in the story, and pay attention to how you talk about the names of those people. Pause the audio.

In the Old Testament, the Hebrews, or Israelites, often referred to themselves as Hebrews when they talked with foreigners. Foreigners often called them Hebrew.

Stop here and discuss as a group: When you talk about your people group to foreigners, how do you describe yourself? How do foreigners describe you? Pause the audio.

There were probably more than 2 Hebrew midwives. They were probably representing all the other midwives.

In scene two, the midwives do not obey Pharaoh. They thought what they were asked to do was wrong.

They knew of God but wouldn't necessarily know much about him. They would know it was wrong to kill babies. They would probably believe there was life after death and that you would be judged. Killing babies would have an effect on their life after death. So they made a hard decision to "fear God"-to follow what they knew was right and not to follow Pharaoh. They knew Pharaoh might kill them if they disobeyed him.

Stop and share as a group a time when you had to make a difficult decision. Pause the audio.

In scene three, some time later, Pharaoh sent a messenger to call the midwives to him and challenges them about why they had not obeyed his command. We don't know how long it was before Pharaoh realised that the male babies had not been killed. It was probably long enough that the parents could no longer hide if their children were boys or girls. The midwives also had a good amount of time to work out what they would say to Pharaoh. They would probably have been nervous in front of Pharaoh, but God protected them.

They told Pharaoh that Hebrew women were different to Egyptian women and gave birth too quickly for them to be able to kill the baby boys. The midwives would arrive too late to the birth, and the baby would already be born. There were likely more people around, and they would notice if the midwives killed the baby boy at that time.

God rewarded the midwives for their courage and gave them families of their own. The midwives would have been ashamed not to have children of their own. God blessed them by giving children of their own. They would be overjoyed.

In scene four, Pharaoh has to carry out a more serious plan. He commands all of the Egyptian people to throw the baby boys into the Nile River. The Nile River was a large river that ran through Egypt. The Egyptians were living as neighbours to the Hebrew people. They would have known them well and it would have been a difficult thing for them to carry out this command too. Killing babies would have felt wrong to the Egyptians too.

Stop and discuss as a group: Talk about a time when one people group or government killed another people group. How do you talk about this? Pause the audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 1:15–22 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Pharaoh
- Shiprah
- Puah
- Egyptian people
- Pharaoh's messenger
- Hebrew mothers

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

In scene one, Pharaoh commands the midwives Shiprah and Puah, "When you act as midwives for the Hebrew women, watch what happens at the birth: If it is a boy, kill him; if it is a girl, she may live."

Pause the action.

Ask Shiprah and Puah, "How did you feel when you were given this command?" You may hear, "Shocked," or "We can't do this. That is wrong," or "I am scared to do this. God will punish me," or "How can we do this without anyone noticing?"

Ask the Hebrew mothers, "What happens when you give birth? Who is with you?" You may hear, "My female relatives and the midwife came to help me give birth," or "The midwife came to help me give birth. She told me what to do and cut the baby's umbilical cord." [!end] Continue the drama.

In scene two the midwives did not follow Pharaoh's command. They allowed the babies to live.

In scene three Pharaoh calls them back and asks them, "Why have you done this, allowing the boys to live?"

Pause the action.

The midwives replied to Pharaoh that the Hebrew women were different to Egyptian women and often give birth before they get there.

Pause the action.

So God did protect them and then blessed them with a family of their own.

Pause the action.

In scene four, Pharaoh now commands his own people to throw the Hebrew boys into the Nile.

Pause the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 1:15–22 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The king of Egypt, or Pharaoh, spoke with the Hebrew midwives. The king of Egypt is also called Pharaoh. The **Pharaoh** is a key character in this narrative. No particular Pharaoh is named, but we know that it is a different Pharaoh to the one that acted kindly to Joseph. Use the same word for Pharaoh that you have used in previous passages. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on the word Pharaoh.

The passage talks about **Hebrews** rather than Israelites. In the Old Testament, when an Israelite wanted to distinguish himself from a person of another ethnic group he called himself a "Hebrew." Also, when a foreigner wanted to distinguish himself from an Israelite, the foreigner called him a "Hebrew."

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for Hebrews. Look up Hebrews in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

A **midwife** is a person who helps women to give birth. They cut the child's umbilical cord, wash the babe with water, then salt it and wrap it. Then they would take news of the birth to the father. The umbilical cord is the cord connecting the baby to the mother.

Stop here and discuss what word you use for midwife. Pause the audio here.

The **birthstool** is mentioned in quite a few translations although the original language, Hebrew, does not use this word. Some translations just say to look at the baby as soon as it is born and see if it is a girl or boy. The same word is used later in the Bible to mean a pair of stones. Ancient Egyptian writings show that Egyptian women very often crouched in childbirth upon a pair of bricks or stones or on a birthstool. So it is thought the Hebrew women in Egypt may have done the same.

The passage says that the midwives **feared God**. Fearing God for these women would probably have meant they feared what God would do to them after they died. They feared what God would do to them, but they also respected God.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for fearing God. Look up Fear of God in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 1:15–22 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. **Pause this audio here.**

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. **Pause this audio here.**

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. **Pause this audio here.**

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 1:15-22

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (4413619 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Exodus 2:1-10

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 2:1-10 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 2:1-10 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?

3. What does this passage tell us about God?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 2:1-10 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

When this story begins, the Israelites, also called Hebrews, are slaves in Egypt, which means they have no rights and work for no pay. In the previous passage, the King of the Egyptians, also called Pharaoh, was worried about the growing number of Israelites, that the Israelites would fight back, and had ordered the Egyptians to kill the new Israelite baby boys. This is a narrative story of the birth and protection of Moses, whom God chooses to lead Israel out of Egypt.

The story starts with the marriage of a man and a woman from the House or tribe of Levi. This means they were part of the tribe or group of people descended from Levi, one of Jacob's twelve sons.

We learn later that the couple have two children, but their third child, a son, is born during this dangerous time. The woman sees that the baby is a special baby. This means in the original language that she loves her child and doesn't want him to die, so she hides him from the Egyptians. She is able to hide him for three months, but he probably grows loud and active enough that she cannot keep her baby hidden with her.

Stop and discuss:

- Tell a story about a mother who is protecting her child from danger.
- What would she do to keep her child safe?
- Listen for words that describe her determination. Pause the audio here.

To keep him safe, the baby's mother gets a basket made out of papyrus, which are reeds or thin plants that grow alongside rivers. She carefully covers the basket in bitumen and pitch, which are sticky pastes that fill in holes so that the basket can float. This basket would be big enough to hold the three-month old baby and has a covering or a lid.

Stop and show the picture of a basket made from papyrus. Pause the audio here.

The baby's mother puts her baby in the basket and places it at the edge of the Nile, a large river in Egypt. She is not abandoning her baby; she has found a new place to hide him. No one would look for a live baby here, since the Egyptians were drowning the Israelite babies in the river. The noise from the papyrus reeds would hide any sounds from the baby, especially crying. It would not be strange for the mother to return to the river often, as the river provided fish, water, rushes for weaving, and many other useful things. His older sister, who we later learn is named Miriam, stays hidden nearby to watch over the baby. She is probably six to twelve years old.

Stop and show the picture of the Nile river. Pause the audio here.

Pharaoh's daughter comes to the Nile river. This is the daughter of the man who ordered the killings. She comes down to the river to bathe, which could be ceremonial or just to wash herself. The Nile is a sacred river, and the Egyptians used it in worship and ritual washing. Pharaoh's daughter would have thought it a good thing to come bathe in this river. She comes with a group of women, who were either servants or slaves and would help Pharaoh's daughter, especially by protecting her privacy.

Pharaoh's daughter sees the basket and sends one of her women to bring the basket over. When Pharaoh's daughter opens the basket, she sees the baby, who is crying. She feels compassion for the baby, which means she felt care or affection for him. She says immediately, "This must be a Hebrew baby." She likely guesses this because the Nile river is where the Egyptians were bringing the Israelite baby boys. Another way she could

have known is if he had been circumcised, which was the removal of the foreskin on the boy's penis to show that they were Israelites. This is often done when the boy is eight days old.

The baby's sister comes close and asks, "Should I find a Hebrew woman to nurse the baby for you?" By "nurse," the girl means both to feed and take care of. This was not uncommon. Royalty often hired women to breastfeed and take care of their babies. Pharaoh's daughter agrees and the sister brings the baby's mother to Pharaoh's daughter. Pharaoh's daughter pays the mother to take the baby home and nurse him. Since Pharaoh's daughter is paying for this, she is the one with "legal" custody of the baby. Since the Israelites are slaves, Pharaoh's daughter could have commanded the mother to nurse the child without paying her. But that is not what happens here. Not only does the baby's mother get to raise him without fear of the Egyptians, but Pharaoh's daughter would likely give the mother enough money to raise the boy in comfort as well as payment for her work.

His mother keeps the baby until he is done breastfeeding, which means he would have lived with his family for three to four years. Then his mother brings him to Pharaoh's daughter who adopts him, or makes the boy her own son. He will be raised in her household like a royal son, so he will have plenty of possessions, education, and importance. Now Pharaoh's daughter gives him the name "Moses," which has both an Egyptian and Hebrew meaning. In Egyptian, it can mean "son of" or "boy child" while in Hebrew, it means "to lift out." She announces, "I gave him this name because I lifted him out of the water."

Stop and discuss:

- Tell a story about a woman who adopts a son.
- Talk about the way she brings him into her family.
- How does she show that this child is now hers?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 2:1-10 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has four scenes.

In the first scene: During a dangerous time, a Levite man and woman marry and have a child, keeping the baby hidden for three months. When the mother cannot keep the growing baby hidden any longer, she prepares a basket and places her son in the Nile river.

In the second scene: As his sister watches over the baby, Pharaoh's daughter finds the baby and has compassion on him. The sister suggests finding a nurse for the baby and Pharaoh's daughter agrees. The sister leaves.

In the third scene: The sister returns with the baby's mother and Pharaoh's daughter hires the woman to nurse and raise the baby.

In the fourth scene: When the baby is grown, the baby's mother brings the boy to Pharaoh's daughter, who takes the boy as her own son and gives him the name Moses.

The characters in this passage are:

- Levite man
- Levite mother
- The baby boy, who is named Moses
- His sister
- Pharaoh's daughter
- Pharaoh's daughter's attendants

The story begins with "Now" or "During this time," which means the first scene happens during the time when the Egyptians were killing Hebrew baby boys which was described in the last passage. During this time, a Levite man marries a Levite woman and the woman conceives and gives birth to a son. They have another son and daughter before this, perhaps before the Egyptians are killing the babies, as one of their earlier children is a boy. Their births are not mentioned as part of this story.

Stop and discuss.

The mother is able to hide her new baby boy for three months. The baby is likely growing and making noise, making it hard to keep the baby a secret. She is probably hiding the baby in her home or nearby. Now she makes the decision to hide him further away, by the Nile river. The Nile river runs the length of Egypt and is an average of 2.8 kilometers across and eight to eleven meters deep. She gets a basket, and makes it so that it will float, then places the baby in the basket. The basket would be large enough to hold a baby and has a lid that completely covers the top. It may have been a storage basket from her house. The mother puts the basket in the rushes at the edge of the river, where the water is not deep and would not be moving quickly. The sister stays close by to watch, probably hiding in the rushes.

Stop and show the picture of the rushes alongside the Nile river. Pause the audio here.

The second scene begins with another "Now," like in the first scene. This word shows that the next part of the story is happening. This could be just after the mother places the baby or after a short time has passed. Either way, the mother is not present during this scene. Pharaoh's daughter, along with a group of women attendants, comes to the river by the place where the baby is hidden. Her attendants are walking along the river bank, spread out to make sure no one comes near and disturbs Pharaoh's daughter while she is in the water. Pharaoh's daughter is either right on the edge of the water, or in the water, as she is able to see the hidden basket. She orders an attendant to bring her the basket.

When she opens the basket, Pharaoh's daughter sees the baby, who is crying, and has compassion on him. She realizes quickly that this is a Hebrew baby, either because he looked different than the Egyptian babies, or because she saw he was circumcised. The baby's sister comes close enough to speak and says, "Should I go get a Hebrew woman to feed and raise the baby for you?" Pharaoh's daughter agrees and the sister leaves.

The third scene begins when the sister returns, bringing with her the baby's mother. Pharaoh's daughter commands the baby's mother to take the child and raise him.

The fourth scene is over a longer period of time, as the mother is raising the baby boy. The story does not give a set amount of time that the mother raised the baby. It just says that when he was older, she brought the boy to Pharaoh's daughter. The boy was probably not fully a man, but at least he no longer needed to breast-feed. Now Pharaoh's daughter adopts the boy and gives him a name, declaring or announcing the reason she chose the name. She could be speaking to someone or to herself. She says, "I gave him this name because I lifted him out of the water." This can mean she is declaring her right to name him, since she found him, or because the name "Moses" can sound like the word in Hebrew "to lift out of."

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 2:1–10 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has four scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Levite man
- Levite woman
- The baby boy or Moses
- His sister
- Pharaoh's daughter
- Pharaoh's daughter's attendants

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character: "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

While the Israelites are slaves in Egypt, a man from the tribe of Levi marries a woman from the same tribe. During a time when Egyptians are killing the new Hebrew baby boys, the woman gives birth to a baby boy. The mother sees that the boy is a healthy and beautiful child and she hides the baby from the Egyptians. After three months, she can no longer hide the growing boy.

Pause the drama.

- I am scared for my child because I love him.
- I do not want him to die.
- I hope I can make a plan to keep him safe.
- I wish I could raise him with joy, instead of fear and hiding.

The baby's mother gets a basket and prepares it so it can float. She puts the baby in the basket and the basket in the slow water at the edge of the Nile river. The tall grasses hide the basket. The baby's sister stands close enough to see what will happen to the baby.

Pause the drama.

- I'm glad I found a new place to hide my baby but I am still worried about keeping him safe.
- Will anyone find him?
- Will the basket I prepared work and keep the water out?
- I wonder if I have made the right choice.

Ask the person playing the sister, "How do you feel as you watch over your brother?" The person might answer things like:

- I'm scared someone will come and find him.
- What do I do if someone finds the basket?
- I don't know how I can help!

Soon, the Pharaoh's daughter comes to the river to bathe, along with a group of women who spread out along the land beside. They are near where the basket is hidden. Pharaoh's daughter sees the basket and tells one of her attendants to bring the basket closer. Pharaoh's daughter opens the basket and sees the baby boy, who is crying.

Pause the drama.

- This is the worst thing that could happen!
- I am scared for my brother.
- I am trying to decide what to do now!
- I wish someone was here to help me.

Pharaoh's daughter feels compassion for the crying baby and says, "This must be one of the Hebrew babies." The boy's sister comes close and asks Pharaoh's daughter, "Should I go find a Hebrew woman to feed and raise the baby for you?" "Yes, go do that," Pharaoh's daughter replies.

Pause the drama.

- I feel sad for the baby who is in the river and crying.
- I wonder if he is hungry or hurting?
- I want to help him.

Ask the person playing the sister, "How do you feel, speaking to someone so important who might cause you harm?" The person might answer things like:

- I am scared, but I need to keep my brother safe.
- I am excited, because this is an opportunity for my mother to take care of my brother!
- I have hope that this may be a way to save my brother.

The sister finds the baby's mother and brings her back to Pharaoh's daughter. "Take this baby boy. Feed him and take care of him for me," Pharaoh's daughter commands the baby's mother, "and I will pay you." So the baby's mother takes the baby home and raises him.

Pause the drama.

- I am amazed at what happened.
- I didn't expect this to happen.
- I am so thankful that my baby will live and that I do not have to worry about someone killing him.
- I am sad that I will have to take the baby back to Pharaoh's daughter.

When the boy is older and no longer nursing, his mother takes him to Pharaoh's daughter who makes the boy her own son. Pharaoh's daughter gives him the name Moses and says, "I give him this name because I lifted him out of the water."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 2:1–10 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The man and the woman at the beginning of this story come from the **House of Levi**, or the tribe of Levi. A **tribe** is a group of people who all have descended from one person, in this case Levi. Levi was one of the sons of Jacob, who is also called Israel.

When the couple have a son and the mother can no longer hide the baby close by, she gets a basket made out of Papyrus. **Papyrus** is a reed or tall grass that grows in the shallow water on the edge of a river. People would dry these reeds and weave them into a strong basket. This basket would have been big enough to hold a baby and have a lid. It was not originally a basket for water, so the woman coats it in **bitumen** and **pitch**. These were thick, sticky pastes used to seal cracks in boats. This would make the basket able to float in water.

The mother places the basket in the **Nile river**, which is Egypt's most important river and is often just called "the river."

The Pharaoh's daughter comes down to the river. **Pharaoh** is the word used for the king in Egypt. Use the same word or phrase for Pharaoh as you used in previous passages. See the Master Glossary for more information about Pharaoh.

When Pharaoh's daughter finds the basket with the baby in it, she says, "This must be a Hebrew baby." **Hebrew** is another name for Israelite, as well as for the language that the Israelites speak. For more information, see the Master Glossary about the word Hebrew.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 2:1–10

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (2806936 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Exodus 2:11–15

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 2:11–15 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 2:11–15 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 2:11–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the book of Genesis, God told Abraham that his descendants would be slaves in a foreign land for four hundred years but then God would rescue them and bring them back to the promised land. In this story, Abraham's descendants are called the Hebrews. The Hebrews have now been enslaved to the Egyptians for four hundred years. The Egyptians are afraid of the Hebrews and are treating them very harshly. We just learned how God protected Moses from birth and provided for Pharaoh's daughter to raise Moses. Pharaoh is the title for the king of Egypt. This story takes place in Egypt.

Stop here and look at a map of Egypt. Note the major landmarks and cities. Pause this audio here.

Now Moses is a grown man and realizing his identity and destiny to save the Hebrew people. Moses is about 40 years old when these events take place. This is a narrative story of Moses's first acts in adulthood. This is the

first story in a series of stories that show Moses's preparation to become the deliverer and leader of God's chosen people, the Hebrews.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Who is a well-known leader or hero in your culture? What kinds of stories are told about this person to show their character or worthiness of being a leader? Pause this audio here.

The story begins by saying that Moses went out to look at the burdens of his people. Moses most likely lived in the palace, or at least in the royal part of the city where the royal family lived. He enjoyed all the privileges of being Egyptian royalty in education, clothing, and lifestyle. But we see from the opening of this story that he identifies himself as a Hebrew and not as an Egyptian. The importance of this is highlighted in the New Testament book of Hebrews where the author tells us that Moses chose to be mistreated along with his people. Moses made a personal and intentional decision to identify with the Hebrew people and to help them.

Moses went to see his fellow Hebrews as they were working. We learned earlier that the Hebrews were building store cities, making bricks and mortar and doing all kinds of work in the fields. The Egyptians were very harsh and gave them hard labor.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Describe a time that you saw others experience suffering. How did you feel? What did you do? Pause this audio here.

Then Moses sees an Egyptian beating a Hebrew and Moses acts quickly. Moses looks around this way and that and sees no one else. Some interpret this section to mean that Moses didn't see anyone else there to help or intervene, so Moses acted justly to save the Hebrew. However, it is more likely that Moses looked around to make sure no one was watching what he was about to do. This is supported by the fact that after killing the Egyptian, Moses quickly buries the body in sand. Moses tries very hard to make sure that no one sees his actions.

The next day Moses again goes out to where the Hebrews are working and this time he is surprised to see two Hebrews fighting each other. Moses steps in to try to reconcile them and speaks to the guilty man and says, "Why are you beating your friend?"

But the Hebrew man rejects Moses's attempt to intervene and responds, "Who made you in charge? Do you plan to kill me like you killed the Egyptian yesterday?" The man doesn't expect Moses to answer these questions, but he is saying two things to Moses. First he is saying, "You don't have any power over us." But this first question also points to the future when God will make Moses the leader of the Hebrew people. This rejection of Moses's attempt to deliver the Hebrew people also foreshadows how the Hebrew people will continue to respond to Moses's leadership. They are suspicious that Moses's help will cause more trouble than good.

With the second question, "Do you plan to kill me too?", the Hebrew man is saying, "We all know what you did and we won't protect you when the Egyptians find out that an Egyptian man is dead." The Hebrew man's response shows that the Hebrew people do not respect Moses. The Hebrews resent Moses for the privilege of growing up in Pharaoh's household. It is likely that the Hebrews are afraid that the Egyptians will punish them for Moses's crime. This man is making it clear that the people who know what Moses did will not hide the truth from Pharaoh.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Have you ever been moved by compassion to help, but in your excitement you ended up causing more harm than good? Share about that experience and what you learned from it. Pause this audio here.

Then Moses was afraid, not of the Hebrew man, but because people knew that Moses killed a man. Moses says to himself, "Oh no! People know what I have done!" And sure enough, Pharaoh tries to have Moses killed. So Moses flees from Pharaoh to save his own life.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell about a time you were afraid for your life. Or, if someone in your group has ever had to flee from their home, explain what that was like. Pause this audio here.

Moses runs away, out of Pharaoh's land, to the land of Midian. Midian is a separate country, probably to the east of Egypt. Midian is a place, but is also the name of the people who lived in that place. Midian is the name of Abraham's fourth son from his second wife, Keturah. So these people are distant relatives of the Hebrews and we soon learn that they also worship God. They were a nomadic people who lived in several different places. So it is difficult to know for certain where Moses went when he went to "the land of Midian."

Stop here and look at a map of possible locations for Midian. Pause this audio here.

"And Moses sat down by a well." This last sentence is both the conclusion to this story and the opening of the next story. A well is a source of water for a community. It is natural that Moses stopped here for rest and refreshment, but also to meet other people. Wells are a symbolic place throughout scripture and are a place of important meetings between people, such as where Jacob met his future wife Rachel. Because Moses stopped at a well, we know that something life-changing is about to happen to Moses.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 2:11-15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

In the first scene: Moses observes the hard labor of his fellow Hebrews and sees an Egyptian attacking a Hebrew.

In the second scene: Moses kills the Egyptian and hides the body.

In the third scene: The second day, Moses sees two Hebrews fighting and confronts them. The guilty one talks back to Moses and Moses realizes that his deed of killing the Egyptian man is known.

In the fourth scene: Pharaoh hears of Moses's deed and seeks to kill Moses. Moses flees to Midian.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses-God's chosen deliverer of the Hebrew people
- The Hebrew people-God's chosen people, currently slaves in Egypt
- Egyptian attacker-an Egyptian attacking a Hebrew slave. Moses kills him
- Hebrew victim-the Hebrew being attacked by the Egyptian
- Hebrew aggressor-One of the Hebrews Moses finds fighting, he is the guilty one who talks back to Moses
- Second Hebrew victim-One of the Hebrews Moses finds fighting, not the guilty one
- Pharaoh-King of Egypt

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

This story takes place in Egypt. We do not know exactly which Pharaoh was in charge at this time, but we do know that he was afraid of the Hebrews. The Hebrews are God's chosen people, descended from Abraham, and God has made them grow into a large and strong people group. Because Pharaoh is afraid of the Hebrews, he has made them into slaves and made them do very harsh labor.

This story skips a long period of time from Moses's birth and early childhood to his adulthood. We know nothing about his growing up years. Many stories at this time were told in this way. A story about an important person would only include the story of their birth if it was very significant. Then the story of the important person's life truly starts with that person's first actions as an adult.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story that skips a lot of time or information. Pay attention to the words or phrases you use to transition to the next part of the story. Pause this audio here.

One day, many years later, when Moses was an adult, probably about 40 years old, Moses went out of the palace or royal city of Egypt to see his own people, the Hebrews. Twice in the first sentence, there is a clarification that the Hebrews were Moses's own people or brothers. The use of the term "to his brothers" shows that Moses knew that he was a Hebrew and sought to identify with these oppressed people. But the use of the term "Hebrew" also shows Moses's awkwardness-that he also felt a bit like an outsider.

Moses looked on their burdens. Here the word burdens refers to the harsh labor that the Hebrew slaves endured. Earlier passages described the Egyptians as being shrewd and ruthless masters who made the lives of the Hebrews bitter with hard service. It is this harsh treatment that Moses observes. Moses watched with sympathy and emotional engagement. He likely saw lots of violence and sweat and blood and tears.

"And Moses saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his own people." This was likely not the only Egyptian striking a Hebrew slave that day, but something about this particular encounter caused Moses to act.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Imagine that you are seeing all of this violence. What would push you to the breaking point? What must that feel like? Pause this audio here.

The word used for "strike" or "attack" or "beat" is the same word used in all three fights-when the Egyptian beat the Hebrew, when Moses beat the Egyptian and when the two Hebrews were beating each other. The word does not mean one single death-blow. This word also does not specify if it was with a weapon or stick or a fist. We do not know if the Hebrew lived or died as a result of this beating. In Moses's fight with the Egyptian it is not clear if Moses meant to kill the Egyptian or if it was an accident. In the other two fights, no one died. Many translations use different words for each of the three events to clarify the differences, especially to clarify that the person that Moses beat died as a result.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a couple of stories about different kinds of fighting. Pay attention to the words or phrases that you use to describe the fighting. Pause this audio here.

Moses looked all around and didn't see anyone. He turned his face this way and that way to see if anyone was watching him. Since this is a busy workplace with lots of slaves and slave drivers, it is unlikely that there was literally no one around. It is more likely that no one was watching him. This shows that Moses's reaction was intentional. He first made sure that no one was watching or could see what he was about to do.

Moses beat the Egyptian to death and hid him in the sand. Sand is like loose dirt that blows away easily in the wind or is easily washed away by water. This means that Moses probably buried the body quickly with his hands in a very shallow hole. Moses didn't have much time to hide his crime, but was hurrying to cover up what he did.

The next day Moses went out from the palace to about the same place and was surprised to see two Hebrews fighting each other. Moses speaks to the one beating the other and asks, "Why do you strike your companion?"

The Hebrew responds with a question, "Who made you a prince and judge over us?" This is a question that he doesn't expect an answer to. It is like he is saying, "You have no right to interfere!" or "We do not recognize you as having any authority over us!"

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Why do you think the Hebrews reject Moses's authority? Pause this audio here.

The Hebrew continues, "Do you plan to kill me like you killed the Egyptian?" This is another question that doesn't expect an answer. It is actually more of a threat to Moses and could be said as a statement like, "I suppose you plan to kill me like you killed that Egyptian." This shows that many people know what Moses did. It also shows that the Hebrews reject Moses's attempt to be one of them.

Then Moses was afraid, not of the Hebrew man, but because everyone knew that Moses killed an Egyptian. Moses thought to himself, "Oh no! People know what I have done!" The original text says that Moses said this phrase, but it is clear from the context that Moses likely did not say this out loud, but that he said this phrase to himself in his mind.

When Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, heard what Moses did, Pharaoh tried to kill Moses. As a king, Pharaoh himself probably didn't try to kill Moses, but ordered that Moses be killed. This is both because Moses killed another Egyptian, and because of this, the Egyptians saw Moses as trying to start a rebellion among the Hebrews. In order to stay alive Moses **runs away from Pharaoh**. This phrase means that Moses went out of the land where Pharaoh had control, out of the country of Egypt. This was likely a long journey of several days.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How will you describe Moses running away from Pharaoh and out of Egypt? Pause this audio here.

Finally Moses sat down by a well in the land of Midian.

Stop here and look at a picture of a well. Pause this audio here.

It may be difficult to understand the order in which the last events happened. The actual event order is that Moses left Egypt and went to Midian. When Moses first arrived in Midian, he sat down at a well. Eventually Moses stayed and lived in Midian for a long time. But Moses's act of sitting down at the well both concludes this story of Moses leaving Egypt and begins the next story of his important encounter at the well. That is why this detail of sitting down at a well is left to the very end of the story.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you want to describe the ending of this story so that the order of events makes sense and it also flows easily into the next story. Pause this audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 2:11–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses-God's chosen deliverer of the Hebrew people
- The Hebrew people-God's chosen people, currently slaves in Egypt
- Egyptian attacker-an Egyptian attacking a Hebrew slave. Moses kills him
- Hebrew victim-the Hebrew being attacked by the Egyptian
- Hebrew aggressor-One of the Hebrews Moses finds fighting, he is the guilty one who talks back to Moses
- Second Hebrew victim-One of the Hebrews Moses finds fighting, not the guilty one
- Pharaoh-King of Egypt

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

In the days when the Hebrews were enslaved to the Egyptians and Moses was an adult, Moses went out and observed the hard labor of his people, the Hebrews.

Pause the drama.

During his visit, Moses saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew.

Pause the drama.

Moses turned and looked around, but didn't see anyone else around, so he killed the Egyptian and hid the body in the sand.

Pause the drama.

The next day, Moses went out and was surprised to see two Hebrews fighting each other. Moses said to the one who started the fight, "Why are you hitting your friend?" But the man replied, "Who made you a prince and a judge over us? Do you plan to kill me like you killed the Egyptian?"

Pause the drama.

Then Moses became afraid because he realized that his actions were known.

Pause the drama.

Pharaoh did hear about what happened and he tried to kill Moses, but Moses ran away until he came to a land called Midian and stopped by a well.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 2:11-15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

One day, when Moses was a grown man, about 40 years old, he went out to his people, the **Hebrews**. Hebrew is a term used for God's chosen people, also known as the Israelites. Hebrew refers to the descendants of Abraham through Isaac, and Jacob. Remember that Hebrew is in the Master Glossary. Use the same word for Hebrew that you have used in previous passages.

Moses saw their burdens. Here the word **burdens** refers to the harsh labor that the Hebrew slaves endured. Earlier passages described the Egyptians as being shrewd and ruthless masters who made the lives of the Hebrews bitter with hard service. It is this harsh treatment that Moses observes.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **burdens**. Pause this audio here.*

Then Moses saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his own people. **Egyptian** refers to the people of Egypt who enslaved the Hebrew people.

Twice in the first sentence it clarifies that the Hebrews were Moses's **own people** or his "brothers."

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use to describe Moses's close relation to the Hebrew people. Pause this audio here.

Moses saw the Egyptian beating the Hebrew. Earlier we discussed the word "beat" or "strike" or "attack" in the three different fights and their different outcomes.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase or if you will use different words to describe the beating in these three events. Pause this audio here.

Moses looked this way and that and saw that no one was there or no one was watching. Then Moses beat the Egyptian to death and hid the body of the Egyptian in the sand. **Sand** is really fine and loose dirt, which easily blows away in the wind or is washed away by water.

Stop here and look at a picture of sand and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use to describe the word sand. Pause this audio here.

When Moses went out the next day, there were two Hebrew men fighting. Moses spoke to **the one in the wrong**. We don't know how Moses identified one of the Hebrews as being the aggressor or wicked one. Likely it was the one who was striking or hitting the other one. It is possible that one of the men was a foreman, a slave with some authority over a group, while the other was a laborer even though they were both Hebrew slaves.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use to describe **the Hebrew that was in the wrong**. Pause this audio here.*

Moses says to the man, "Why are you beating your companion?" **Companion** could also be "friend" or "fellow Hebrew" or "kinsman."

The Hebrew man answered, "Who made you a prince and judge over us?" **Prince** here means "ruler" or "officer," not a son of a King. It means one who rules or has authority. A **judge** is someone who settles disputes.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use to describe the phrase "prince and judge." Pause this audio here.

When Pharaoh heard that Moses killed an Egyptian, Pharaoh tried to kill Moses. So Moses runs away from Pharaoh.

Moses went to and stayed in the land of **Midian** and sat down by a well. Midian is both the name of a place and a people group. The exact location of Midian is not known because the people were nomadic, but it is likely east of Egypt. The Midianites are distant relatives of the Hebrews and also worship God.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use to describe Midian. Pause this audio here.

This phrase that Moses sat by a well could mean both a momentary event, like he was tired from his long journey, but could also mean that he settled and lived in Midian by a well. A **well** is a deep hole dug into the ground. Water from an underground source comes into this hole. People use a clay jar attached to a rope to pull water up from this deep hole. The water is used for their animals and for daily use in the community.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use to describe a well. Pause this audio here.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage Exodus 2:11–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 2:11–15

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (4350860 KB)

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Exodus 2:16–25

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 2:16–25 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 2:16–25 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 2:16–25 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This story explains how Moses, a stranger in a foreign land, finds a new family and a new home. Moses previously fled from his homeland in Egypt after angering the Egyptian king, or Pharaoh. Now Moses is a stranger in the new and foreign land of the Midianites.

Stop here and look at a map of Egypt and Midian as a group. Pause this audio here.

At the end of the last story, Moses sat down beside a well of water in the land of Midian. The priest of Midian lived near that well. A priest was someone who acted as a spokesman of the people before God. A priest presented people's gifts to God. The priest of Midian had seven daughters, and at the start of this story they are going to the well to draw out water for their flock of animals to drink. These daughters were probably all unmarried, though some of them were probably old enough to marry. The animals they brought to the well

were probably sheep or goats, and they were an important part of the wealth and livelihood of the priest of Midian's family. The daughters came to the well to get water for their animals. In that time, people would lower a container into the well, fill it with water, then pull it out again and pour the water from the container into troughs for their animals to drink from.

Stop here and look at a picture of a sheep, a goat, a well, a container for drawing water, and a watering trough as a group. Pause this audio here.

As the daughters collected water, some shepherds came and drove them away from the well. These shepherds were men who had their own flocks of animals. The well did not belong to them, but they did not want to share it with the girls or allow the girls to make use of it. In this time, it was usually the young men of the household who went to collect water for their family's flock to drink from; however, the priest of Midian had no sons, and so he had to send his daughters to do this job instead. This created a problem, because the girls were probably afraid of the older and more aggressive male shepherds.

Moses sees the male shepherds driving the girls away. He stands up and rescues the girls. He may have driven the male shepherds away, or ordered them to leave the girls alone. Moses then even helped the daughters to collect the water and fill the troughs for their animals to drink. This scene tells us several things about Moses. It tells us that Moses is a virtuous man. He cares deeply about justice and fairness, and he helps those in need. Moses especially cares about defending those who are weak from those who are strong. His defense of Reuel's daughters is like his defense of the Israelite slave abused by the Egyptian in a previous story.

After they finished giving the animals water, the seven girls rushed home. They came to their father, the priest of Midian, whose name was Reuel. Reuel asked his daughters why they had returned home so soon that day. Reuel's daughters explained that a man had rescued them from the shepherds, and that he had helped them collect the water into the drinking troughs. The daughters and Reuel do not yet know who Moses is, and the daughters call him simply "an Egyptian." Moses was actually an Israelite, but he had been raised in the king of Egypt's household; the daughters may have thought Moses was an Egyptian by the way he dressed or spoke.

Reuel asked his daughters where this man who rescued them was, and asked why his daughters left this man behind at the well. Reuel asked these questions to show his great surprise that his daughters did not invite Moses home with them, because in that time people usually showed their gratitude by inviting someone into their home and giving him a meal. Reuel now wants to show his gratitude to Moses for rescuing his daughters, so he instructs them to go back and invite Moses to have a meal with them.

Stop and discuss this question as a group: What kind of customs do you have for showing your gratitude to somebody? What happens when you forget to do this? Tell a story about a time when you or someone you know forgot to show your gratitude to someone. Pause the recording here.

The story moves forward in time here and does not show the daughters' invitation to Moses or the meal Moses shared with Reuel and his family. Reuel gave his daughter Zipporah to Moses to marry, and Moses was happy to live in Reuel's home. Reuel made Moses a member of his family, which shows how pleased Reuel must have been with Moses. He would not give his daughter in marriage to Moses if he mistrusted Moses or disliked Moses. Some time later, Zipporah gave birth to a son. Moses named his son "Gershom." In Moses' language, "Gershom" meant "a foreigner"; Moses explained that he chose this name because he himself had been a foreigner in the land of Midian. This name was very important to Moses, because Moses was a foreigner who fled from his homeland and from his people. But he found a new home and a new family.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What are the naming customs in your culture? How do you choose names for newborn babies? What kinds of special significance do children's names have in your culture? Pause the recording here.

The story now returns to Egypt, Moses' homeland. Sometime while Moses was living with Reuel, the king of Egypt died. However, the Israelites continued to be slaves to the Egyptians. Their hardship and suffering continued to be very great, and they groaned in their captivity. These are agonized, tearful cries. They cried out to God to rescue them from their slavery. God heard their cries for help, and God remembered the promise he had made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the ancestors of the Israelites. God had promised these men that He would bless their descendants, rescue them from oppression, and lead them to a special land to dwell in. At this

point in the story, God hears the Israelites; he sees their suffering; and he remembers his promise. God wants to help them, because they are His people. God knew it was time to save them from slavery.

This story emphasizes God's desire to rescue those who are oppressed and in need of Him. The story emphasizes this by first telling how Moses rescued the daughters of the priest of Midian, then ending by telling how God remembered his promise to rescue the Israelites from slavery. Moses' desire to save the daughters reminds us of God's desire to save the Israelites.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 2:16–25 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has seven scenes.

In the first scene: The daughters of Reuel, the priest of Midian (who is also called Reuel), come to a well to draw water for their sheep.

In the second scene: A group of male shepherds come and drive the daughters away.

In the third scene: Moses defends the daughters from the shepherds. Moses then helps the daughters draw out water for their sheep.

In the fourth scene: The daughters return home and tell Reuel their father everything that happened at the well. Reuel instructs them to invite Moses to come to their house and eat with them.

In the fifth scene: Moses marries Zipporah, one of Reuel's daughters.

In the sixth scene: Zipporah gives birth to a son, and Moses names the baby "Gershom."

In the seventh scene: The king of Egypt dies, and the people of Israel cry out to God to release them from their slavery. God hears their cries and remembers his covenant with Abraham.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Reuel, the priest of Midian (also called "Reuel")
- Reuel's daughter Zipporah
- Reuel's six other daughters
- A group of male shepherds
- Pharaoh, the king of Egypt
- The people of Israel
- And God

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: Reuel and his daughters live in the land of Midian. The daughters of Reuel go from their home to a well, then back home. Reuel tells them to go back to the well again and to invite Moses into their home. However, the Bible does not describe the scene of the daughters' invitation to Moses; instead, the story in the Bible jumps ahead to a later time when Moses is living in Reuel's home and Reuel gives Moses his daughter Zipporah in marriage. After this, the story moves away from the land of Midian, back to the land of Egypt, where the king of Egypt has just died and the enslaved Israelites continue to suffer.

In Scene One, Moses is already sitting beside the well. Then the seven daughters of Reuel, the priest of Midian, come with their flock to a well so they can give the water to their flock to drink.

Stop and show a picture of a sheep, a goat, a well, a container for drawing water, and a trough. Pause the recording here.

The story does not say how much work the daughters completed before the shepherds came to drive them away. The daughters may have already filled the containers with water and begun to pour the water into the troughs when the shepherds came, or they may have only just begun to lower their containers into the well.

In Scene Two, some male shepherds come and drive Reuel's daughters away from the well. They are stronger and perhaps older than Reuel's daughters, and so the daughters are afraid of them. The male shepherds do not want to allow the girls to use the water.

In Scene Three, Moses rescues Reuel's daughters. The Bible passage does not state clearly how Moses does this. It may be that Moses drove the male shepherds away, or it may be that he commanded them to leave the girls alone, and the shepherds, afraid of Moses, obeyed him. But the Bible is clear that Moses helped the girls: the Hebrew word in the story says that he "saved" or "rescued" them. Moses does not only save the girls from the male shepherds; he also stays with them and helps them give water to the girls' flock.

In Scene Four, the daughters return home and tell their father what happened at the well. Reuel asks his daughters two questions: since Moses rescued them, why isn't Moses with them now? Why did they leave him at the well? Reuel asks these questions because he is so surprised. He is surprised that his daughters did not show their gratitude to Moses by inviting Moses home with them. Reuel believes that he and his daughters should give Moses a meal to show how thankful they are for Moses' help. Reuel then tells his daughters to go back and invite Moses to their home to eat a meal with them.

In Scene Five, some time has passed by, and Moses is now living in Reuel's house. The girls must have gone back to invite Moses to their home to eat a meal with them, and Moses must have accepted, but this scene is not in the Bible. Reuel gives his daughter Zipporah to Moses to marry.

In Scene Six, Zipporah gives birth to her and Moses' son. Moses names the son "Gershom." In Hebrew, "Gershom" means a "foreigner." This name has special and personal significance to Moses, because Moses himself has been a foreigner in a strange land.

In Scene Seven, the story moves from Midian, the land of Moses' new home, to Egypt, Moses' former home.

Stop and show a map showing both Egypt and the land of Midian. Notice the distance between the two lands. Pause the recording here.

Years pass, and now the king of Egypt dies, and the Israelites continue to suffer as the Egyptians' slaves. The Israelites cry out to God to rescue them from slavery. God hears their prayers, and God remembers the covenant he made with Abraham. God sees the Israelites, and he knows that they are the descendants of Abraham.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 2:16–25 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has seven scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Reuel, the priest of Midian
- Reuel's daughter Zipporah
- Reuel's six other daughters
- A group of male shepherds
- Pharaoh, the king of Egypt
- The people of Israel
- And God

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In Scene One, the seven daughters of Reuel, the priest of Midian, come with their flock to a well. They begin to draw water from the well so they can give the water to their flock to drink.

In Scene Two, some male shepherds come and drive Reuel's daughters away from the well. The male shepherds do not want to allow the girls to use the water.

Pause the drama.

- The shepherds are bigger and stronger than we are.
- We can't fight them or challenge them.
- We are afraid of them. [!end] Continue the drama.

In Scene Three, Moses rescues Reuel's daughters from the shepherds. Moses perhaps drove the male shepherds away, or commanded them to leave the girls alone. Moses also stays with the girls and fills the watering troughs for them.

Pause the drama.

- It angers me that the shepherds were being so unjust and so unkind.
- The girls could not defend themselves, so I wanted to help them. [!end] Continue the drama.

In Scene Four, the daughters return home, and their father asks why they are back so soon. They tell their father what happened at the well. Their father asks why Moses isn't with them, and why they left him at the well? He then tells his daughters to go back and invite Moses to their home to eat a meal with them.

Pause the drama.

- I was surprised that they were back so soon.
- It usually takes them much longer to fill the drinking troughs and give water to all the animals.

Ask the person playing Reuel how he felt when he heard about Moses rescuing his daughters. You may hear:

- I couldn't believe they didn't think to invite him home with them!
- After all he did for them, we should show our thankfulness by giving him a meal.
- I was surprised that they just left him at the well after he showed them such kindness!
[!end] Continue the drama.

In Scene Five, Moses is now living in Jethro's house. Reuel gives his daughter Zipporah to Moses to marry.

Pause the drama.

- I feel content.
- I feel happy.
- I was a lonely foreigner and now I have a family.

Ask the person playing Reuel, "Why did you allow Moses to live in your house? Why did you give him one of your daughters in marriage?" You may hear:

- Moses pleased me by his actions.
- Moses is a righteous and good man. [!end] Continue the drama.

In Scene Six, Zipporah gives birth to a son. Moses names the son "Gershom."

Pause the drama.

- In my language, "Gershom" means "a foreigner."
- This name has special and personal significance to me, because I myself was a foreigner in this land, but now I have a family. [!end] Continue the drama.

In Scene Seven, the story moves from Midian, the land of Moses' new home, to Egypt, Moses' former home. The king of Egypt has just died, and the Israelites cry out to God for help. God hears their prayers, and God sees the Israelites.

Pause the drama.

- We are suffering under the Egyptians.
- The Egyptians make us their slaves.
- We are not free.
- We are hurt and oppressed by the Egyptians.

Ask the person playing God, "Why do you give attention to the cries of the Israelites?" You may hear:

- It angers me that the Egyptians are so cruel and unkind.
- The people of Israel cannot defend themselves, and so I want to help them.
- They are my chosen people, and I promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that I would rescue them.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 2:16–25 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The **priest** of Midian had seven daughters. A priest acted as the spokesman of the people before God, and presented the people's gifts to God.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **priest**. Look up priest in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

The seven daughters of the priest of Midian went out to draw water from a well. They put the water in troughs for their flock to drink from. Their flock probably consisted of sheep or goats.

Stop here and look at a picture of sheep, goats, a well, a container for drawing water, and a drinking trough as a group. Pause this audio here.

Some **shepherds** came and drove the girls away from the well. Shepherds were men who tended to goats and sheep.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **shepherds**. Look up shepherd in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

Moses stood up and defended the girls from the shepherds, and helped them fill up their drinking troughs. After the daughters return home and Reuel invites Moses to his home for a meal, the story jumps ahead in time. Now Moses is living in Reuel's house, and Reuel gives Moses his daughter Zipporah in marriage. After Moses and Zipporah are married, Zipporah gives birth to a son. Moses names his son Gershom. The name "Gershom" in Moses' language meant a **foreigner** or, according to some translations, a **sojourner**. Moses explained that he had himself been a foreigner or sojourner in the land of Midian, and that was why he chose this name for his son. The name "Gershom" had special and personal significance to Moses, because now Moses was no longer a foreigner. God had brought him to a new family now.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **foreigner** or **sojourner**. Look up foreigner and sojourner in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

During this time, the king of Egypt dies. The story refers to him here as king, but he is the same man called Pharaoh at other times. God hears the Israelites and He sees them; and God remembers the **covenant** he once made to rescue them. Some translations say that God saw the Israelites and "knew"; others say that He saw the Israelites and "took notice" of them or "was concerned" for them.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **covenant**. Look up covenant in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 2:16–25

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3325073 KB)

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Exodus 3:1–10

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 3:1–10 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 3:1–10 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 3:1-10 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This story happens after Moses has fled from Egypt to Midian and has married Zipporah. This is a narrative story of God revealing himself to Moses in a burning bush. God tells Moses God has seen that his people are suffering and God tells Moses that he is going to send Moses to rescue his people, the Israelites, from Egypt.

Stop here and look at a map of Midian and Egypt as a group. Pause this audio here.

The passage does not tell us how long has passed since Moses got married in the last story, but we know from other passages that this story takes place some years later. Moses is looking after the flocks which belong to his father-in-law, Jethro. Jethro is another name for Reuel, the name that we heard in the previous passage. Jethro and Reuel are the same man. You will remember that Jethro is the father of Moses' wife Zipporah. Jethro is a priest in Midian. He is probably a very influential man. Jethro's flocks would have included sheep and goats.

Stop here and look at a picture of sheep and goats as a group. Pause this audio here.

These are the flocks which Jethro's daughters had brought to the well in the previous story. The flocks would have been the family's livelihood. The fact that Moses has been put in charge of them suggests Moses is now completely at home in Midian with his wife's family. It also suggests that Moses completely identified with his people, the Hebrews. You will remember that Moses grew up in the Egyptian palace. An Egyptian from this community would have never become a shepherd. In contrast, the Hebrews had a long history of looking after flocks of animals.

Moses takes the animals far into the wilderness. Some translations say he went "to the west" or to "the far side" of the wilderness, but we do not know precisely where he went. The story suggests he has gone beyond his usual grazing areas. He is a long way from home in an unfamiliar place.

Moses comes to a mountain called Horeb. This is probably the same mountain which is later called Sinai. Horeb means desert or desolation. We do not know the meaning of the name Sinai. We do not know where this mountain is. The story tells us this is the mountain of God which probably means that people considered this mountain sacred or holy. At this point in the story, Moses does not know the significance of this mountain, but this mountain will become the place where God meets with Moses.

Stop here and look at a picture of a mountain as a group. Pause this audio here.

Moses is at the mountain of God when the angel of Yahweh appears to Moses. The Old Testament often talks about the "angel of Yahweh." This special angel speaks with so much authority that it is like God himself is speaking. This passage uses the angel of Yahweh and Yahweh interchangeably, and so it might even be that this angel is God himself.

In this story, the angel of Yahweh takes on the symbolic form of a flame of fire. A flame of fire is often a symbol of Yahweh's presence throughout the Old Testament.

The flame of fire appears in the middle of a thorn bush, but the fire does not burn up the bush. Moses thinks that it is strange that the fire is not burning up the bush and changes direction to go closer and have a look.

Stop here and tell a story about a fire which damaged or destroyed something. Pay special attention to the words and phrases you use to describe what the fire does to the things in its path. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh sees that Moses has come over to look closer, and calls to Moses. Moses responds by saying "here I am," which is a natural response in Hebrew, Moses' language, for someone who's name has just been called.

Stop here and take it in turns to call out the name of someone in the group. Pay special attention to the words and phrases you use to respond when your name is called. Pause this audio here.

God tells Moses not to come near. The phrase "to come near" is often used in the old testament to refer to coming into the presence of God. Yahweh then instructs Moses to remove his sandals. Sandals are a type of shoe which are tied with straps. When a person takes off their shoes, this can be a sign of respect.

Stop here and look at a picture of sandals as a group. Pause this audio here.

God then tells Moses that the ground he is standing on is holy, which means it is set apart for God. By telling Moses not to come near and instructing Moses to remove his shoes, Yahweh is showing Moses that people cannot come straight into Yahweh's presence. Yahweh is different to human beings. Yahweh is holy, or set apart from people, and Yahweh's presence transforms the wilderness into a holy and set apart place.

God now tells Moses that he is the God of Moses' father, and the God of his ancestors: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God is telling Moses that he is the same God that Moses' parents and the rest of the Israelites worshipped back in Egypt.

Moses reacts by covering his face in fear. People in Moses' time believed that those who saw God would die. Moses probably believed this too. Moses' reaction shows that Moses truly understood this was the same great God that his ancestors had known.

Yahweh then tells Moses that he has seen that his people who are in Egypt are suffering. Yahweh refers to the Israelites as his people because Yahweh has chosen them from all other people to have a special relationship with him. The phrase "my people who are in Egypt" suggests that all of Yahweh's chosen people are in Egypt, apart from Moses.

Yahweh says he has heard and paid attention to his people's cries. The Egyptian slave masters were forcing the Israelites to do hard work in bad conditions. The people were crying out, or wailing for help, because the Egyptians were treating them badly.

Yahweh says he has come to deliver or rescue his people from the Egyptians. The original language says that Yahweh will snatch his people away from the Egyptians. The language makes it sound like the rescue will involve some violence.

Yahweh tells Moses that he will take his people out of Egypt to a good and big land flowing with milk and honey. Milk is the white liquid produced by mother animals to feed their young. Honey is a sweet sticky liquid made by bees. "A land flowing with milk and honey" is a way to say that the land Yahweh promises his people will be big and good for growing crops. Yahweh tells Moses that six people groups live in this land: the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites. Each of these people groups probably lived in a particular place, and all together their individual lands were the land Yahweh promised to the Israelites. Yahweh had promised Abram that this land would belong to Abram's descendants when Yahweh had made the covenant with Abram.

Stop here and look at a map of the promised land. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh repeats that he has heard the Israelites' cry and has seen that they are suffering. Yahweh then says to Moses, "Go, now" which is sometimes translated as "Come" in the sense of the phrase "come on!" Yahweh is calling Moses to action. Yahweh tells Moses that he is sending Moses to Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, so that Moses can bring Yahweh's people out of Egypt. Yahweh tells Moses that he, Moses, will be the one that Yahweh uses to rescue his people.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Remember what Moses did in the previous story, and why Moses had to flee to Midian. How do you feel about God choosing to use Moses to rescue his people?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 3:1-10 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

In the first scene: Moses leads Jethro's flock of sheep and goats through the wilderness to the mountain of God.

In the second scene: The angel of Yahweh appears to Moses in a fire in the middle of a bush. Moses looks at the bush and sees the bush is not burnt up. Moses goes over to see the bush more closely.

In the third scene: When Yahweh sees that Moses has turned aside, God calls to Moses. Moses replies by saying "here I am." God tells Moses not to come near and to take off his sandals because Moses is standing on holy ground. God tells Moses that he is the God of his father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. Moses hides his face because he is afraid to look at God.

In the fourth scene: Yahweh tells Moses that he has seen that his people are suffering and has heard them cry because of their slave masters. Yahweh says that he knows the suffering of his people and Yahweh has come down to rescue his people from the Egyptians and to bring them to their own land which will be spacious and good for producing crops. Yahweh tells Moses that land will be flowing with milk and honey. Yahweh says it is the land where the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites currently live.

Yahweh says that he has heard the cry of his people and says that he has seen that the Egyptians treat his people harshly. Yahweh says he will send Moses to Pharaoh so that Moses can bring Yahweh's people out of Egypt.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Yahweh

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

The story starts with an opening marker like "One day, Moses was looking after the flocks," or "Now, Moses was looking after the flocks." This marker shows that this is a new story, and is a separate scene to the previous story. The passage does not say how much time has passed since Moses got married, but from other passages we know that this is several years later.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Each person should tell a short story about someone who went on a journey. The rest of the group should pay attention to the words used at the start of each story. Pause this audio here.

In the first scene, Moses is looking after Jethro's sheep and goats. Moses takes the flock through the wilderness, beyond the usual grazing places, until he comes to the mountain of God. The text is not clear whether he led the flocks from in front, or whether he drove them from behind.

A wilderness is a place where no-one lives and very little grows. The wilderness where Moses was would probably have been dry and rocky.

Stop here and look at a picture of a wilderness as a group. Pause this audio here.

In the second scene, Moses is at the mountain and the angel of Yahweh appears as a flame of fire in the middle of a bush. We do not know exactly what type of bush the angel of Yahweh appeared in but it was probably some kind of thorn bush. Thorn bushes have lots of sharp spikes on the branches which are called thorns.

Stop here and look at a picture of an example of a thorn bush as a group.

Discuss what thorny or spiky bushes you are familiar with in your culture. Pause this audio here.

Moses notices the fire and changes direction to go and have a closer look.

In the third scene, Yahweh calls out to Moses from the middle of the thorn bush. Yahweh calls "Moses, Moses", repeating Moses' name to communicate urgency to Moses. Moses replies saying "here I am." God tells Moses not to come any closer and to take off his sandals.

Now the language of the story shows a pause while God waits for Moses to take off his shoes.

Stop here and discuss as a group: When you are telling a story, how do you show a pause in the action? Pause this audio here.

God now tells Moses that he is the God of Moses' father, and the God of his ancestors. Moses covers his face in fear. We do not know whether Moses used his hands or his clothes to cover his face.

Then Yahweh declares that he has seen the suffering of his people. Yahweh emphasizes his compassion on his people by saying "I have carefully watched the misery of my people."

Yahweh says he has come down to rescue his people. The text does not tell us where Yahweh has come down from. Yahweh then says that he will bring his people up out of Egypt to the promised land. The phrase "to bring up" probably means literally taking the people from the low lying lands of Egypt to the mountains of the promised land.

God gives Moses a list of 6 people groups who currently lived in the land.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story where you are listing groups of people or things. Pay attention to how you list them, in what order, and how you introduce the list. Pause this audio here.

The phrase "and now, behold" gives emphasis to what follows. Yahweh repeats that the Israelites' cry has reached him, and that Yahweh has seen the way the Egyptians cruelly treat the Israelites. This repetition emphasizes that Yahweh has heard his people's cry for help.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 3:1-10 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Yahweh

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Act out Moses in the wilderness leading Jethro's flock through the wilderness until he reaches Horeb, the mountain of God.

Pause the drama.

Act out the angel of Yahweh appearing to Moses in a fire. The fire is in the middle of a bush. Moses looks at the bush and sees the bush is not burnt up. Moses says "I will turn to go closer to see this amazing thing, to see why the bush is not burnt up."

Pause the drama.

Yahweh sees that Moses has turned aside, and God says "Moses, Moses." Moses replies by saying "Here I am."

Pause the drama.

God says to Moses "Do not come closer. Take off your sandals because you are standing on holy ground." God then says to Moses "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." Act out Moses hiding his face because he is afraid to look at God.

Pause the drama.

Now ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I am pleased Moses has responded to me," or "I want Moses to know who I am so he will trust me," or "I want Moses to know I am the God who made a covenant with his ancestor, Abram." [!end] Continue the drama.

Yahweh says to Moses "I have seen the suffering of my people in Egypt. I have heard their cries because of their harsh slave drivers. I know that my people are suffering."

Pause the drama.

Now ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I am amazed that God has seen my people are suffering," or "I am pleased God has seen how the Egyptians treat us. Maybe he will do something about it." [!end] Continue the drama.

Act out Yahweh saying to Moses, "I have come down to rescue my people from the Egyptians and take them to their own land which will be spacious and good for producing crops. That land will be flowing with milk and honey. It is the land where the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites live."

Pause the drama.

Yahweh says to Moses, "I have heard the cry of my people and I have seen that the Egyptians treat my people harshly. Now you should go, because I am sending you to Pharaoh. You must bring my people out of Egypt."

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 3:1-10 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

This passage uses two different names for God, the personal name **Yahweh** and a more general name **God**. You will remember that Yahweh is the proper name for the God of the Jews. Most English translations use the word **Lord** which means the supreme master over everything. The name "God" means divine or supreme being. Lord and God refer to the same divine or supreme being.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **Yahweh**. Look up Yahweh in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

Moses is looking after the flocks which belong to his father-in-law, Jethro. **Father-in-law** is a phrase which means the father of his wife. If your language has a word for the father of his wife then you can use that word. If your language does not have a specific word, you can describe Jethro as the father of Moses' wife.

Flocks are groups of sheep and goats which belonged to the same person. Use the same word or phrase for flocks as you used in the previous passage.

Jethro was a priest in Midian. **Priests** were people who represented a god to the people. Jethro would have represented the god of the Midianites to the people of Midian. Use the same word or phrase for a priest in Midian as you used in the previous passage. For more information on priests, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses takes the animals far into the wilderness. A **wilderness** is a deserted place where no one lives and no one has cultivated the land. People who lived in towns and villages would take their animals into the wilderness to find food for the animals. The wilderness where Moses was would have been dry and rocky.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **wilderness**. Look up wilderness in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

Moses comes to a mountain called Horeb. A **mountain** is an area of very high land. Mountains usually have steep sloping sides which join together at a high point. If your language does not have a word for mountain, you can describe it as an area of high land.

Stop here and look at a picture of a mountain as a group. Pause this audio here.

The **angel of Yahweh** appears to Moses. An **angel** is a supernatural, spiritual being. The Old Testament often talks about the "angel of Yahweh." This special angel speaks with so much authority that it is like God himself is speaking. It might even be that this angel is God himself.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **angel of Yahweh**. Look up angel and angel of Yahweh or angel of the Lord in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

Yahweh instructs Moses to remove his sandals. **Sandals** are a type of shoe which are tied with straps. If your language does not have a word for a type of shoe tied with straps, you can use a general term for shoes.

God tells Moses that the ground he is standing on is **holy**, which means it is set apart for a special purpose for God. When holy refers to God himself, it signifies that he is distinct from his creation, and that he is morally perfect. It refers to his majesty and power.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **holy**. Look up holy in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

Yahweh tells Moses that he is sending Moses to **Pharaoh**, the king of Egypt. Use the same word or phrase for Pharaoh as you used in previous passages. For more information on Pharaoh, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 3:1–10

Audio Content

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Exodus 3:11–22

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 3:11–22 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 3:11–22 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 3:11–22 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This passage continues the story of Yahweh appearing to Moses in a burning bush in the wilderness. Yahweh has told Moses that he, Yahweh, has seen that his people, the Israelites, are suffering. Yahweh has also told Moses that he is going to send Moses to rescue his people from Egypt.

This passage is a narrative story where Yahweh tells Moses what he must do, and promises to be with Moses.

Moses says to Yahweh, "Who am I to go to Pharaoh and lead the Israelites out of Egypt?" Moses is not trying to decline Yahweh's request. In Moses's culture if a person was accepting an honour it was polite and respectful to respond by saying "Who am I to do this?" Moses' response shows he understands what Yahweh is asking him to do. Moses was being polite to Yahweh and was also expressing that he didn't feel "good enough" or "important enough" to do this very important job.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about someone who has been asked by an important person to do a job for them. Talk about how that person responds when they are asked to do the job. What is the polite response expected in your culture? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh responds by promising to be with Moses. When Yahweh promises to be with someone it means that he will help that person and give them guidance. With Yahweh's help and guidance, the Israelites will recognise Moses' authority.

Yahweh also promises Moses that all the Israelites will return to Mount Sinai to worship Yahweh, which is where Yahweh and Moses are currently meeting. You will remember that Mount Sinai is outside Egypt. This sign will confirm that Moses has completed an important part of the job Yahweh has given him. Moses has to lead the people out of Egypt for them to get to Mount Sinai. Yahweh gives signs like this to prophets and leaders in the Old Testament so they know that they have completed an important job.

Stop here and look at a map of Mount Sinai and Egypt as a group. Pause this audio here.

Moses asks God what his name is, so he can tell the Israelites. All the people groups who lived around the Israelites believed in more than one god, and so Moses expects the Israelites to ask him which god he was speaking to. There are lots of possible reasons why it was important for Moses to know God's name.

In Moses' time, people thought that in order to pray to a god and worship him, they had to say the name of the god they were praying to. Moses may be asking for the name of God because "the God of your fathers" may not be enough for people to know.

In ancient cultures, people believed a name told them information about the character of a person. Moses is asking God for information about his character. Moses may also have been looking for reassurance that God really could achieve what he was promising to Moses.

It was important for the Israelites to understand that Moses was a true prophet. Throughout the history of the Israelites, a person can only be a true prophet if that person comes in the name of Yahweh.

God tells Moses that his name is Yahweh, by saying "I am who I am." The word Yahweh in Hebrew, Moses' language, means either I am or I cause to be. In Hebrew culture, names revealed the character of a person. God shows his people his character through his name "Yahweh." The name "Yahweh" shows God's faithfulness to his people. The name "Yahweh" also shows that He is and always will be the same, the creator God. All the other characteristics of God are encompassed in this name "Yahweh."

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Go round the group and discuss the meaning or significance of each person's name. How do you choose names in your culture? Pause this audio here.

Now discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a time you were asked by someone to pass on a message. Pay attention to the language you use to describe that you were speaking on behalf of someone else, or were coming in their name to bring a message. Pause this audio here.

The name Yahweh was known by Moses' ancestors, but it seems that the Israelites were no longer using the name Yahweh. This might be because the most recent generations of Israelites had lost their knowledge of the true God, or it could mean that Yahweh was now taking on a new and deeper meaning for the people of Israel.

Yahweh gives Moses authority to tell the Israelites that "I am" has sent me to you." Yahweh is making it clear that Yahweh is sending Moses to speak on his behalf and represent Yahweh to the Israelites. The words that Moses is to speak to the Israelites will be the words of Yahweh, not just the words of Moses.

Yahweh also tells Moses to say to the Israelites that it is the God of their ancestors who has sent Moses to them. This would help the Israelites to realise it is not a new god who has sent Moses but the same god that their

ancestors worshipped. Yahweh tells Moses that his name, Yahweh, should be used immediately by the Israelites to identify him, and that his name should be used by all their descendants from age to age.

Yahweh asks Moses to tell the elders, or leaders, of Israel what Yahweh has said. Yahweh says he has been carefully watching over the Israelites and has seen how the Egyptians have treated the Israelites. This is a way of Yahweh saying that he is going to do something about their suffering. Yahweh then repeats the promise he made to Moses in the previous passage. Yahweh says that he will bring his people up out of Egypt into the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites. Yahweh describes this in the same way as in the previous passage, saying this will be a land flowing with milk and honey.

Yahweh instructed Moses that when they went to speak to the King of Egypt they must talk about themselves as Hebrews. This is because the King would have thought about them as Hebrews rather than Israelites.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: The same group of people can often be described differently. For instance, the government authorities might not agree with the way a people group describe themselves. Share any examples you can think of. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh instructed the leaders of Israel to request that the King let them travel into the wilderness for three days. In Moses' time, this was a way of asking permission to leave Egypt for as long as they wanted to, not just for three days. The Israelites were to ask the King if they could leave to go and make sacrifices to Yahweh. This is also a way of saying the Israelites were going to go and set up their own country with their own god. This would mean the Israelites would have a separate identity to Egypt.

Yahweh says he knows the King will not let the Israelites leave Egypt even if the most powerful human hand tries to force him. This shows that Yahweh knows what the King is like. Yahweh knows the King's personality and how he thinks. Some translations say that the King will not let the Israelites leave unless a mighty hand forces him to let them go. However, it is closer to the meaning of the original language, Hebrew, to say that the most powerful person could not force the King to agree.

Yahweh then says he will do something no human can do. Yahweh will make the King agree by reaching out his hand to strike the Egyptians, which is a way of saying that he will destroy them. Yahweh says he will do this by performing miracles, or signs which are beyond human understanding. Yahweh does not reveal to Moses at this time what these miracles will be. Yahweh tells Moses that the King will then let the Israelites leave Egypt.

The Egyptians had been treating the Israelites very badly, but Yahweh tells Moses that this will change. Yahweh says that the Israelites will find favour in the eyes of the Egyptians. This is a way of saying that the Egyptians will look kindly on the Israelites and will give valuable items made of gold and silver and precious clothing to the Israelite women before they leave Egypt. In Moses' culture, the women would usually be responsible for looking after the family valuables.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story of someone who treated you with unexpected kindness. Pay attention to how you describe their attitude towards you. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses that this is how the Israelites will plunder the Egyptians. This is usually a way of saying that one nation steals another nation's wealth after a battle. Yahweh is telling Moses that he, Yahweh, will fight the battle on behalf of Israel and the Egyptians would willingly give their wealth to the people of Israel. This way, Yahweh will make sure that the Israelites are provided for when they leave Egypt.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Take it in turns to tell a short story of a time when God has provided for you in an unexpected way.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 3:11–22 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

In the first scene: Moses asks God "Who am I to do this?" God answers by telling Moses that he will be with Moses.

In the second scene: Moses asks God what he should tell the Israelites. God replies and tells Moses that "I am who I am."

In the third scene: Yahweh tells Moses to assemble the leaders of Israel, and instructs Moses to tell the leaders he has met with the god of their fathers and that he has promised to take them out of Egypt. Yahweh tells Moses that the leaders will listen to him, and then they must go and speak to the King of Egypt.

In the fourth scene: Yahweh tells Moses that the King of Egypt will not allow the Israelites to leave. Yahweh says he will do miracles in Egypt and then the King will let the Israelites leave. Yahweh also says that the Egyptians will look kindly at the Israelites and the Israelites will be able to take the Egyptians' riches.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Yahweh

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

This passage continues from the previous story of Yahweh appearing to Moses in a burning bush. The whole story takes place in the wilderness, at the mountain of God. You will remember that the wilderness was probably dry and rocky.

Stop here and look at a picture of a wilderness as a group. Pause this audio here.

In the first scene, Moses asks "Who am I?" Moses probably did not expect an answer to this question, but is suggesting that he is not qualified to go to the King. Yahweh does not answer Moses' question but responds by promising to be with Moses. This shows us that it is more important to understand who Yahweh is than who Moses is.

The pattern of God speaking and Moses protesting continues throughout the following passages.

In the second scene, Moses responds to Yahweh by saying "if I come to the Israelites." It is not completely clear from the passage what Moses is thinking when he asks this question. Moses may be unsure whether he will accept Yahweh's instructions, or Moses may be assuming that he is going to go to Egypt. Moses may simply be asking what to say if the people ask Moses who sent him. In Yahweh's response, Yahweh repeats his name, or the phrase "I am," four times. This repetition strongly emphasizes the importance of Yahweh's name and everything it tells us about Yahweh's character.

In this scene, Moses and Yahweh continue the conversation they had in the wilderness when Yahweh appeared to Moses in the burning bush. You will remember their conversation from the previous passage. However, the phrase "and God also said to Moses" may suggest that a period of time has passed since the previous passage which the author, Moses, did not choose to write about here. However, we do not know if this is the case.

The phrase "and God also said to Moses" also emphasizes that everything has been told to Moses directly from Yahweh, and is Yahweh's words, not Moses' words.

Yahweh says, "This is my name forever and this is how I am to be remembered by all your descendants." He is saying the same thing in two different ways to add emphasis and show how important his name is. What Yahweh says is a form of poetry that Moses uses to highlight important parts in the story.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: When you are telling a story, how do you emphasize the most important part? Pause this audio here.

In the third scene, Yahweh tells Moses to "Go" and gather the leaders of Israel. Yahweh is telling Moses he must go to Egypt because that is where the leaders of Israel are. The instruction was for Moses to call the leaders to meet together. He did not necessarily need to go around and gather them himself.

Yahweh tells Moses what he must say to the leaders of Israel. Yahweh repeats a lot of what he said in the last passage. This is a common way for ancient storytellers to explain what was commanded, and then to explain how it was to be fulfilled. They would use almost exactly the same words to emphasize that the commandment was to be fulfilled exactly as it was commanded.

Yahweh says that he will bring his people up out of Egypt into the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites. Yahweh says this will be a land flowing with milk and honey. You will remember that this is how Yahweh described the land he would give to the Israelites in the previous passage. It means that the land would be big and spacious and good for growing crops. You will remember that the phrase "to bring up" probably means literally taking the people from the low-lying lands of Egypt to the mountains of the promised land.

In the fourth scene, Yahweh tells Moses he knows the King will not let them leave, and so Yahweh will strike the Egyptians. Yahweh is telling Moses that Yahweh's strikes are a direct consequence of the King refusing to let the Israelites go.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about actions which led to specific consequences. The rest of the group should pay attention to the language used to show that the consequences were a result of the actions. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses that the Israelite women should ask their neighbours for items made of gold and silver and valuable clothing. Yahweh also instructs the Israelite women to ask for gifts from any woman who lives in her house. It is unclear whether this refers to a woman living in the Israelite's house, or whether this means a woman living in the neighbour's house. It is unlikely the Israelites would have had other people living in their houses because the Israelites were slaves. Therefore the command probably means that the Israelite women were to ask for gifts from their neighbours and any women living with their neighbours. This is a command that the women are expected to follow.

The items made of gold and silver may have been jewelry or other household items. The word used for clothing in Hebrew, Moses' language, would have referred to outer garments such as cloaks.

Stop here and look at pictures of silver and gold items and cloaks as a group. Pause this audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 3:11–22 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Yahweh

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

This story happens in the wilderness. Moses has seen a burning bush and gone closer to look at it. Yahweh has spoken to Moses from the burning bush and told Moses that he, Yahweh, has seen the Israelites are suffering in Egypt. Yahweh has just told Moses that he is sending Moses to rescue the Israelites and take them to their own land.

But Moses says to God, "Who am I to go and speak to the king? Who am I to lead the Israelites out of Egypt?"

Pause the drama.

God says to Moses "I will be with you. And this is the sign that I am the one who has sent you. When you have led the Israelites out of Egypt, you will worship God here, at this mountain."

Pause the drama.

Moses complains again, saying, "If I go to the Israelites and tell them that the God of their fathers has sent me, they will ask me 'What is his name?' Then what should I tell them?"

Pause the drama.

God replies to Moses and says, "I am who I am. You should tell the Israelites that I am has sent me to you." God also says to Moses, "Tell the Israelites that Yahweh, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, has sent me to you. This is my name forever, my name that people should call me from age to age."

Yahweh tells Moses, "Go and gather the leaders of Israel and say to them 'Yahweh, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel appeared to me and said: I have watched over you and seen what the Egyptians have done to you. I have promised to bring you out of your sadness in Egypt into the land where the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites live. That land will be flowing with milk and honey.'"

Pause the drama.

"The leaders of Israel will listen to you. Then you and the leaders of Israel must go to the King of Egypt and say to him, 'Yahweh, the God of the Hebrews has met with us. Let us take a journey into the wilderness for three days so we can offer sacrifices to Yahweh our God.' But I know the King of Egypt will not let you go, not even if the most powerful person tries to make him agree. So I, Yahweh, will raise my hand and strike the Egyptians. I will perform all kinds of miracles for them to see. Then the King of Egypt will let you go."

Pause the drama.

"I will make the Egyptians look at you kindly. They will give you gifts when you go so you will not leave Egypt with nothing. Every Israelite woman will ask for silver and gold and beautiful clothes from her Egyptian neighbours and from the foreign women in their houses. You will dress your children with these gifts, and take the Egyptians' wealth from them."

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 3:11-22 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

In the same way as the last story, this passage uses two different names for God, the personal name **Yahweh** and a more general name **God**. You will remember that Yahweh is the proper name for the God of the Jews. Most English translations use the word **Lord** which means the supreme master over everything. The name "God" means divine or supreme being. Lord and God refer to the same divine or supreme being. Use the same words or phrases for God and for Yahweh as you used in the previous passage. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

This passage talks about Moses going to **Pharaoh**, the king of Egypt. Use the same word or phrase for **Pharaoh** as you used in previous passages. However, this is the only time the author uses the specific title for Pharaoh in this passage. The author uses the general word for a king in the rest of this passage. For more information on Pharaoh, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh says he is sending Moses to rescue the Israelites. Use the same word or phrase for **Israelites** as you used in previous passages. For more information on the Israelites, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh says that "I am who I am." The word Yahweh in Hebrew, Moses' language, means either I am or I cause to be. It is helpful to use a translation here which explains the meaning of the name Yahweh.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **I am**. Look up **I am** and **Yahweh** in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated "**I am**" in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

Yahweh says this is his name to be used by all **generations**. In this case, generation refers to the people who live at the same time as each other. When someone talks about several generations, or uses the phrase generation to generation, this is a way of talking about one lifetime after another after another. Yahweh is saying that his name is to be used by one group of people after another for the rest of history. All of Moses' descendants are to use this name forever.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **generations**. Look up **generation** or **generations** in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

Moses is told to gather the **elders** of Israel. An elder is a person with authority in the community. In the Old Testament, an elder was usually the head of a family or a group of families. A group of elders would meet together to make decisions about the affairs in the community. In this instance, this is referring to the leaders of the Hebrew people in Egypt.

When you are translating this word, be careful that you do not use a word that just means "old people." An elder was not necessarily an old person, though they would not be a very young person either.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **elders**. Look up **elders** in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word to mean the nation's leaders in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

Moses and the elders are told to tell the king that they have met with the God of the Hebrews. Use the same word or phrase for **Hebrews** as you used in previous passages. For more information on the Hebrews, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses and the elders are to ask the King for permission to go into the wilderness to offer sacrifices to God. Use the same word or phrase for **wilderness** as you used in previous passages. For more information on wilderness, refer to the Master Glossary.

A **sacrifice** is a gift to God. People often placed the gift on a platform made of earth or large stones, which was called an altar. The purpose for a sacrifice could be that people wanted to thank God for something, worship God, confirm their relationship with God, or ask forgiveness for something they had done wrong. A **sacrifice** could involve the killing of an animal, which then would be burned on the altar. But the gift could also be food items, oil, or sweet smelling spices.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **sacrifice**. Look up **sacrifice** in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there.*

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 3:11-22

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (4844502 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 4](#)
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Exodus 4:1-17

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 4:1-17 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 4:1-17 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 4:1-17 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This passage is the last part of the conversation between Moses and Yahweh. Moses and Yahweh are still speaking on Mount Horeb. Yahweh is speaking to Moses from a bush that is on fire but not burning up. Yahweh tells Moses that Yahweh is going to send Moses to Pharaoh in Egypt to tell Pharaoh to let the Israelites leave Egypt. In this passage Yahweh is used for every instance of God until Moses talks about the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

As far as we know, Yahweh has not appeared to anyone since the time of Jacob, about 400 years earlier. In this passage, Moses brings Yahweh his concerns with obeying Yahweh's plans. Moses expresses his doubt that the Israelites will actually listen to Moses. This is the third time Moses has expressed his concern to Yahweh, and Yahweh has already reassured Moses that the Israelites will listen. Moses asks Yahweh, "what if" the Israelite leaders, or elders, do not believe him, and say, "Yahweh did not appear to you."

Yahweh's response to Moses' question, "what if" is another question. Yahweh asks Moses what Moses has in his hand. The staff in Moses' hand was not magical. It was a normal staff that a shepherd would have to keep sheep together. Sometimes a shepherd's staff would have a hook on one end in order to pull a sheep closer to the flock if it started to wander away. We know that Moses was leading his sheep when Yahweh started speaking to him. This staff was probably about 5 feet in length and could have had a hook on the end.

Stop here and look at a picture of a shepherd's staff, together as a group. Discuss this question as a group: What kind of tools do shepherds in your culture use to keep sheep, or livestock together? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh gives Moses three signs to perform in front of the Israelite elders, so that they will believe Yahweh, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, sent Moses. Yahweh wants the Israelites to know His name and that He is the same God that their important ancestors worshipped. The first sign is to take the staff that Moses has and throw it on the ground. When Moses throws it, it becomes a snake. In order to keep the snake from biting, most people would pick up a snake by the neck. This would keep the snake from turning its head to bite the hand that picked it up. However, Yahweh instructs Moses to pick up the snake by the tail, in order to show that this was miraculous. When Moses picks up the snake, it becomes a staff again. The staff was an Egyptian symbol of authority and the snake a symbol of Pharaoh himself. Most scholars believe this was to be a sign that even Yahweh has authority over Pharaoh and the Egyptians.

Stop here and look at a picture of a snake together as a group.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How does your culture feel about snakes? How would people in your culture handle a snake? Pause this audio here.

The second sign was for Moses to put his hand into his cloak, or outer garment, near his chest. When he took out his hand, it was white like snow, or really bright white, and full of skin disease. Then when Moses put his hand back into his cloak and took it out again it was healed like the rest of his flesh. This skin disease was not just a small rash, but was a serious disease. Many people feared skin diseases, so God being able to heal this showed His great power.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Discuss something in your culture that is the whitest thing you can think of. Talk about the kinds of skin diseases that you face in your culture. Is there one that is life threatening if it goes untreated? What will you use in your translation to describe this skin disease? Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of a cloak together as a group. Pause this audio here.

Then Yahweh tells Moses that if the Israelites do not listen to the voice of the first or second sign, then to do the third sign. There is a direct connection between Yahweh's signs and His word. The signs are evidence that Yahweh's word is true. Yahweh tells Moses to take water out of the Nile River and pour it on the ground. The water will turn into blood on the dry ground. The Nile is the longest river in Africa at 6650 kilometers and flows north into the Mediterranean Sea. This allows Egypt to trade with many nations around the Mediterranean Sea. The Nile was a source of prosperity for Egypt, and Egyptians identified the Nile with one of the Egyptian gods. Many scholars think that this sign was proof again that Yahweh had control and power over Egypt's source of wealth as well as being more powerful than any of the Egyptian gods.

Stop here and look at a picture of the Nile river. Look at a map of Egypt and see where the Nile is in the country. Pause this audio here.

Egyptian culture of that time placed high priority on speaking well. They had cultural stories that showed the value of good speech. Moses' address to Yahweh is one that is polite and formal. Oh Lord, or Please forgive me Lord, or master. However, Moses still complains to Yahweh that he is not and has never been a good speaker, and that Moses has not become a good speaker since Yahweh started talking to him. Moses is doing what many people in that culture would do. Moses is showing exaggerated humility when talking with someone who was more important or greater than they were.

Yahweh makes it clear that He is the one who made Moses' and all of humanity's mouths. Yahweh asks questions of Moses that He does not expect an answer to. Yahweh is fully able to overcome all of Moses' excuses and problems. Yahweh is not just sending Moses to the Israelite elders and to the Egyptians, but Yahweh Himself will go with Moses. Yahweh says that He will fill Moses' mouth with the words to say. All of Moses' excuses have not worked. Moses does not want to do what Yahweh is asking of him. This is revealed in Moses' direct and no longer polite plea to Yahweh. Some versions say, "Oh Lord, send who You will." This can be confusing because it sounds like Moses is accepting that God will send him. However, instead what Moses is saying is more like, "Please Yahweh, forgive me, but send anyone else but me."

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about the excuses you or others might give God when you don't want to do what God has asked you to do. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh shows both His anger and His great mercy to Moses. Yahweh continues to include Moses in His plan even when Moses wants to be disobedient. Yahweh says that Moses' brother, Aaron the Levite, will lead together with Moses. Both Aaron and Moses are from the Levite clan or tribe of the Israelites. We are not sure why God makes it clear in this passage that Aaron is a Levite. Yahweh says that Aaron is a good speaker, and is on his way to see Moses at that time. Yahweh says that Aaron will be glad in his heart. This is more than likely not just meaning that Aaron will be glad to see Moses, but that Aaron will be glad to hear God's plan to rescue the Israelites from Egypt.

Yahweh gives Moses no more opportunity to object, but tells Moses that Moses will speak to his brother Aaron and give Aaron the words to speak. Yahweh also promises to be with both of their mouths and teach them what to say and do. Aaron will speak for Moses, and Moses will speak to Aaron what Yahweh speaks to him. Then Yahweh tells Moses to take the staff with him to perform the miracles. Moses' staff becomes a symbol of authority for Moses. It is also a symbol of the presence of Yahweh that goes with Moses and Aaron.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 4:1-17 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has four scenes.

In the first scene: Moses asks Yahweh what to do if the Israelite elders do not listen to his words.

In the second scene: Yahweh gives Moses three signs to show the elders in order to believe God visited Moses. The signs are: turning the staff into a snake and back to a staff, Moses' hand becomes diseased and then healed, and turning the water of the Nile River to blood.

In the third scene: Moses says that he has not ever been and is not now a good speaker. Yahweh tells Moses that He will give Moses the words to speak and teach him what to say. Moses asks Yahweh to please send anyone else.

In the fourth scene: God becomes angry with Moses. Yahweh tells Moses he will send Moses' brother Aaron to speak for Moses to the people. Yahweh will be with both of their mouths and will teach them what to say. Yahweh tells Moses that Aaron will speak for Moses, and Moses will be Yahweh's voice to Aaron. Yahweh tells Moses to take the staff with them.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- The Israelite elders are mentioned
- The staff/snake
- Aaron

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: This passage continues the conversation between Moses and Yahweh on Mount Horeb. Yahweh is still speaking through a bush that is on fire, but not burning up. Moses had his shepherd's staff in his hand because Moses had led his sheep out to this area.

Moses asks Yahweh what to do if the Israelite elders do not listen to his words. Yahweh asks Moses what he has in his hand. Moses is holding his shepherd's staff. Yahweh tells Moses to drop the staff on the ground and the staff becomes a snake. Moses steps back away from the snake. Some versions say that Moses ran away, but more than likely Moses just drew back or stepped away from the snake. Yahweh then tells Moses to pick up the snake by the tail. Moses picks up the snake by the tail and the snake turns back into a staff. Yahweh tells Moses to perform this sign and the people will believe that Yahweh, the God that their ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob worshipped, has met with Moses.

Stop here and look again at a picture of the shepherd's staff. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh gives Moses another sign in case the elders do not listen to the first one. Yahweh tells Moses to put his hand in the fold of his cloak, near his chest. Moses does this. When Moses takes his hand out again, his hand has a terrible skin disease, referred to as leprosy, and is extremely white.

Stop here and look at a picture of a diseased hand as a group. Pause this audio here.

Moses put his hand back in his cloak and then pulls it out one more time and his hand is healed like the rest of his flesh. Yahweh tells Moses that if the Israelite elders don't listen to the first or second sign, then to do the third sign. This sign will be to pour some of the water from the Nile River onto the ground and it will turn into blood.

Moses says that he has not ever been and has not become a good speaker since Yahweh has been talking to Moses. Moses says that he is slow of speech and tongue. This means that Moses cannot think of or say the correct words quickly or at the right time. Here Moses is exaggerating his humility because Moses is talking with one who is so much greater than Moses is. This is a very polite way to talk to God.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How would you say that someone has a difficult time coming up with the right thing to say at the right time? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh asks Moses who made the mouths of humans, and who makes man mute, or unable to speak, or deaf, which is unable to hear, or to see, or be blind? Yahweh is asking a question that He does not expect an answer to. Yahweh tells Moses that He will go with Moses and will give Moses the words to speak and teach him what to say. Moses asks Yahweh to please send anyone else. This is a direct plea to Yahweh. Moses is no longer making excuses, but Moses is asking Yahweh directly. This is not a polite way to talk to Yahweh.

Yahweh's anger burned against Moses. This literally means that the nose of Yahweh became hot or began to burn. This was a common expression of the time to express someone getting very angry.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you talk about someone getting very angry? Pause this audio here.

At some point before this conversation, Aaron started a journey to visit Moses. Yahweh tells Moses that his brother Aaron is already on his way, so Aaron can go with Moses to speak to the people for Moses. Yahweh tells Moses that Aaron will speak for Moses, Moses will put words in Aaron's mouth. This means that as Yahweh tells Moses what to say, Moses will tell Aaron what to say. Yahweh will be with both of their mouths and will teach them what to say. Yahweh says that it will be as if Aaron is Moses' mouth and Moses will be like God to Aaron. This means that Moses will represent and speak what God is telling him to speak and will tell it to Aaron. Yahweh tells Moses to take the staff with him.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 4:1-17 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- The Israelite elders are mentioned
- The staff/snake
- Aaron

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Moses asks Yahweh what to do if the Israelite elders do not listen to his words. Yahweh asks Moses what he has in his hand. Moses is holding his shepherd's staff. Yahweh tells Moses to drop the staff on the ground, and the staff becomes a snake. Moses steps back away from the snake. Yahweh then tells Moses to pick up the snake by the tail.

Pause the drama.

Moses picks up the snake by the tail and the snake turns back into a staff. Yahweh tells Moses that the elders will listen to this first sign. They will know that the God of their fathers, of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob has visited Moses. Yahweh gives Moses two more signs to show the elders in order to believe Moses has been visited by God. Yahweh tells Moses to put his hand in the fold of his cloak. Moses does this. When Moses takes his hand out again, his hand has a terrible skin disease and is extremely white.

Pause the drama.

Moses put his hand back in his cloak and then pulls it out one more time and his hand is healed like the rest of his flesh. Yahweh tells Moses that if the Israelite elders don't listen to the first or second sign, then to do the third sign. This sign will be to pour some of the water from the Nile onto the ground and it will turn into blood.

Pause the drama.

Moses says that he has not ever been and is not now a good speaker. Yahweh asks Moses who made the mouths of humans, and who made humans to be mute, or deaf, or blind, or to see? Yahweh tells Moses that He will be with Moses, and give Moses the words to speak and teach him what to say. Moses asks Yahweh to please send anyone else.

Pause the drama.

God becomes angry with Moses. Yahweh tells Moses that Aaron is already on his way to see Moses. Yahweh will send Aaron to speak to the people for Moses. Yahweh will be with both of their mouths and will teach them what to say. Yahweh tells Moses that Aaron will speak for Moses, and Moses will be Yahweh's voice to Aaron. Yahweh tells Moses to take the staff with them.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 4:1-17 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Moses asks **Yahweh** what to do if the Israelite elders do not listen to his words. Yahweh is the personal name of God. Yahweh is used for God throughout this passage. Use the same word you have used for Yahweh before. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh asks Moses what he has in his hand. Moses is holding his **shepherd's staff**. A shepherd is someone who cares for sheep or goats. The staff a shepherd used was to make sure the sheep and goats went in the correct direction. Use the same word for shepherd you have used before. For more information on shepherd, refer to the Master Glossary. Yahweh tells Moses to perform the **sign** of the snake and the people will believe that Yahweh, the **God of your fathers**, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob has met with Moses. A sign is a signal that something is true, or will happen. See the Master Glossary for more information on miracles, signs and wonders. God is the creator of all things. God of your fathers, or ancestors, is the God who Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob worshipped. Abraham was the one that God promised to give many descendants, and to bless all of the nations through. Use the same words for God of your fathers, and Abraham, that you have used in previous passages. For more information on God and Abraham, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh gives Moses another sign. Yahweh tells Moses to put his hand in the fold of his **cloak**. The cloak is the outer garment worn over regular clothing. See the Master Glossary for more information about cloak. Moses does this. When Moses takes his hand out again, his hand has a terrible skin disease, referred to as **leprosy**, and is extremely white. Leprosy could refer to several types of skin disease, but it was extremely contagious and made a person religiously or ritually unclean.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for leprosy. Look up leprosy in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

Moses put his hand back in his cloak and then pulls it out one more time and his hand is healed like the rest of his flesh. Yahweh tells Moses that if the Israelite elders don't listen to the first or second sign, then to do the third sign. This sign will be to pour some of the water from the Nile River onto the ground and it will turn into **blood**. Blood is often used as a symbol of life, however, here it is more than likely used as a symbol of death.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for blood. Look up blood in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

Moses says, "Pardon your servant, **Lord**," and that he has not ever been and has not become a good speaker since Yahweh has been talking to His **servant**, Moses. A servant is someone who serves and works for their master, usually without a choice.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for servant. Look up servant in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

Lord means master, or someone who is in a higher position. Use the same word for Lord you've used in previous passages. For more information on Lord, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses that Aaron will speak for Moses, and Moses will be like **God** to Aaron. God is the general word used for the creator of the universe. Use the same word for God you've used in previous passages. For more information on God, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses to take the staff with him.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 4:1-17

Audio Content

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Exodus 4:18–31

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 4:18–31 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 4:18–31 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 4:18–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Moses has just encountered Yahweh on Mount Horeb. Yahweh tells Moses that Moses will go back to Egypt to tell Pharaoh to let the Israelites leave. Moses gives Yahweh many excuses why Yahweh should pick someone else, and finally Yahweh says that He will send Moses' brother Aaron with Moses.

In this passage, Yahweh is used in every instance for God, except when talking about objects of God; for example, the mountain of God, or the staff of God.

In this passage, Moses returns from Mount Horeb and goes back to Midian to his wife's father Jethro. Because Moses is a shepherd for Jethro, it is right for Moses to seek permission from Jethro to leave with his family. Moses asks permission from Jethro to go back to Egypt to check on his people. Moses is speaking about the Israelites who are still in Egypt. Jethro tells Moses to go in peace.

Stop here and look at a map of Mount Horeb, Midian, and Egypt as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a time when you had to politely ask for permission to do something. How does your culture ask for things in a polite way? Pause this audio here.

At some point, Yahweh speaks to Moses while Moses is in Midian. We are not sure if this instance happened before or after Moses asks Jethro for permission to leave. But we do know that Moses asks permission from Jethro as a result of Yahweh's command to go back to Egypt. Yahweh tells Moses to go back to Egypt since the ones who wanted Moses dead were now gone. When Moses was in Egypt he killed an Egyptian. This became known to Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, and Pharaoh wanted Moses dead. Now Pharaoh has died and so Moses can return to Egypt at this time. Moses takes his wife, Zipporah, and his sons and places them on a donkey. A donkey is an animal like a horse, but with longer ears and shorter legs. They are often used as work animals to carry loads of goods or people.

Stop here and look at a picture of a donkey together as a group. Pause this audio here.

Many versions say that Moses returned to the land of Egypt. In this passage this means that Moses started the journey to go back to Egypt, not that Moses had actually arrived back in Egypt yet. Moses also took the staff of God with him. This was the staff that Yahweh used to show Moses one of the miracles that Moses would do. Yahweh had instructed Moses to take the staff with him when he spoke to the Israelite elders and to the Pharaoh.

Stop here and look at the picture of the shepherd's staff together as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about symbols of power and authority in your culture. Pause this audio here.

We are not sure exactly when the next conversation between Yahweh and Moses happens. It could be either when Moses was in Midian, when Yahweh assured Moses that the people who wanted Moses dead were gone. Or it could be as Moses is on his return to Egypt that Yahweh speaks to Moses again. Yahweh tells Moses to be sure to do all of the miracles that He gave Moses the power to do, in front of Pharaoh. Yahweh tells Moses what Pharaoh's response will be. Yahweh uses the phrase, "I will harden Pharaoh's heart," or I will make Pharaoh stubborn. In that culture, people believed the heart was the center of the mind or thinking, and often of feelings too. Pharaoh's mind, will, and emotions will be stubborn or unchangeable when Pharaoh will not let the Israelite people go. Pharaoh already ignores the cries of the Israelites, and so Pharaoh's heart will also be stubborn and resist the miracles that Moses performs.

Yahweh tells Moses what Moses will need to say after Pharaoh does not let the Israelite people go. Here we have a quote from Yahweh within Yahweh's speech to Moses. Yahweh tells Moses to say, "This is what Yahweh says," or "Thus says Yahweh." This phrase showed the authority of the direct quote from Yahweh that the messenger said. So Moses is to repeat exactly what Yahweh tells him to say to Pharaoh. Yahweh calls Israel His firstborn son, because Israel is the first nation that Yahweh chooses as His people. Yahweh says that Pharaoh is to let Yahweh's son go so that they may worship Him. But because Pharaoh will say no, Yahweh will kill Pharaoh's firstborn son.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you indicate that your communication has authority? Pause this audio here.

This next portion is a confusing exchange between Moses, his family, and Yahweh. At a place where Moses and his family stopped to rest for the night, Yahweh met "him" and came to kill "him" or tried to cause him to die. There is no explanation of who "him" is, but most scholars agree that it is Moses, and some believe it is Moses' oldest son. There is no explanation as to how or why Yahweh sought to kill either one of these two males. Moses' wife's actions may give some insight as to why Yahweh sought to kill Moses, or his son, but again, the text is not clear. Some scholars believe that because Moses had killed the Egyptian, he was still guilty before God, and so God came to kill Moses. However, what most scholars believe is that because Moses was raised as an Egyptian, Moses had not circumcised his son, nor had Moses been circumcised. This was the sign of the covenant that Yahweh established with Abraham, the ancestor of the Israelites. The Egyptians did not circumcise in the same way as the Israelites, so Moses needed to set himself apart from the Egyptians by being circumcised himself. Zapporah, Moses' wife, acts quickly by circumcising her son, by cutting off the loose skin at the end of his penis, with a flint, which was a very sharp piece of metal or stone, used in ancient Jewish rituals, and easily found in the area. Then Zapporah touched the foreskin to his feet. Again, there is no indication whether the passage is speaking about Moses' feet, or the son's feet. In that culture people often used the word feet as a nice way of saying the genitals. So it's possible that Zapporah touched the foreskin to the genitals of Moses, but we are not sure. It is best to translate this literally as "she touched the foreskin to his feet." Many versions say it was Moses' feet because Zapporah says that he has become a bridegroom, or relative of blood to her. If it is Moses, then this action is thought to be a symbol of Moses being circumcised as well. However, if it is the son's feet, then Zapporah's word bridegroom would be translated as one who was circumcised. If talking about the son, it could be translated that through this bloodshed, he was now her circumcised son. Some believe that Zapporah's words, "bridegroom of blood" are part of the circumcision ritual, and so there should be no indication that Zapporah was angry or upset, but simply stating the words.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you explain a story when the details are unclear? Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What kinds of serious rituals do you have in your culture like this one? Describe them. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Why do you think it was so important for Moses and his son to be circumcised? Why was God serious about this ritual? Pause this audio here.

So Yahweh let him live. This must be the same him that is spoken about in the previous passage, either Moses or his oldest son. This was the result of Zapporah performing the circumcision and stating the words, "bridegroom of blood."

Yahweh then speaks to Aaron and tells Aaron to go and meet Moses in the wilderness. We are not sure of the timing or when God spoke to Aaron, or where Aaron was, but most likely Aaron was in Egypt. Aaron met Moses

on the mountain of God. It is likely that Aaron happened to find Moses on the mountain of God, possibly Mount Horeb, but this was not a determined place to meet. Again, we do not know which mountain this is. There Aaron kissed Moses, most likely on the cheek. This was a friendly greeting for families in Jewish culture. Moses then tells Aaron everything that Yahweh said to him and the signs that Yahweh told Moses to perform.

Moses and Aaron then go together to Egypt and gather the elders or leaders of Israel together. Aaron speaks for Moses, just as Yahweh had said he would. Aaron tells the leaders all of Yahweh's words and then he performs the signs. Again, "he" is not specified, so either Aaron or Moses could have done the signs. Either way, the people believed, and when they heard that Yahweh saw the way they were treated, and was concerned about them, or came to visit them, they bowed low to the ground as an act of worship.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a time when you were very grateful to God for what He had done. How did you worship God?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 4:18-31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 5 scenes.

In the first scene: Moses returns to Midian to ask permission of his father-in-law, Jethro, to take his family to Egypt to check on the Israelites who are there. Jethro tells Moses to go in peace.

In the second scene: The author reminds us that Yahweh tells Moses to go back to Egypt because the men who were seeking his life are dead. Moses puts his wife and sons on a donkey and they head out towards Egypt. Moses took the staff of God with him in his hand.

In the third scene: Yahweh speaks to Moses and tells Moses to go to Pharaoh and perform all of the signs that Yahweh gave Moses the power to do. Yahweh tells Moses that He will harden Pharaoh's heart so that Pharaoh will not let the Israelites leave. Yahweh gives Moses the exact words to tell Pharaoh, saying that Israel is Yahweh's son, His firstborn and Pharaoh needs to let Israel leave Egypt to go worship God. Because Pharaoh has refused to let Israel go, Yahweh will kill Pharaoh's firstborn.

In the fourth scene: When Moses and his family stop to rest for the night, Yahweh comes to kill him. Zapporah quickly cuts off the foreskin of her son and touches it to his feet, declaring that he is now a bridegroom of blood to her. Yahweh let him live.

In the fifth scene: Yahweh tells Aaron to go to the wilderness to find Moses. Aaron goes and finds Moses on the mountain of God. Aaron kisses Moses with a greeting. Moses tells Aaron all of the things that Yahweh told Moses. Moses and Aaron go to Egypt and gather the Israelite leaders together. Aaron tells them all of the things that Yahweh said and the signs are performed for them. The Israelite leaders believe them and when they hear that Yahweh has visited them and remembered the way they are being treated, they bow low to the ground in worship.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Jethro
- Yahweh
- donkey
- Zapporah
- Moses' son
- Pharaoh
- Aaron
- Israelite elders

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: This passage takes place in several different areas. Moses starts out at Mount Horeb and goes back to Midian. Then Moses leaves with his family for Egypt. Part of the passage takes place on the way to Egypt, and the last part is somewhere in Egypt.

Stop here and look again at the map of Midian, Horeb, and Egypt. Pause this audio here.

In the first scene, Moses has been on Mount Horeb, speaking with Yahweh. Moses leaves Mount Horeb and goes back to Midian to his father-in-law, or his wife's father, Jethro. One little detail to notice is that Moses was tending Jethro's sheep when he went to Horeb. More than likely Moses is taking the sheep back with him. Moses asks for Jethro's permission to leave Midian with his wife and sons, to go to Egypt to check on his people, or the Israelites. In this culture, Moses needs to be extra polite to his father-in-law, the father of his wife. Moses is not necessarily asking for permission, but he is using a very polite way to tell Jethro that he will be going to Egypt. Jethro says to Moses, "go in peace." This means that there will be no issues between Moses and Jethro when Moses leaves.

In the second scene, Yahweh speaks to Moses while Moses is still in Midian. We are not sure when or which instance this is talking about, but we know that God has been speaking to Moses about going back to Egypt. Yahweh tells Moses to go back to Egypt because the men who wanted to kill Moses are dead. Moses puts his wife, Zapporah, and his sons on a donkey, and takes the staff of God in his hand. Then Moses leaves to head back to Egypt.

In the third scene, Moses is traveling on his way to Egypt with his family. Yahweh talks to Moses and tells Moses what to do and say when Moses is in front of Pharaoh. Yahweh says, however, that He will harden Pharaoh's heart, which means that Pharaoh will be very stubborn, and will not let the Israelites leave Egypt.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you talk about someone who is very stubborn?

Tell a story about a time you have been very stubborn or someone you knew was very stubborn. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses that after Pharaoh will not let the Israelites leave, Moses is to tell Pharaoh this direct quote from Yahweh, "I told you: Let My son go so that he may worship Me, but you refused to let him go. Now I will kill your firstborn son!" Remember that this is a direct quote that Yahweh is giving Moses ahead of time.

The fourth scene takes place at a lodging place, probably in tents, on the way to Egypt. Because it is a place to rest, it is more than likely evening during this scene. Remember that we do not know for sure if Yahweh came to kill Moses or to kill Moses' son. We are not sure how Zapporah knew that God was coming to kill Moses or his son. We are not sure if Zapporah touched the foreskin of the penis to the feet or genitals of Moses or to his son.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about how you will translate this part of the passage which is unclear. Talk about whether or not you will use Moses or his son as the object of this passage, or will you keep it uncertain? How do you usually tell stories when sometimes the action is unclear? Pause this audio here.

We don't know exactly where Aaron is when Yahweh speaks to him to tell him to meet Moses. Most scholars assume he is in Egypt. So Aaron goes to meet Moses and finds him on the mountain of God, probably Mount Horeb where Moses met with God. Aaron greets Moses with a kiss. Moses tells Aaron everything that Yahweh said. The two men walk back together to Egypt and gather the Israelite leaders together to tell them all that Yahweh said. One of them also performs the signs that Yahweh gave them the power to do. The Israelite leaders heard that Yahweh had visited them, which really means that Yahweh was concerned about them and heard them. The Israelite leaders believe them and bow low to worship Yahweh. We no longer read about Moses' wife and sons, and so we do not know if they are still with Moses or if they went back to Midian to Zapporah's father.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 4:18–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has five scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Jethro
- Yahweh
- Donkey
- Zapporah
- Moses' son
- Pharaoh
- Aaron
- Israelite elders

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Moses returns to Midian to ask permission of his father in law, Jethro, to take his family to Egypt to check on the Israelites who are there. Jethro tells Moses to go in peace.

Yahweh tells Moses to go back to Egypt because the men who were seeking his life are dead. Moses puts his wife and sons on a donkey and they head out towards Egypt. Moses took the staff of God with him in his hand.

Pause the drama.

Yahweh speaks to Moses and tells Moses to go to Pharaoh and perform all of the signs that Yahweh gave Moses the power to do. Yahweh tells Moses that He will harden Pharaoh's heart so that Pharaoh will not let the

Israelites leave. Yahweh gives Moses the exact words to tell Pharaoh, saying that Israel is Yahweh's son, His firstborn and Pharaoh needs to let Israel leave Egypt to go worship God. Because Pharaoh has refused to let Israel go, Yahweh will kill Pharaoh's firstborn.

Pause the drama.

When Moses and his family stop to rest for the night, Yahweh comes to kill him. Zapporah quickly cuts off the foreskin of her son and touches it to his feet, declaring that he is now a bridegroom of blood to her. Yahweh let him live.

Pause the drama.

Yahweh tells Aaron to go to the wilderness to find Moses. Aaron goes and finds Moses on the mountain of God. Aaron kisses Moses with a greeting. Moses tells Aaron all of the things that Yahweh told Moses.

Pause the drama.

Moses and Aaron go to Egypt and gather the Israelite leaders together. Aaron tells them all of the things that Yahweh said and he performs the signs for them. The Israelite leaders believe them and when they hear that Yahweh has visited them and remembered the way they are being treated, they bow low to the ground in worship.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 4:18–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Moses returns to Midian to ask permission of his father-in-law, Jethro, who is the father of Moses' wife, to take his family to Egypt to check on the Israelites who are there. Jethro tells Moses to go in **peace**. Peace is the absence of conflict and the fullness or completeness of life.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **peace**. Look up peace in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

Yahweh tells Moses to go back to Egypt because the men who were seeking his life are dead. Yahweh is the personal and proper name of God. Use the same word for Yahweh that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh and on the general term for God, refer to the Master Glossary. Yahweh is used for God in this passage in every situation except when talking about objects of God, like the staff of God, or the mountain of God.

Moses puts his wife and sons on a **donkey** and they head out towards Egypt. Moses took the **staff** of God with him in his hand. Use the same word for staff that you have used in previous passages. A donkey is an animal similar to a horse that is used to carry loads.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **donkey**. Look up donkey in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

Yahweh speaks to Moses and tells Moses to go to **Pharaoh** and perform all of the **miracles, or wonders** that Yahweh gave Moses the power to do. Pharaoh is the term used for the king of Egypt. Miracles are powerful acts that only God can do. Use the same word for Pharaoh, and miracles or wonders that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Pharaoh and miracles, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses that He will harden Pharaoh's **heart** so that Pharaoh will not let the Israelites leave. The heart is the place where emotions and decisions are made.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **heart**. Look up heart in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

Yahweh gives Moses the exact words to tell Pharaoh, saying that **Israel** is Yahweh's son, His firstborn, and Pharaoh needs to let Israel leave Egypt to go **worship** God. Because Pharaoh has refused to let Israel go, Yahweh will kill Pharaoh's firstborn. Israel is the nation of people who were descendants of Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel. To worship is to show awe and wonder towards something, in this case God. Use the same word for Israel and worship as you have used in previous passages. For more information on Israel and worship refer to the Master Glossary.

When Moses and his family stop to rest for the night, Yahweh draws near to kill him. Zipporah quickly cuts off the foreskin of her son and touches it to his feet, declaring that he is now a **bridegroom of blood** to her. Bridegroom can mean a husband, or one who has gone through circumcision, or relative. Blood is often a symbol of life, but here it refers to the blood related to circumcising someone.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **bridegroom of blood**. Look up blood in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

Yahweh let him live because of the **circumcision**.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **circumcision**. Look up circumcision in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

Yahweh tells Aaron to go to the **wilderness** to find Moses. The wilderness is an area of land where no one lives, but is usually where shepherds can take their sheep. Use the same word for wilderness that you've used in previous passages. For more information on wilderness refer to the Master Glossary.

Aaron goes and finds Moses on the mountain of God. Aaron kisses Moses with a greeting. Moses tells Aaron all of the things that Yahweh told Moses, and showed him the **signs** that Yahweh told Moses to do. Signs are a signal that something is true or will happen. Signs can be a specific kind of miracle. In this passage, these actions are referred to as either miracles or signs. Moses and Aaron go to Egypt and gather the Israelite **elders** together. Aaron tells them all of the things that Yahweh said and the signs are performed for them. The Israelite leaders **believe** them and when they hear that Yahweh has visited them and remembered the way they are being treated, they bow low to the ground in worship. Elders are the rulers of the tribe or group of people. To believe is to put trust in what someone says. Use the same words for signs, elders, and belief that you have used in previous passages. For more information on signs, elders, and belief, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 4:18–31

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (4417256 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Exodus 5:1–21

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 5:1–21 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 5:1–21 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 5:1–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage Yahweh told Moses to go back to Egypt to ask Pharaoh to let the Israelites go, so Israel could serve Yahweh. Aaron joined Moses at the mountain of God and Moses told Aaron everything that Yahweh

had commanded him to do. In Egypt Moses and Aaron gathered all the elders of Israel and Aaron told them everything Yahweh commanded Moses to say. The elders believed Yahweh and they worshipped Him.

After Moses and Aaron met with the leaders of Israel, Aaron and Moses went to see Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. God had told them to do that. Some of the Israelite leaders possibly went with them. The Egyptian legal system allowed anyone to come in front of Pharaoh. Pharaoh was the title of the king of Egypt, which was probably the most powerful nation on earth at that time. Moses and Aaron talked to Pharaoh directly and with authority. They made it clear to Pharaoh that they were speaking the words of Yahweh, who was the God of Israel. Yahweh is the personal name of God, which God revealed to Moses in the burning bush. Yahweh was telling Pharaoh through Moses and Aaron to allow his people Israel to go and have a feast, or a celebration and honour Yahweh in the desert.

But Pharaoh replied with a question, "Who is Yahweh, that I should obey his voice and let Israel go?" In those days people worshipped various gods. Knowing the personal names of those gods was necessary in order to call on their power. Pharaoh most likely had not yet heard of a God named "Yahweh." Pharaoh, who considered himself a god, was likely arrogant and spoke with contempt. The meaning behind his question was, "I don't know this Yahweh. Why should I pay any attention to what he says?" So Pharaoh refused Yahweh's demand to let Israel go into the wilderness to honour Yahweh.

After Pharaoh's harsh reply, Moses and Aaron responded with a humble request. This time they mostly used the exact words God gave Moses at the burning bush. They said, "God of the Hebrews has met with us. Please let us go a three days' journey that we may sacrifice to Yahweh our God." They explained to Pharaoh that they unexpectedly met the "God of the Hebrews." The word translated as "met" in English implied that they did not plan or arrange the meeting. Then they pleaded with Pharaoh to allow the Hebrews to go for a three-day journey to make sacrifices to Yahweh their God. A sacrifice is something offered to God to thank him, ask forgiveness from him, restore a relationship with him or to honour him. Here God wanted the Israelites to honour him. It could be a blood sacrifice, which includes killing and burning an animal, or a non-blood sacrifice that gives God incense or grain. Aaron and Moses added that if they did not go, Yahweh would send punishments on the Hebrews. He would strike them with pestilence, which means that Yahweh would send a contagious and usually deadly disease. Or he would attack them with the sword, which means that God would cause other people to kill the Hebrews in battle.

But none of the requests changed Pharaoh's mind. He responded addressing Moses and Aaron by name. The king may have been singling them out from a group of Israelite elders, or he may have recognised Moses as a former Egyptian prince, and Aaron as his brother. Pharaoh asked them, "Moses and Aaron, why do you take the people away from their work?" Pharaoh did not want the Israelite people to stop working and go to the wilderness to worship God. The Israelites were no longer an independent people but were a group of slaves under the control of Egyptian slave masters. The Israelites were not slaves in the sense that they were owned by the king and had no independence at all. They were subject to the king just as all the Egyptians were. But, unlike the Egyptians, they were forced as a people group to do heavy labour with little or no pay. Their main purpose in life was to perform forced labour assigned to them by the Egyptians. They originally were free people and worked as shepherds. Then Pharaoh made them slaves working as construction workers and forced them to do general labour and especially to make bricks. They also worked in fields planting, tending, and harvesting crops. Pharaoh did that to reduce the Israelites' position in Egyptian society to stop their growing influence. Pharaoh also used the hard labour as a tool to reduce the growing Israelite population. Pharaoh intended the heavy workload to make those who were previously strong, weak, and sick end the lives of those who were weak and sick.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a people group who were oppressed or invaded by others. What kinds of things did the conquerors do to them? Pause this audio here.

Then Pharaoh ordered Moses, Aaron, the elders who were probably with them and all the Israelites to get back to their burdens, or forced labour.

The king continued, "The Israelites have greatly increased in number. Now you, Moses and Aaron, want to make them stop working!" Pharaoh thought that there were already too many Israelites in Egypt, so why should he give them rest from their forced labour? Moses and Aaron's request that Pharaoh would let the people go on a three-day trip into the desert was against Pharaoh's policy of making the Israelites work very hard so some of

them would die. The trip into the desert would provide the people with rest, which Pharaoh did not want them to have.

The same day, after Aaron and Moses left the palace, Pharaoh issued a decree and commanded the taskmasters of the people, or Israelites and their foremen. Taskmasters were Egyptian slave drivers who were directly responsible to the king. The foremen were Israelites whose responsibility was to keep the slaves working. They reported to the Egyptian taskmasters, or slave drivers. We do not know if the Israelites considered the Israelite foremen to be representing their people, or if the Israelites considered the foremen to really belong to the Egyptian taskmasters, or slave drivers. Pharaoh issued a new decree telling the taskmasters, or slave drivers that they should stop supplying the Israelites with straw for making bricks. From then on the Israelites were to go and find the straw themselves. "Let them go" is a command and it meant that the taskmasters, or slave drivers were to make the Israelite slaves go out into the harvest field and gather the straw wherever they could find it. The bricks in ancient Egypt were flat rectangular blocks of sun-dried mud or clay, which people used for constructing walls and buildings. People placed bricks on top of each other with a layer of mud in between as mortar. Straw refers to chopped pieces of the stalks of wheat or barley after people harvested the grain. It served a double purpose: it caused the mud to stick together in one lump, and it produced a substance that strengthened the dried bricks. Up till this point the Israelites making bricks did not have to gather the straw themselves, as other people were responsible for supplying them with the straw. However, the king's decree meant that in addition to making bricks they now also had to go and gather the straw themselves. However, the king ordered the taskmasters, or slave drivers not to reduce the number of bricks they required the Israelites to supply, even though the Israelites would now have more work. We don't know the exact number of bricks the taskmasters, or slave drivers required, but we know that they forced the slaves to make a minimum number of bricks each day.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of Egyptian bricks made of mud and straw. Pause this audio here.

Then Pharaoh gave a reason for his new decree. Pharaoh said that the Israelites were lazy and didn't have enough to do, so they asked if they could go and offer sacrifices to their God instead of working. Instead, Pharaoh decided to increase their workload. Pharaoh omitted God's name Yahweh. By doing this he was communicating that to him Yahweh was merely "the god these people worship," not a god he was going to respect or listen to. He was speaking about Yahweh with contempt.

Then Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters, or slave drivers and the foremen, to force the men, or people, to work harder than before, and to be so busy working. The whole purpose of the king's command to increase the Israelites' workload was "so they don't have time to listen to lying words." It is not clear what the lying words were. The king may have referred to the words of Moses and Aaron that God of the Hebrews had met with them or to the request of Moses, Aaron, and the Israelite leaders to let the people go and sacrifice to Yahweh in the desert.

So the taskmasters, or slave drivers and the foremen supervising the Israelite slaves went out to where the Israelites were working. The phrase "went out" does not necessarily mean that the taskmasters, or slave drivers and the foremen were in the palace in the first place. The phrase may simply mean that they went to the Israelites. They reported what Pharaoh had commanded. Until now, other workers had supplied the Israelites with straw. Now Pharaoh says that the Israelites have to go "wherever they can find it"-possibly to the fields, or places where people gather straw. The Israelite slaves will have to spend a lot more time going to where the straw is, gathering it, and then making the bricks. But they would need to make the same number of bricks per day as before.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a time when a ruler of your people asked your people to do something too hard for them to do? If so, what was it? Pause this audio here.

So the people scattered all over Egypt to search for stubble to use as straw. These people probably included all the Israelite family members. They would most likely need every Israelite to help gather the straw because of the extra work that Pharaoh had given them. So everyone everywhere went looking for stubble to serve as a substitute for straw. Stubble is the very short stalk of plants remaining after harvesting: the bit between the root and where the reaping scythe or sickle cut the plant. It was not as good as straw and it made the process of producing useable bricks much harder. But also, stubble was much harder to gather from harvested fields as compared to straw.

Stop here and as a group look at pictures of straw and stubble. Pause this audio here.

The taskmasters, or slave drivers, kept pressing the Israelites and the foremen, saying, "Complete your work, your daily task each day, as when there was straw." The taskmasters, or slave drivers, were urging the Israelites to finish their daily quota of bricks. They were saying that the Israelites each day had to make the same number of bricks as they did when the Egyptians gave them straw.

The taskmasters, or slave drivers, who set the Israelite foremen over the people of Israel, beat the foremen. They asked them, "Why have you not completed your assigned work of making bricks, today and yesterday, as in the past?" Before Pharaoh stopped giving them straw, the workers completed their work. But yesterday and today, or in the recent days after Pharaoh stopped giving them straw, they could not complete their work. The foremen themselves were not actually making the bricks, but were responsible for the work the Israelites did. So the meaning of the taskmasters', or slave drivers' question is: "Why aren't you forcing the workers to make as many bricks yesterday and today as they did before?"

Then the Israelite foremen came to Pharaoh in the palace to make an appeal. Pharaoh as the king was the final court of appeal. The foremen came to an audience with him and in a polite, but bitter complaint they asked the king, "Why do you do this to your servants? They are not giving your servants any straw for making bricks, but they are commanding us to make bricks!" The foremen were asking why Pharaoh would treat the foremen and the Israelites like this. Nobody was supplying them with the straw any more, but the Egyptian taskmasters, or slave drivers, were still ordering them to require the Israelites to make the same number of bricks as before. The foremen added in distress, "And now they are beating your servants, but it is your own people who are at fault." The foremen were complaining about the Egyptians beating them because the people did not make enough bricks. The Israelite foremen are calling themselves servants of Pharaoh.

The Egyptians were beating the foremen. The Israelite foremen may be indirectly accusing Pharaoh himself of mistreating them, or they may be accusing the taskmasters, or slave drivers of showing more authority than they should.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Who judges matters of injustice in your people group? If you are not happy with the judgement, who can you appeal to? Pause this audio here.

But Pharaoh replied, "You are lazy-nothing but lazy! That's why you keep asking: 'Let us go and sacrifice to Yahweh.'" The king emphasised his disgust at the foremen and the Israelites by repeating the word lazy, or idle. He ignored their complaint about the Egyptians not supplying the straw and beating them. Then the king ordered the foremen to go back to work and stated that they would not receive any straw. Pharaoh also said that they would have to deliver the same number of bricks. This meant the foremen had to ensure that the Israelites made the same number of bricks on a daily basis as before the time the king issued his decree.

Now the Israelite foremen realised that they and the Israelites under them were in trouble-they were caught in a situation with no way out. They knew this when both Pharaoh and the Egyptian taskmasters, or slave drivers, said, "You must still make the same number of bricks each day as you did before."

As the foremen came out from Pharaoh's palace they found Moses and Aaron who went to meet them outside. Moses and Aaron were eager to learn the result of the foremen's audience with the king and wanted to be supportive.

The foremen spoke to Moses and Aaron and angrily scolded them. They said, "May Yahweh look on you and judge you! You have made us stink in front of Pharaoh and his servants, and have put a sword in their hand to kill us." The foremen were furious and were cursing Moses and Aaron. They wished for Yahweh to look at Moses and Aaron with disapproval, notice what they did and punish them. The foremen thought that Moses and Aaron did not represent the Israelites well before Pharaoh and as such, they disobeyed Yahweh. They appeared to think that Moses and Aaron had gone against Yahweh's will because they believed Yahweh would not have allowed all this suffering unless Moses and Aaron disobeyed him. And so, the foremen wanted God to judge Moses and Aaron. "You have made us stink in the sight of Pharaoh and his servants" means, "You caused Pharaoh and his servants, or taskmasters, to hate us." By stating that Moses and Aaron "put a sword in the Egyptian's hand to kill them," the foremen were saying that now the Egyptians had a way to kill them.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 5:1-21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has seven scenes.

In the first scene: Moses and Aaron go to Pharaoh and ask him on behalf of Yahweh to let Yahweh's people Israel go into the desert to worship Yahweh. Pharaoh does not agree and tells Moses and Aaron that the people should get back to work.

In the second scene: Pharaoh decrees that the Israelites now have to gather their own straw for making bricks. He orders the taskmasters, or slave drivers, not to reduce the daily amount of bricks that the Israelite slaves are to make.

In the third scene: The taskmasters, or slave drivers, and the foremen tell the Israelites that they have to gather their own straw from now on and that their brick quota will stay the same.

In the fourth scene: The Israelite slaves throughout the country scatter to look for stubble to use as straw. The Egyptian taskmasters, or slave drivers, urge the people to make the same number of bricks daily as before.

In the fifth scene: The Egyptian task masters beat the Israelite foremen and ask them why they are not getting people to make the same number of bricks as in the past.

In the sixth scene: The Israelite foremen go to Pharaoh to complain about the way the Egyptian taskmasters are treating them. Pharaoh accuses the foremen of being lazy and tells them to go back to work.

In the seventh scene: The foremen speak to Moses and Aaron angrily and curse them. The foremen accuse Moses and Aaron of making Pharaoh and his officials hate them.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Aaron
- Pharaoh
- Yahweh
- Egyptian taskmasters, or slave drivers, reporting to Pharaoh
- Israeli foremen reporting to the taskmasters, or slave drivers
- And the people, or Israelites

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

After Moses and Aaron met with the leaders of Israel, Aaron and Moses went to see Pharaoh, the king of Egypt in his palace. Some of the Israeli leaders possibly went with them. The passage says that "they" spoke to Pharaoh, but most likely only one of them, either Moses or Aaron spoke. The speaker addressed Pharaoh in an authoritative and direct manner. He used a special phrase, which made it clear to Pharaoh that Yahweh was speaking through them. He said, "Thus says Yahweh, the God of Israel," and followed it with God's words asking Pharaoh to let Yahweh's people go and honour him in the desert.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your language how do you make it clear that someone is bringing a message from someone in authority? Pause this audio here.

But Pharaoh replied with a question, "Who is this Yahweh, that I should obey his voice and let Israel go?" Pharaoh was saying he did not know Yahweh, and he saw no reason to listen to him. So because of that Pharaoh refused Yahweh's demand to let Israel go and honour Yahweh in the desert.

After Pharaoh's harsh reply, Moses and Aaron responded with a humble request. This time they mostly used the exact words God gave Moses at the burning bush. They said, "God of the Hebrews has met with us. Please let us go on a three days' journey that we may sacrifice to Yahweh our God." Then they added that if they did not go, Yahweh would send punishments on the Hebrews in the form of deadly disease or death in battle.

But Pharaoh responded to Aaron and Moses asking them why they were stopping people from their labour. Pharaoh addressed Moses and Aaron by name. He may have been singling them out from the group of Israeli elders, or he may have recognised Moses as a former Egyptian prince, and Aaron as his brother. Then Pharaoh ordered Moses, Aaron, the elders who were probably with them and all the Israelites to get back to their burdens, or forced labour. The king continued and called for their attention saying, "Listen to me! The people who now live in this land are now more numerous, and you want them to stop working and rest!" Moses and Aaron's request that Pharaoh would let the people go on a three-day trip into the desert was against Pharaoh's policy of making the Israelites work very hard so some of them would die. The trip into the desert would provide the people with rest, which Pharaoh did not want them to have.

The next scene starts that "same day" when Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters, or slave drivers of the people and their foremen. Moses and Aaron probably left the palace, but the king reacted immediately by issuing a new decree. "Pharaoh commanded" may mean, "Pharaoh gave the order." He did not necessarily talk directly to all the taskmasters, or slave drivers of the people and their foremen, and the text does not tell us how many there were. Some of them may have been in the palace at the time. Pharaoh's decree forbade the taskmasters, or slave drivers, and the foremen to supply the Israelite slaves with straw for making bricks, like they did before. From then on the Israelites had to gather straw for making bricks themselves. However, the king ordered the taskmasters, or slave drivers, not to reduce the number of bricks they required the Israelites to supply, even though the Israelites would now have more work.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of Egyptian bricks made of mud and straw. Pause this audio here.

Then Pharaoh gave a reason for his new decree. He said, "For they are idle." The word "idle" is sarcastic and implies that the Israelites were lazy and did not want to work hard. That's why the king increased their workload. Pharaoh continued saying, "Therefore they cry, 'Let us go and offer sacrifice to our God.'" The king was saying that as a result of not having enough to do the Israelites kept asking him or persisted in begging him to let them go into the wilderness and make sacrifices to their God. Pharaoh omitted God's name Yahweh. By doing this he was communicating that to him Yahweh was merely "the god these people worship," not a god he was going to respect or listen to. Pharaoh did not respect or like Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Pharaoh showed with his words that he did not respect or like the God of the Israelites. When people in authority do not like or respect someone else, how do they talk about them? Describe a time when someone talked about someone else in a disrespectful way. Pause this audio here.

Then the king commanded the taskmasters, or slave drivers, and the foremen to force the men, or the people, to work harder than before, and to keep busy working. He did that so that the Israelites would not look at, what he called, words of deception. The whole purpose of the king's command to increase the Israelites' workload was "so they don't have time to listen to lying words." It is not clear what the lying words were. The king may have referred to the words of Moses and Aaron that the God of the Hebrews had met with them or to the request of Moses, Aaron, and the Israelite leaders to let the people go and sacrifice to Yahweh in the desert.

So the taskmasters, or slave drivers, and the foremen supervising the Israelite slaves went out to where the Israelites were working. The phrase "went out" does not necessarily mean that the taskmasters, or slave drivers, and the foremen were in the palace in the first place. The phrase may simply mean that they went to the Israelites. They reported what Pharaoh had commanded. They said, "Thus says Pharaoh, 'I will not give you straw. Go and get your straw yourselves wherever you can find it, but your work will not be reduced in the least.'"

As a result the people scattered all over Egypt to search for stubble to use as straw. These people probably included all the Israelite family members. They would most likely need every Israelite to help gather the straw because of the extra work that Pharaoh had given them. So everyone everywhere went looking for stubble to serve as a substitute for straw.

Stop here and as a group look at pictures of straw and stubble. Pause this audio here.

The taskmasters, or the Egyptian slave drivers kept pressing the Israelites and the foremen, saying, "Complete your work, your daily task each day, as when there was straw." The taskmasters, or slave drivers, were urging the Israelites to finish their daily quota of bricks. They were saying that the Israelites each day had to make the same number of bricks as they did when the Egyptians gave them straw. The text repeats several times the idea of the Israelites having to make the same number of bricks as before. The author does it on purpose to draw attention to this situation.

The taskmasters, or slave drivers, who set the Israelite foremen over the people of Israel, beat the foremen. They asked them, "Why have you not completed your assigned work of making bricks, today and yesterday, as in the past?" The foremen themselves were not actually making the bricks, but were forcing other Israelites to do the work. So the meaning of the taskmasters', or slave drivers', question is: "Why aren't you forcing the workers to make as many bricks yesterday and today as they did before?"

Then the Israelite foremen came to the king to make an appeal. The foremen came to an audience with him and in a polite, but bitter complaint they asked the king, "Why do you do this to your servants? They are not giving your servants any straw for making bricks, but they are commanding us to make bricks!" The foremen probably entered the palace itself to talk with the king. The foremen added in distress, "And now they are beating your servants, but it is your own people who are at fault."

But Pharaoh replied, "You are lazy-nothing but lazy! That's why you keep asking: 'Let us go and sacrifice to Yahweh.'" The king emphasised his disgust at the foremen and the Israelites by repeating the word lazy, or idle. Then the king ordered the foremen to go back to work and stated that they would not receive any straw. Pharaoh also said that they would have to deliver the same number of bricks. This meant the foremen had to ensure that the Israelites made the same number of bricks on a daily basis as before the time the king issued his decree.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Here Pharaoh emphasised his disgust by repeating the word "lazy." How do you emphasize strong feeling when you tell a story in your language? Pause this audio here.

Now the Israelite foremen realised that they and the Israelites under them were in trouble-they were caught in a situation with no way out. They knew this when both Pharaoh and the Egyptian slave drivers said, "You must still make the same number of bricks each day as you did before."

As the foremen went out from Pharaoh's palace they found Moses and Aaron who came to meet them. The foremen spoke to Moses and Aaron and angrily scolded them saying, "May Yahweh look on you and judge you! You have made us stink in front of Pharaoh and his servants, and have put a sword in their hand to kill us." The foremen were furious and were cursing Moses and Aaron. They appeared to think that Moses and Aaron had gone against Yahweh's will because they believed Yahweh would not have allowed all this suffering unless Moses and Aaron disobeyed him. And so, the foremen wanted God to judge Moses and Aaron.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 5:1-21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has seven scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Aaron
- Pharaoh
- Yahweh
- Egyptian taskmasters reporting to Pharaoh
- Israelite foremen reporting to the taskmasters
- And the people, or Israelites

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Then Aaron and Moses went to the king of Egypt and said, "Yahweh God, whom we Israelite people worship, says this to you: 'Let my people go to the desert, in order that they may have a feast to honour me!'"

But the king said, "Who is Yahweh? Why should I pay attention to what he says and let the Israelite people go? I do not know Yahweh! And furthermore, I will not let the Israelite people go!"

Moses and Aaron replied, "Yahweh God, the one we Hebrews worship, has appeared to us and told us what to tell you. So we ask you to please let us go on a three-day journey into the desert. We must offer sacrifices to Yahweh God there. If we do not do that, he will cause us to die from diseases or from attacks by our enemies." But the king of Egypt said to them, "Moses and Aaron, why are you preventing the Israelite people from working? Tell those slaves to return to work!" The king also said, "Listen to me! You people who now live in this land are now more numerous, and you want them to stop working and rest!"

Pause the drama.

That same day the king commanded the Egyptian slave drivers and the Israelite foremen supervising the slaves, "Do not continue to give the Israelite people straw for making bricks, as you have done previously. Make them go into the fields and gather straw for themselves. But require them to make the same number of bricks that they did before. Do not decrease the number at all. They do not have enough work to do. That is the reason they are asking me to let them go into the desert to offer sacrifices to their god. Force the men to work harder, so that they will not have time to listen to lies from their leaders!"

So the Egyptian taskmasters and the Israelite foremen went to where the Israelite people were and said to them, "The king has said that he will no longer give you any straw. So you yourselves must go and get straw wherever you can find it. But you must still keep working to make the same number of bricks as before."

Pause the drama.

So the Israelite people went all over Egypt to find straw. The slave bosses kept pressing them, "Finish the work you are required to do each day, making the same amount of bricks as you did before, when we gave you straw!" When they were not able to do that, the slave bosses got others to beat the Israelite foremen with sticks, and they asked them, "Why have all the men you are supervising not been able to make the same number of bricks today as they did before?"

Then the Israelite foremen went to the king and complained, saying, "Why are you treating us this way? Now they are not giving us any straw for making bricks, but they keep commanding us to make bricks. And now sometimes they beat us. But it is the fault of your own slave bosses that we cannot make as many bricks as before!" But the king said, "You are lazy and do not want to work! That is why you keep saying, 'Allow us to go to the desert and offer sacrifices to Yahweh.' So go and get back to work! We are not going to give you any straw, but you must keep making the same number of bricks!"

Pause the drama.

The Israelite foremen realized that they were in a difficult situation, because they had been told, "We are not going to decrease the number of bricks you must make each day." As they left the king's palace, they met Aaron and Moses, who were waiting for them there. They said to Aaron and Moses, "Yahweh has seen what you two have done. He will punish you, because you have caused the king and his officials to despise us! You have given them an excuse to kill us!"

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 5:1–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Afterward Moses and Aaron went and said to **Pharaoh**, "Thus says **Yahweh**, The God of **Israel**, 'Let my people go, that they may hold a feast to me in the **wilderness**.'" Use the same word or phrase for Pharaoh as you used in previous passages. For more information on Pharaoh, refer to the Master Glossary.

Use the same word or phrase for **Yahweh** as you used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh refer to the Master Glossary.

The word **Israel** has several different meanings in the Bible. Here the word Israel refers to the people of Israel, or the Israelites who descended from the man Israel or Jacob. Use the same word or phrase for Israel as you used in previous passages. For more information on Israel, refer to the Master Glossary.

Use the same word or phrase for **wilderness** as you used in previous passages. For more information on wilderness refer to the Master Glossary.

Then Moses and Aaron said to Pharaoh, "The God of the **Hebrews** has met with us. Please let us go a three days' journey into the wilderness that we may **sacrifice** to Yahweh, our God." Hebrews refers to the same group of people as Israelites. Use the same word or phrase for Hebrews as you used in previous passages. For more information on Hebrews, refer to the Master Glossary.

Use the same word or phrase for **sacrifice** as you used in previous passages. For more information on sacrifice, refer to the Master Glossary.

The same day Pharaoh commanded the **taskmasters** of the people and their **foremen**, "You shall no longer give the people **straw** to make **bricks**, as in the past; let them go and gather straw for themselves."

Taskmasters were Egyptian slave drivers who were directly responsible to the king. Use the same word or phrase for taskmasters as you used in previous passages.

The foremen were Israelites whose responsibility was to keep the slaves working. They reported to the Egyptian taskmasters.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **foremen**. Pause this audio here.*

Bricks in ancient Egypt were flat rectangular blocks of sun-dried mud or clay mixed with straw, which people used for constructing walls and buildings. People placed bricks on top of each other with a layer of mud in between as mortar. Use the same word or phrase for bricks as you used in previous passages.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of Egyptian bricks made of mud and straw. Pause this audio here.

Straw refers to chopped pieces of the stalks of wheat or barley after people harvested the grain. It served a double purpose: it caused the mud to stick together in one lump, and it produced a substance that strengthened the dried bricks.

Use the same word or phrase for straw as you used in previous passages.

So the people were scattered throughout all the land of Egypt to gather **stubble** for straw. Stubble is the very short remaining stalk of plants after harvesting: the bit between the root and where the reaping scythe or sickle cut the plant.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for stubble.

Stop here and as a group look at pictures of straw and stubble. Pause this audio here.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 5:1-21

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (8363545 KB)

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Exodus 5:22–6:13

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 5:22–6:13 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 5:22–6:13 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 5:22–6:13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage Moses and Aaron told Pharaoh that Yahweh, the God of the Hebrews, wanted Pharaoh to let the Israelites go and sacrifice to Yahweh in the desert. Pharaoh refused and made the Israelite slaves' work even harder. He issued a decree requiring the Israelite slaves to gather their own stubble to use as straw for making bricks. But Pharaoh expected them to produce the same number of bricks as before. When the Israelites did not produce their quota of bricks the Egyptians beat the Israelite foremen. The foremen complained about the situation to Pharaoh. But Pharaoh did not back down and the foremen blamed Moses and Aaron for their hardship. The foremen cursed Moses and Aaron saying that God should judge them.

Then Moses turned to Yahweh and prayed to him. He said in despair to Yahweh, "Oh Lord, or master, why have You brought harm to this people?" Moses did not expect Yahweh to answer his question. It was more like a lament. In it he accused Yahweh of allowing the trouble that Pharaoh then brought on the Israelites. Moses was unhappy and disappointed by what had happened. Yahweh had told him to expect Pharaoh's stubbornness, but he did not expect Pharaoh's cruel actions against the Israelites as a result of speaking to Pharaoh. That's why Moses asked Yahweh during his prayer next, "Why did you send me on such a mission?" Moses continued, "And from the time when I went to Pharaoh to speak for you he has treated your people cruelly. And you have done nothing to help them!" The phrase "from the time when I went to Pharaoh" implies that a significant amount of time passed between Moses' audience with Pharaoh and the time he was speaking to Yahweh. Moses expected that Yahweh's promised deliverance would happen quickly and would not involve setbacks or disappointments.

Stop here and tell the group a story about a time when somebody asked you to do something really hard which was above your abilities. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh replied to Moses, saying that from then on Moses would see what Yahweh would do to Pharaoh. Yahweh would perform his mighty acts on Pharaoh and Egypt without delaying any longer. Yahweh continued, "Because of my mighty hand Pharaoh will let my people Israel go, because of my mighty hand he will drive the people out of his land." Yahweh was saying, "I will powerfully force Pharaoh to let my people go. In fact, by my power I will force Pharaoh to drive out Israel from his land!" Yahweh answered Moses by referring back to his original promise that he gave Moses at the burning bush. The promise was that it would take something greater than human power to move Pharaoh to let the Israelites go. Here Yahweh promised Moses that he would force Pharaoh to let the Israelites leave Egypt, not just go for a three-day festival. Yahweh would force Pharaoh to "drive the Israelites out of Pharaoh's land" permanently.

God spoke to Moses and said, "I am Yahweh." God introduced himself by his proper name "Yahweh." "Yahweh" is a unique name-no other religion in the region around Israel used a name like this for their god. In Hebrew culture, names revealed the character of a person. God shows his people his character through his name "Yahweh." The name "Yahweh" shows God's faithfulness to his people. The name "Yahweh" shows that He is and always will be the same, the creator God. God used the phrase "I am Yahweh" four times in this passage. By doing this God confirmed his authority and his presence as the God of Israel. Then God reminded Moses that he was the God who appeared to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob, the forefathers of the Israelites. God said that he revealed himself to them using the name El Shaddai, which some people translate as God Almighty or God All-Powerful. The name shows the might and power of God to work miracles.

Then God said, "but by my name, Yahweh, I did not make myself fully known to them." However, God had introduced himself to the Israelite forefathers by his personal name "Yahweh" and they used the name "Yahweh" when they called on God in the book of Genesis. What this scripture may be implying is that even though Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob knew God's name "Yahweh," they did not know Him fully according to the meaning of this name. God would reveal the full meaning of his name "Yahweh" by fulfilling his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What meanings do names for people and deities in your culture have? Pause this audio here.

God also reminded Moses that he made his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. A covenant was a relationship that involved a binding agreement between two parties, sealed with an oath, which both parties had to keep. It was more than just a promise, but it included a promise. Yahweh said that it was Yahweh's covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Yahweh initiated the covenant. He made the terms of the covenant which included his promise. Yahweh's covenant was a promise to give the Israelites the land of Canaan. People called the Canaanites lived in Canaan. Before moving to Egypt, the Israelites lived in Canaan as sojourners, or foreigners. Yahweh promised under the terms of his covenant to let the Israelites own the land of Canaan. Canaan would be their homeland.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What type of binding agreements, or covenants do people make in your people group? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh continued reassuring Moses and said, "At this time I have heard the desperate cry of the Israelites, because the Egyptians are making them work as slaves, and I have remembered my covenant." When Yahweh said, "I have heard," it most likely means "I am going to respond favourably to your prayers and meet your needs."

Yahweh is the God who would personally, decisively, and faithfully be present to fulfil the covenant he made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The Israelite forefathers had only the promises, not the things God promised. The time has come when the Israelites would know God in the capacity and character of his name, Yahweh. Now he would fulfil what he had promised and would do what he had decreed.

For this reason Yahweh gave Moses words with which to reassure the Israelites. Yahweh told Moses to say, "I am Yahweh." By introducing himself again by his personal name "Yahweh," Yahweh reminded Moses and the Israelites that he was the God who made a covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He used his personal name "Yahweh" as a guarantee of the promise he made to the Israelite forefathers. One part of Yahweh's covenant

was to free the Israelites from Egyptian slavery. Yahweh continued, "And I will bring you out from under the forced labour, which the Egyptians lay on you. And I will release you from the oppression by the Egyptians. And I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgement." The word "redeem" often refers to buying back what belongs to someone, for example, buying back family members who someone sold as slaves. Here Yahweh was saying he would bring the Israelites out of Egypt. He would deliver them and save them. The phrase "with an outstretched arm" means "through my great power," and it suggests an arm waiting to strike. Yahweh would deliver, or save his people through his great power when he struck Egypt with his great acts of judgement, or terrible punishment. The terrible punishment probably refers to the plagues that Yahweh would bring on the Egyptians. Yahweh would not merely rescue his people from the Egyptians but would also punish the Egyptians in the process.

Stop here and tell the group a story of a situation when someone in authority gave you a message of reassurance and encouragement to tell a group of people you were in charge of. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh continued, "And I will make you my own people," which meant that Yahweh would adopt the Israelites as his children. He would claim them as his own and accept them. This was also part of Yahweh's covenant with the Israelite forefathers. Yahweh continued further, "and I will be your God, and you shall know that I am Yahweh your God, who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians." Yahweh would become the God of the Israelites. They would know and worship Him. By Yahweh rescuing them, the Israelites would know through experience that Yahweh was the active and present God who set them free from slavery in Egypt.

Yahweh continued by saying that he would cause the Israelites to enter the land of Canaan. He had made an oath and promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to give Canaan to their descendants. Yahweh would give the land to the Israelites as their own possession. It would be theirs. They would not be slaves but would own the land. This was the final part of Yahweh's covenant with the Israelite forefathers. He would bring them out of Egyptian slavery and into the service of Yahweh in the land He promised to them. Yahweh concluded his speech by saying, "I am Yahweh." In this way Yahweh confirmed his authority to fulfil the covenant he made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Moses told the Israelites what Yahweh had said, but they refused to listen to him. The Israelites were too dejected and worn out by the slavery that they had to endure to listen to Moses or pay attention to the words he quoted.

Then Yahweh told Moses to go again to the king of Egypt and demand that he let the Israelites leave his country. This time the Israelites would not just go for a three-day festival, but Pharaoh was to let them leave his land forever.

But Moses spoke out in Yahweh's presence and said, "Even the Israelites have refused to believe what I told them. Why would Pharaoh listen to me?" Moses was saying the Israelites did not listen to him, even though they were his people and they would benefit from the message he was speaking on Yahweh's behalf. Therefore how could he ever expect to be successful by demanding freedom for the Israelites from Pharaoh? Pharaoh was Moses' enemy. Pharaoh would lose the benefits from the work of the Israelites if they left his land. Then Moses added, "I am a man of uncircumcised lips," meaning that in addition, he considered himself a poor speaker.

Then Yahweh spoke to Moses and Aaron. Yahweh commanded Moses and Aaron to bring the Israelites out of the land of Egypt. This means that Moses and Aaron were under the orders of Yahweh to cause the Israelites to leave Egypt. Yahweh possibly said to Moses and Aaron, "I am with you. You must not fear Pharaoh or the Israelites. You must bring the people out of Egypt."

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 5:22–6:13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has nine scenes.

In the first scene: Moses turns to Yahweh in prayer and lament. He is asking Yahweh why Yahweh sent him on a mission which resulted in more misery for the Israelites.

In the second scene: Yahweh answers Moses and promises him that he, Yahweh, will force Pharaoh to drive the Israelites out of the land of Egypt permanently.

In the third scene: God reminds Moses that he is Yahweh, the God who appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and made his covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan.

In the fourth scene: Yahweh says that he has heard the desperate cries of suffering of the Israelites in Egypt and he was now going to fulfil his promises to them.

In the fifth scene: Yahweh gives Moses the exact words to encourage the Israelites with. Through Moses' speech Yahweh reveals himself to the Israelites by his personal name. He promises to them that he will bring them out of the slavery in Egypt and he will establish them as his people who will know and worship him. Then he will lead them into the land of Canaan where they will serve him.

In the sixth scene: Moses speaks to the Israelites and gives them Yahweh's message, but they don't accept his words. They are too worn out by slavery to listen to Moses' message from Yahweh.

In the seventh scene: Yahweh tells Moses to go to Pharaoh and order him to let the Israelites leave the land of Egypt.

In the eighth scene: Moses replies to Yahweh saying that if the Israelites did not listen to him, it would be unlikely that Pharaoh would.

In the ninth scene: Yahweh speaks to Moses and Aaron and gives them an order to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. Moses and Aaron are to tell the Israelites and Pharaoh about it.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Yahweh
- The people of Israel
- And Aaron

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Then Moses turned to Yahweh in prayer. The passage does not state where Moses was when he prayed to Yahweh. Moses felt despair and he said to Yahweh, "Why Lord have you permitted things to develop like this?" Moses did not expect Yahweh to answer his question. It was more like a lament. Moses asked Yahweh why Yahweh would send him on a mission, which would result in misery of the Israelites. Moses continued, "And from the time when I went to Pharaoh to speak for you he has treated your people cruelly. And you have done nothing to help them!" The phrase "from the time when I went to Pharaoh" implies that some amount of time passed between Moses' audience with Pharaoh and his prayer now.

Stop here and as a group talk about stories in your culture where a character complains about their situation using a lament or prayer. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh replied to Moses saying that very soon Moses would see what Yahweh was going to do to Pharaoh. Yahweh continued, "Because of my mighty hand Pharaoh will let my people Israel go. Because of my mighty hand he will drive the people out of his land." Yahweh answered Moses by saying that it would take something greater than human power to move Pharaoh to let the Israelites go. Here Yahweh promised Moses that he would force Pharaoh to let the Israelites leave Egypt. They would not go for just a three-day festival. God would force Pharaoh to drive them out of the land of Egypt permanently.

God spoke to Moses and said, "I am Yahweh." God introduced himself to Moses by his personal name Yahweh. God used the phrase, "I am Yahweh" four times in this passage. By doing this God confirmed his authority and his presence as the God of Israel. Then God reminded Moses that he appeared to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob, the forefathers of the Israelites. God said he revealed himself to them using the name El Shaddai that means God Almighty. El is the name for God. Shaddai means power. Some translations use God All-Powerful and others use God Almighty.

Then God said, "but by my name, Yahweh, I did not make myself fully known to them." However, God had introduced himself to the Israelite forefathers, or ancestors by his personal name "Yahweh" and they used the name "Yahweh" when they called upon God in the book of Genesis. What this scripture may be implying is that even though Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob knew God's name "Yahweh," they did not know Him fully according to the full meaning of this name. God would reveal the full meaning of his name "Yahweh" by fulfilling his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Stop here and as a group discuss how a story in your culture would show, or describe a character's authority. Pause this audio here.

God also reminded Moses that he made his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God's covenant was a promise to give the Israelites the land of Canaan. People called the Canaanites lived in Canaan and owned the land. Before moving to Egypt, the Israelites lived in Canaan as sojourners, or foreigners. God promised under the terms of his covenant to let the Israelites own the land.

God continued reassuring Moses and said, "At this time I have heard the desperate cry of the Israelites, because the Egyptians are making them work hard as slaves. I will keep my promise to them." God said that now was the time to carry out what he had promised to his people.

Yahweh wanted to reassure the Israelites that he would keep his promise to them. So Yahweh told Moses to say, "I am Yahweh." By introducing himself again by his personal name "Yahweh," God reminded Moses and the Israelites that he was the God who made a covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He used his personal name "Yahweh" as a guarantee of the promise he made to the Israelite forefathers. Yahweh promised that he would rescue the Israelites from the forced labour and oppression of the Egyptians. He would redeem his people with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgement. "With an outstretched arm" is an expression which means that Yahweh would free his people Israel with his mighty power.

Yahweh continued by saying that he would adopt the Israelites as his children. He would claim them as his own and accept them. Yahweh would become the God of the Israelites. They would know and worship Him. By Yahweh rescuing them, the Israelites would know through experience that Yahweh was the active and present God who set them free from slavery in Egypt.

Yahweh continued by saying that he would cause the Israelites to enter the land of Canaan. He had made an oath and promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to give Canaan to them and to their descendants. Yahweh would give the land to the Israelites as their own possession. It would be theirs. They would not be slaves but would own the land. This was the final part of Yahweh's covenant with the Israelite forefathers. He would bring them out of Egyptian slavery and into the service of Yahweh in the land He promised to them. Yahweh concluded his speech by saying, "I am Yahweh." In this way Yahweh confirmed his authority to fulfill the covenant he made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Stop here and as a group discuss how people in your culture confirm their authority when they finish an official speech. Pause this audio here.

Moses told the Israelites what God had said, but they refused to listen to him. The Israelites were too dejected and worn out by the slavery that they had to endure to listen to Moses or pay attention to the words he quoted.

The story here makes it clear that a new scene is starting. Then Yahweh told Moses to go again to the king of Egypt and demand that he let the Israelites leave his country.

But Moses spoke out in Yahweh's presence and said, "Even the Israelites have refused to believe what I told them. Why would Pharaoh listen to me?" This way of introducing Moses' speech suggests that he replied to Yahweh with some emotion.

Moses said, "I am a man of uncircumcised lips." Moses used the idea of circumcision to say that he was a poor speaker. You can simply say, "I am not a powerful speaker."

Then Yahweh commanded Moses and Aaron to bring the Israelites out of the land of Egypt. This means that Moses and Aaron were under the orders of Yahweh to cause the Israelites to leave Egypt. Yahweh possibly said to Moses and Aaron, "I am with you. You must not fear Pharaoh or the Israelites. You must bring the people out of Egypt."

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 5:22–6:13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has nine scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Yahweh
- The people of Israel
- And Aaron

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Moses prayed to Yahweh again, saying, "O Lord, or master, why have you caused all these evil things to happen to your people? And why did you send me? Ever since I went to the king and told him what you told me to say, he has treated your people very cruelly, and you have not done anything to help or rescue them!"

Pause the drama.

Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Now you will see what I will do to the king. I will powerfully compel him to let my people go. In fact, by my power I will force him to expel them from his land!" God also said to Moses, "I am Yahweh. I am the one who appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and told them that I was God Almighty, but I did not tell them that my name was Yahweh. I also made my solemn agreement with them, promising to give them the Canaan region. That was the area in which they were living as foreigners. And also, I have heard the Israelite people as they were groaning because of the hard work that the Egyptians forced them to do as their slaves. I have thought about that solemn promise that I made. So tell the Israelites that I said this: 'I am Yahweh. I will free you from the burdens of heavy work that the Egyptians have given you. I will free you from being their slaves. With my great power and by punishing them very severely, I will save you. I will cause you to be my own people, and I will be your God, the one you worship. You will truly know that I, Yahweh your God, am the one who has freed you from the burdens of work as slaves of the Egyptians. And I will bring you to the land that I solemnly promised to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. You will possess it forever. I am Yahweh'"

Pause the drama.

Moses told that to the Israelites, but they did not believe what he said. They were very discouraged because of the hard work that they had been forced to do as slaves.

Pause the drama.

Yahweh said to Moses, "Go and tell the king of Egypt *again* that he must allow the Israelite people to leave his land!" But Moses said to Yahweh, "Listen to what I am saying. Even the Israelites have not paid attention to

what I told them. But I am a poor speaker. So why should Pharaoh pay attention to what I tell him? Pharaoh will certainly not pay attention to what I tell him!" But Yahweh spoke to Aaron and Moses and commanded them, "Tell the Israelites and the king of Egypt that I have commissioned you two to lead the Israelite people out of Egypt."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 5:22–6:13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Then Moses turned to **Yahweh** and said, "O Lord, why have you done evil to this people?" Moses addresses Yahweh as **Lord**, which means master. Use the same word for Lord as master as you have in previous passages, and remember that Lord is in the Master Glossary. **Yahweh** is the personal name for God, and it is used in most parts of this passage. In some places the word for God is used. In those places use the same word for God that you have used in previous passages, and see God in the Master Glossary for more information. Use the same name for **Yahweh** that you have used in previous passages. Look up Yahweh in the Master Glossary for more information.

For since I came to **Pharaoh** to speak in your name, he has done evil to this people. Use the same word or phrase for **Pharaoh** as you used in previous passages. For more information on Pharaoh, refer to the Master Glossary.

I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as **El Shaddai**, and by my name Yahweh, I did not make myself known to them. **El Shaddai** is a name for God that means God Almighty. El is the name for God. Shaddai means power. Some translations use God All-Powerful and others use God Almighty.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **El Shaddai**. Look up El Shaddai in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

I also established my **covenant** with them to give them the land of Canaan, the land in which they lived as sojourners. Use the same word or phrase for **covenant** that you have used in previous passages. Look up covenant in the Master Glossary for more information.

God says that he has heard the **Israelites** groaning. Use the same word for **Israelites** as you have in previous passages, and remember that Israelites is in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 5:22–6:13

Audio Content

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Exodus 6:14–27

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 6:14–27 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 6:14–27 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 6:14–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage Moses asked God why God had sent him on a mission to Pharaoh, which only brought more misery on the Israelites. God responded by reminding Moses that he was Yahweh, the same God who made his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Yahweh told Moses to tell the Israelites that he heard their cries and he would now fulfil his covenant with them. He would take them out of Egyptian slavery and he would bring them into the land of Canaan.

This passage starts with the family record of Moses and Aaron. This background information at this point of the story gives Aaron greater importance, because he is about to become Moses' spokesperson. He will later become the first high priest for the Israelites. This list has family members of Aaron, both his ancestors who lived before him and his descendants who lived after him. This list does not include all of Aaron and Moses' family members. It only mentions key people who help to trace Aaron's lineage back to the immediate family of Israel, or Jacob. The mention of Aaron's descendants allows future generations to trace back their lineage to him.

The list consists of three groups of people. The first group has the three oldest sons of Israel, or Jacob-Reuben, Simeon, and Levi-and their sons in it. The second group focuses on the tribe of Levi and lists Levi's grandsons. The third group continues with the tribe of Levi, focusing on the male descendants of Kohath, Levi's second son. It lists some of Kohath's grandsons and one great grandson. Aaron and Moses are in this list.

Let us now look in more detail at each of these groups of family members. The first group lists the three oldest sons of Jacob, or Israel. Jacob was the son of Isaac and the grandson of Abraham. Yahweh promised Abraham that Yahweh would create his chosen nation through Abraham. Yahweh's chosen people descended from the twelve sons of Jacob. Yahweh gave Jacob the new name of Israel, from whom Yahweh's people also got their name "Israel." The list first mentions Reuben, Israel's firstborn son, and Reuben's four sons. The passage, however, does not mention Reuben's grandsons because Moses and Aaron did not come from his line. The passage starts by saying, "These are the heads of their fathers' houses" and lists the sons of Reuben, Israel's firstborn son. The phrase "the heads of their families" means that Reuben's sons became heads of their ancestral clans. Each clan would then carry the name of the son. For example, Reuben's son Hezron would be the head of his family clan and people would call his descendants "the Hezronites."

The next person on the list is Simeon-Jacob's second-born son. The passage also only mentions Simeon's six sons and no grandsons, because Aaron and Moses did not come from his line either. The passage says that the mother of Simeon's son called Shaul, was a "Canaanite woman." This means that she was not an Israelite, but came from the land of Canaan.

The lineage of the tribe of Levi, Jacob's third son, follows next. The passage lists the names of his three sons: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari "according to their generations." This means that the names appear in age order from the oldest to the youngest. The family list does not mention their sister. The passage selectively gives us more information to show the importance of certain family members. The passage tells us Levi's age because Aaron and Moses came from his line. Levi lived 137 years. This long age was typical for the Israelite forefathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and other people of their generation.

The passage does not list the remaining nine sons of Jacob. From this point the passage concentrates on the descendants of Levi because Aaron and Moses come from his line.

Stop here and ask people in your group to tell about their own ancestors:

- How far back do you still know the names of your ancestors?
- Can you tell a story about your ancestors?
- In your community, do people think it is important to know your ancestors?
- Is it a good thing to remember many names from your ancestors, or is it not so important? Why, or why not? Pause this audio here.

The sons of Gershon, Levi's oldest son, were Libni and Shimei, "by their clans." The phrase "by their clans" is not clear, but it most likely means that the names Libni and Shimei also represented their family clans or their descendants.

The sons of Kohath, Levi's second son, were, in age order, Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. The passage tells us that Kohath lived 133 years. Kohath is an important person in this story because Aaron and Moses came from his line.

The sons of Merari, Levi's youngest son, were, in age order, Mahli and Mushi. To show he is finished talking about the Levites, the writer says almost the same thing he said when he started listing the Levite clans, "These are the clans of Levites according to their generations." This statement refers back to the three sons and eight grandsons of Levi who gave their names to the Levite clans.

Now the family list focuses on the third group of people—the clan, or descendants of Kohath, Levi's second son. The clan of Kohath is important in this story since Aaron and Moses come from Kohath's line.

Amram was Kohath's eldest son. He married Jochebed, who was his father's sister, and Amram's aunt. Marriage customs were different then. Abraham married his sister by another mother. Isaac, and Jacob also married women who were close relatives. Later, God gave laws to the Israelites which forbid marriage and sexual relations between close family members like a man and his father's sister. However, Amram married Jochebed, his aunt, before God gave the laws. This means that Amram and Jochebed did not break God's laws by getting married. Jochebed was the mother of Aaron and Moses. Aaron and Moses had parents who were both from the tribe of Levi. Jochebed and Amram also had other children, but they are not in this list. The passage tells us that Amram lived 137 years. He is an important person in this story because he is the father of Aaron and Moses.

Then the family list mentions the sons of Izhar and Uzziel. Izhar and Uzziel were Kohath's second and fourth sons and Amram's younger brothers. However, the list does not mention the sons of Hebron, Kohath's third son. Hebron's descendants were probably not important to this story.

The passage now focuses on the next generation down from Kohath's sons and it follows some of the descendants of some of his sons, who are important to the story.

Aaron, the son of Kohath's son Amram, married Elisheba who was from the tribe of Judah. Her father Amminadab and her brother Nahshon were ancestors of Jesus Christ. Elisheba gave birth to Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. Aaron's sons later became priests with Aaron. Eleazar became chief, or high priest after Aaron died.

The passage does not talk about the descendants of Moses because it is mainly focusing on Aaron, as Moses' spokesperson and a future high priest.

Then the passage lists the sons of Korah who was the son of Izhar, and Aaron's cousin. Korah and his sons are in this family list probably because he later led a great rebellion against Moses in the wilderness. Also, the Korahites were a powerful clan among the Levites.

The family line in this passage finishes with Aaron's son Eleazar and his family. Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu died childless. The passage does not mention Aaron's youngest son Ithamar's descendants. Eleazar, Aaron's third son, married one of the daughters of Putiel. We do not know who Putiel was and which line he came from. Eleazar and his wife had a son called Phinehas who became the high priest after his father Eleazar. The family list closes with a statement, "These are the heads of the fathers' houses of the Levites by their clans." It refers back to all the male descendants of Levi in this family list. All the men listed were the heads of the clans of the Levites, arranged by families.

Stop here and as a group look at a family tree of the people from this family list. Pause the audio here.

The passage now concludes the family list and links Aaron and Moses from the family list to the story, which the family list interrupted. The passage does this by saying that Aaron and Moses, who were mentioned in the family list, are the ones whom Yahweh commanded to bring the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt "by their hosts." The passage mentions Aaron first because he was older and because the family list focuses more on him. This is a nearly exact retelling of what Yahweh said to Aaron and Moses before the family list started. The phrase "by their hosts" is an addition. It is a military term referring to soldiers ready for battle. It may suggest that Aaron and Moses were to lead the Israelites out of Egypt in battle order, or troop by troop. The phrase may equally mean that Aaron and Moses were to bring the Israelites out tribe by tribe.

The passage continues, emphasising again that the Moses and Aaron from the family list were the men who spoke to Pharaoh the king of Egypt and told him that he was to let them bring the people of Israel out of Egypt.

The passage finishes by emphasising that it is talking about "this Moses and this Aaron." Here the name Moses appears first even though Aaron is oldest, since Moses will be the main character in the story that follows.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 6:14–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has four scenes.

In the first scene: The passage lists the names in the first group: the first three sons of Israel, or Jacob and their sons.

In the second scene: The passage lists the names in the second group, the tribe of Levi: Levi's grandsons.

In the third scene: The passage lists the names in the third group: male descendants of Kohath, Levi's second son: some of Kohath's grandsons and one great grandson. Aaron and Moses are in this list.

In the fourth scene: The passage reminds us that the Aaron and Moses from the family list are the ones whom God commanded to bring the people of Israel out of Egypt. They are also the ones who told Pharaoh to let the people of Israel go out of Egypt.

The characters in this passage are:

- All names mentioned in the three groups in the family list

These are the people the passage lists in the first group:

1. Israel, or Jacob
2. Reuben, firstborn son of Israel
3. Hanoch, son of Reuben
4. Pallu, son of Reuben
5. Hezron, son of Reuben
6. Carmi, son of Reuben
7. Simeon, second son of Israel
8. Jemuel, son of Simeon
9. Jamin, son of Simeon
10. Ohad, son of Simeon
11. Jachin, son of Simeon
12. Zohar, son of Simeon
13. Shaul, son of Simeon
14. Canaanite woman, mother of Shaul, son of Simeon
15. Levi, third son of Israel
16. Gershon, son of Levi
17. Kohath, son of Levi
18. Merari, son of Levi

These are the people the passage lists in the second group:

1. Libni, son of Gershon

- 2.** Shimei, son of Gershon
- 3.** Amram, son of Kohath
- 4.** Izhar, son of Kohath
- 5.** Hebron, son of Kohath
- 6.** Uzziel, son of Kohath
- 7.** Mahli, son of Merari
- 8.** Mushi, son of Merari

These are the people the passage lists in the third group:

- 1.** Jochebed, Kohath's sister and Amram's wife
- 2.** Aaron, Amram's and Jochebed's son
- 3.** Moses, Amram's and Jochebed's son
- 4.** Korah, son of Izhar
- 5.** Nepheg, son of Izhar
- 6.** Zichri, son of Izhar
- 7.** Mishael, son of Uzziel
- 8.** Elzaphan, son of Uzziel
- 9.** Sithri, son of Uzziel
- 10.** Amminadab
- 11.** Nahshon, son of Amminadab
- 12.** Elisheba, the daughter of Amminadab and wife of Aaron
- 13.** Nadab, son of Aaron and Elisheba
- 14.** Abihu, son of Aaron and Elisheba
- 15.** Eleazar, son of Aaron and Elisheba
- 16.** Ithamar, son of Aaron and Elisheba
- 17.** Assir, son of Korah
- 18.** Elkanah, son of Korah
- 19.** Abiasaph, son of Korah
- 20.** Putiel, father in law of Eleazar
- 21.** Daughter to Putiel
- 22.** Phinehas, son of Eleazar and Putiel's daughter
 - Yahweh
 - People of Israel
 - And Pharaoh

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

The family list interrupts an important narrative in the book of Exodus, in which Aaron and Moses played a key part. This passage starts with a reference to the list of heads of "their families," or the families of Moses and Aaron.

The family list is a tool the author uses to help the reader track Aaron and Moses' lineage back to the immediate family of Jacob, or Israel. We find out which family clans they are in. We learn who their immediate family members are and who Aaron's descendants are.

Here is something you can do to help you visualise Aaron and Moses' position within the extended family of Israel, or Jacob. You may first want to think about how you are going to pronounce the names of all the people in the story in your language.

Now start making a family tree of all the names in the family list. Here is how. First collect a bag of pebbles, rocks, beans, or other small objects. Each object will stand for a name from the list. Make sure you have enough objects of the same kind for each generation. For example, use the same type of rocks for the three sons of Israel, or Jacob and their sons.

Then collect a bag of many sticks. You will use the sticks to connect the pebbles or objects, which stand for family members, with one another.

Now start the family tree by putting a large pebble down to represent Israel, or Jacob. Now put down three pebbles, which look alike below Israel's pebble. They will represent his three sons from this family list. Now join each son pebble with the larger Israel pebble with sticks.

Remember that you are only illustrating the family list from this passage. Because of that you will not have pebbles for the remaining nine sons of Israel, as they are not on this list.

Now put down another row of different looking pebbles or objects below the pebbles representing Levi's sons. These will be Israel's grandsons. As you put the pebbles or objects down, say the name of the person they are representing. Whenever there is a mother mentioned, you can put down an extra pebble. The mother pebble can be next to the son pebble. Or it can be next to the husband, whatever you like. Now connect each son pebble and their father pebble with a stick. The family tree is growing!

Continue in the same way adding the pebbles or objects for the other groups to the family tree. You can choose two larger pebbles for Aaron and Moses. Have a good look where Aaron and Moses are on the family tree. Take turns saying different facts you learnt from this passage about their immediate family members. Can you say the names of Aaron's and Moses' father, grandfather, and great-grandfather? What are the names of Aaron's descendants?

Stop here and discuss the following question as a group: What is the most natural way to give a list of family names in your language? Pause this audio here.

The passage tells us that each son in the family list became a head of his ancestral clan. Each clan would then carry the name of the son. For example, Reuben's son Hezron would be the head of his family clan and people would call his descendants "the Hezronites." Can you think how you will create the clan names in your language?

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your people group, how do you describe people who come from different parts, or clans of your family? If you create a name or a nickname for different clans, where does the name come from? Pause the audio here.

Here is something else you can do to remember the story. Choose a family clan from the family list. For example, Aaron's clan will include Aaron, his four sons and his grandson Phinehas. Line up 6 people. Each of them is one character from the Aaronite clan. Each of them will memorise the name of their own character. Everybody says their character's name, one after the other, in the right order and how they are related to Aaron. Do this a few times. Next, can people also remember the name of their character's brother? You can choose a larger clan, for example, the Kohathites, and involve more people in the activity.

Now take turns explaining to each other how the Aaron and Moses from the family list fit into the Exodus story. The passage does this by saying that Aaron and Moses, who were mentioned in the family list, are the ones whom Yahweh commanded to bring the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt.

The passage continues, emphasising again that the Moses and Aaron from the family list were the men who spoke to Pharaoh the king of Egypt and told him that he was to let them bring the people of Israel out of Egypt. Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 6:14–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has four scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- All the names mentioned in the three groups in the family list

These are the people the passage lists in the first group:

1. Israel, or Jacob
2. Reuben, firstborn son of Israel
3. Hanoch, son of Reuben
4. Pallu, son of Reuben
5. Hezron, son of Reuben
6. Carmi, son of Reuben
7. Simeon, second son of Israel
8. Jemuel, son of Simeon
9. Jamin, son of Simeon
10. Ohad, son of Simeon
11. Jachin, son of Simeon
12. Zohar, son of Simeon
13. Shaul, son of Simeon
14. Canaanite woman, mother of Shaul, son of Simeon
15. Levi, third son of Israel
16. Gershon, son of Levi
17. Kohath, son of Levi
18. Merari, son of Levi

These are the people the passage lists in the second group:

1. Libni, son of Gershon
2. Shimei, son of Gershon
3. Amram, son of Kohath
4. Izhar, son of Kohath
5. Hebron, son of Kohath
6. Uzziel, son of Kohath
7. Mahli, son of Merari

8. Mushi, son of Merari

These are the people the passage lists in the third group:

1. Jochebed, Kohath's sister and Amram's wife
2. Aaron, Amram's and Jochebed's son
3. Moses, Amram's and Jochebed's son
4. Korah, son of Izhar
5. Nepheg, son of Izhar
6. Zichri, son of Izhar
7. Mishael, son of Uzziel
8. Elzaphan, son of Uzziel
9. Sithri, son of Uzziel
10. Amminadab
11. Nahshon, son of Amminadab
12. Elisheba, the daughter of Amminadab and wife of Aaron
13. Nadab, son of Aaron and Elisheba
14. Abihu, son of Aaron and Elisheba
15. Eleazar, son of Aaron and Elisheba
16. Ithamar, son of Aaron and Elisheba
17. Assir, son of Korah
18. Elkanah, son of Korah
19. Abiasaph, son of Korah
20. Putiel, father in law of Eleazar
21. Daughter to Putiel
22. Phinehas, son of Eleazar and Putiel's daughter
 - Yahweh
 - People of Israel
 - And Pharaoh

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

This passage is different from most others, because, for the large part, it is a list of names. You can involve a number of narrators to retell the names from the list, but there is no dialogue or drama. Help each other remember the different family clans. Select some actors to be the audience listening.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group retells the passage a second time. At certain points, pause the retelling and ask the audience, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The audience should answer what they would be feeling or thinking. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

These are the ancestors of some of the clans of Israel: The sons of Reuben, Israel's oldest son, were Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi. Their descendants became the clans of Reuben.

The sons of Simeon were Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jakin, Zohar, and Shaul. Shaul's mother was a Canaanite woman. Their descendants became the clans of Simeon.

These are the descendants of Levi, as listed in their family records: The sons of Levi were Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. Levi lived to be 137 years old.

Pause the drama.

The descendants of Gershon included Libni and Shimei, each of whom became the ancestor of a clan.

The descendants of Kohath included Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. Kohath lived to be 133 years old.

The descendants of Merari included Mahli and Mushi. These are the clans of the Levites, as listed in their family records.

Amram married his father's sister Jochebed, and she gave birth to his sons, Aaron and Moses. Amram lived to be 137 years old.

Pause the drama.

The sons of Izhar were Korah, Nepheg, and Zichri. The sons of Uzziel were Mishael, Elzaphan, and Sithri.

Aaron married Elisheba, the daughter of Amminadab and sister of Nahshon, and she gave birth to his sons, Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.

Pause the drama.

The sons of Korah were Assir, Elkanah, and Abiasaph. Their descendants became the clans of Korah.

Pause the drama.

Eleazar son of Aaron married one of the daughters of Putiel, and she gave birth to his son, Phinehas. These are the ancestors of the Levite families, listed according to their clans.

Pause the drama.

The Aaron and Moses named in this list are the same ones to whom Yahweh said, "Lead the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt like an army." It was Moses and Aaron who spoke to Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, about leading the people of Israel out of Egypt.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 6:14-27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

These are the same Aaron and Moses to whom **Yahweh** said, "bring out the people of **Israel** from the land of Egypt by their hosts."

Yahweh is the personal name for God, and it is used throughout this passage. Use the same name for Yahweh that you have used in previous passages. Look up Yahweh in the Master Glossary for more information.

Use the same word or phrase for **Israel** that you have used in previous passages. Look up Israel in the Master Glossary for more information.

It was they who spoke to **Pharaoh** king of Egypt about bringing out the people of Israel from Egypt, this Moses and this Aaron.

Use the same word or phrase for **Pharaoh** that you have used in previous passages. Look up Pharaoh in the Master Glossary for more information.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practise telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 6:14-27

Audio Content

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Exodus 6:28–7:13

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 6:28–7:13 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 6:28–7:13 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 6:28–7:13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The previous passage consisted of a family list of names, which gave us understanding of Aaron and Moses' family background. They were great-grandsons of Levi, the third son of Israel. In addition to Aaron's ancestors, the list also mentioned some of his descendants. It stopped at his grandson Phinehas.

The first part of this passage is a summary of events which already took place. It retells the story of how Yahweh commanded Moses to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. When Yahweh spoke to Moses in the land of Egypt, He said to Moses, "I am Yahweh! Tell Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, everything I am telling you." By saying, "I am Yahweh!" Yahweh was reminding Moses that Yahweh was the Almighty and All-powerful God who made a promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to lead the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt. Moses' role was simply to pass on to Pharaoh king of Egypt what God told him to say. Moses was to fulfil the role of God's spokesman.

But Moses said to Yahweh, "I am a man of uncircumcised lips. How will Pharaoh listen to me?" Moses considered himself a poor speaker. His question was really a statement saying, "Pharaoh certainly will not listen to me."

Stop here and tell a story of how God expected you to carry out an act of faith, which you found very scary. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh answered Moses, saying that Yahweh would make Moses as God to Pharaoh and Moses' brother Aaron would become Moses' spokesman. Yahweh wanted to reassure Moses. Yahweh emphasised that He was the one who would make Moses seem as God to Pharaoh. And in the same way that a prophet was the spokesperson for his god, Aaron would be the spokesperson for Moses, speaking to Pharaoh, as Moses would instruct him.

Yahweh continued to reassure Moses. Moses would speak what Yahweh commanded him to speak. He would only speak what Yahweh told him to say. Aaron, in turn, was to communicate the message to Pharaoh. So Aaron would be the one telling Pharaoh the message from Yahweh. He would tell Pharaoh to let the people of Israel go out of his land, or Egypt.

Then Yahweh told Moses that he would harden Pharaoh's heart, or he would make the king stubborn. In that culture, people believed the heart was the centre of the mind or thinking, and often of feelings too. Exodus uses three phrases when talking about the hardening of Pharaoh's heart. The passages either say that Yahweh would harden Pharaoh's heart, or Pharaoh would harden his own heart, or that Pharaoh's heart became hard, or stubborn. The three phrases refer to the same thing—God keeping Pharaoh from letting the Israelites leave Egypt until the time God chose. By doing this God was showing his power over Pharaoh's power.

So when Yahweh hardened Pharaoh's heart, even though Yahweh would perform many signs and wonders, Pharaoh would not listen to Moses. Signs and wonders are supernatural events, which Yahweh used as proof

that He had spoken. Yahweh was telling Moses that even when Pharaoh experienced those terrifying supernatural acts of Yahweh, Pharaoh would not do what Moses and Aaron asked.

Yahweh continued by saying he would lay his hand upon Egypt, which was a phrase meaning that he would use his power against Egypt. And he would bring "his hosts," his people the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great acts of judgement. Here the military term, "hosts," which means "soldiers ready for battle," refers to Yahweh's people, the sons of Israel. Yahweh would lead his people out of Egypt by using his power to punish the Egyptians through his supernatural acts.

Stop here and tell a story of a time when God expected you to carry out an act of faith in obedience to Him and how He practically encouraged you to do that. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh continued, "Then the Egyptians shall know that I am Yahweh, when I stretch out my hand against Egypt and bring out the people of Israel from among them." Up until this point only the Israelites knew or acknowledged Yahweh. The phrase "the Egyptians shall know" means that the Egyptians have not yet acknowledged or perceived who Yahweh really was. They would recognise Yahweh for who he was and they would know that he was all-powerful when he punished them.

The passage says that Moses and Aaron "did so, they did just as Yahweh commanded them." This refers to their actions in the past when they obeyed Yahweh and spoke to Pharaoh. However, the phrase "as Yahweh commanded them" also refers to specific commands Yahweh would give them in the next part of the passage and in passages that follow. This sentence, therefore, is both a conclusion to the retelling of past events and a preview of what would soon take place. Moses and Aaron would indeed do just as Yahweh commanded them.

At the time when they spoke to Pharaoh, Moses was 80 years old and Aaron was 83 years old. Aaron was three years older than his younger brother Moses.

From this moment onwards the passage talks about new events. Then Yahweh told Moses and Aaron what to do when Pharaoh would ask Moses and Aaron to prove themselves by performing a miracle. God knew that Pharaoh would ask Moses and Aaron to show convincing evidence that Yahweh sent them. Pharaoh would ask them to display a supernatural sign or wonder. Yahweh told Moses that when that happened he should say to Aaron, "Take your staff and cast it down before Pharaoh, that it may become a serpent." Aaron's "staff" was the stick he mainly used for walking. He was to throw it down in front of Pharaoh and it would become a "serpent." The word for serpent in this verse often means "sea monster," or the "dragon." It is not the common word for "snake." Here it suggests the superior power of Yahweh over the powers of evil. The usual translation, however, is "serpent" because it is similar in size and shape to a rod. Use the same word for "serpent" throughout this passage.

So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh, which means that they most likely went into his palace. Pharaoh likely demanded a miracle from them, because the passage says that they did as Yahweh commanded them. Aaron threw his staff down in front of Pharaoh and his servants and it turned into a serpent. Pharaoh's servants were probably important men who served as attendants and as advisors to the king.

Then Pharaoh sent for the wise men and sorcerers. The wise men were probably priests who had great knowledge about "magic." The sorcerers were their assistants who were trained to use herbs and mix potions in order to cast spells and interpret signs. Both the wise men and the sorcerers served as special advisors to the king and were not far away. They were the magicians of Egypt and they performed the same miraculous signs as Moses and Aaron did by using their secret powers. Each of the magicians cast down his staff before Pharaoh and the staffs turned into serpents. Pharaoh's magicians performed their "miracles" either by illusion and deceptive tricks, or they used demonic power of their gods. However, Aaron's staff, which at that point was a serpent, swallowed up the magician's serpent staffs. This was evidence that Yahweh's power was greater than Pharaoh's power.

In spite of all this, Pharaoh behaved as Yahweh had said. He remained stubborn and refused to listen to Moses and Aaron.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 6:28–7:13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has eight scenes.

In the first scene: The passage retells what already happened in the past. Yahweh commanded Moses to be His spokesman to Pharaoh. Moses argued with Yahweh saying that he was a poor speaker and that Pharaoh would not listen to him.

In the second scene: Yahweh told Moses that Yahweh would make Moses seem like a God to Pharaoh and Aaron would be Moses' prophet. Moses would speak everything that Yahweh commanded him and Aaron would tell Pharaoh to let the Israelites go out of Pharaoh's land.

In the third scene: Yahweh told Moses that Yahweh would make Pharaoh stubborn. And even though Yahweh would perform many miraculous signs before Pharaoh, Pharaoh would not listen to Moses. Then Yahweh would perform great acts of judgement against Egypt and lead his people Israel out. Then the people of Egypt would know who Yahweh really was.

In the fourth scene: Moses and Aaron did everything that Yahweh commanded them in the past and they would do what he would tell them to do from now on.

In the fifth scene: From this moment onwards the passage talks about new events. Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron what they are to do when Pharaoh tells them to prove themselves by performing a miracle. Moses is to tell Aaron to cast down Aaron's staff before Pharaoh, so it becomes a serpent.

In the sixth scene: Moses and Aaron go to Pharaoh and do exactly as Yahweh commanded them. Aaron casts down his staff, which becomes a serpent.

In the seventh scene: Pharaoh summons his magicians who perform the same miracle by their secret arts. When they throw their staffs to the ground they turn into serpents. However, Aaron's serpent staff swallows up the magician's serpent staffs.

In the eighth scene: Pharaoh's heart becomes hardened and he does not listen to Moses and Aaron, just as Yahweh had said.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- Pharaoh king of Egypt
- People of Israel
- The Egyptians
- Aaron's staff and the serpent it turned into
- Pharaoh's servants
- Pharaoh's wise men and sorcerers, also called magicians
- And staffs of Pharaoh's magicians and the serpents the staffs turned into

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

The first part of this passage is a summary of events, which already took place. It retells the story of how Yahweh commanded Moses to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. This is an important part of the story, so Moses repeats this part of the story several times so that his audience can remember it and understand that it is important.

Stop here and as a group discuss examples of stories from your culture which repeat certain important parts of the narrative a number of times throughout the story. Pause this audio here.

When Yahweh spoke to Moses in the land of Egypt, He said to Moses, "I am Yahweh! Tell Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, everything I am telling you." Yahweh commanded Moses to be His spokesman to Pharaoh. But Moses argued with Yahweh saying that he had "uncircumcised lips," which meant that he was a poor speaker. This does not mean that Moses' lips were literally circumcised. This is a way to say that Moses could not speak well. Maybe he did not know the right kinds of things to say. He feared that Pharaoh would not listen to him.

Stop here and discuss the following: How would you talk about someone who doesn't speak well? What kinds of descriptions do you use to explain that they are not fluent in their speech or do not know what to say? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh answered Moses saying that Yahweh would make Moses seem like a God to Pharaoh and that Aaron would be Moses' prophet. Moses would say everything that Yahweh commanded him and Aaron would tell Pharaoh to let the Israelites go out of Pharaoh's land, or Egypt.

But Yahweh would make Pharaoh stubborn. And even though Yahweh would perform many miraculous signs before Pharaoh, Pharaoh would not listen to Moses. Then Yahweh would use his power against Egypt. Yahweh would lead his people out of Egypt by using his power to punish the Egyptians through his supernatural acts.

Then Yahweh said that when he used his power against the Egyptians and brought the Israelites out of Egypt, the Egyptians would then know that he was Yahweh.

The passage says that Moses and Aaron "did so, they did just as Yahweh commanded them." This refers to their actions in the past when they obeyed Yahweh and spoke to Pharaoh. However, the phrase "as Yahweh commanded them" also includes specific commands Yahweh would give them in the next part of the passage and in passages that follow. This sentence, therefore, is both a conclusion to the retelling of past events and a preview of what would soon take place.

Stop here and discuss the following. At this point the passage stops the repetition of an important narrative and starts to tell the audience about new events in the story. Discuss in a group how to make it clear to the audience that the repetition of what had happened ends and new events in the story begin. Pause this audio here.

The passage now gives us additional information about Moses and Aaron. At the time when they spoke to Pharaoh, Moses was 80 years old and Aaron was 83 years old. Aaron was three years older than his younger brother Moses.

From this moment onwards the passage talks about new events. Then Yahweh told Moses and Aaron what to do when Pharaoh would ask Moses and Aaron to prove themselves by performing a miracle. Yahweh told Moses that when that happened he should say to Aaron, "Take your walking stick and throw it down before Pharaoh. It will turn into a serpent."

So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh, which means that they most likely went into his palace. Pharaoh likely demanded a miracle from them, because the passage says that they did as Yahweh commanded them. Aaron threw his staff down in front of Pharaoh and his servants and it turned into a serpent.

Then Pharaoh sent for the wise men and sorcerers. Both the wise men and the sorcerers served as special advisors to the king and were not far away. They were the magicians of Egypt and they performed the same miraculous signs as Moses and Aaron did by using their secret powers. Each of the magicians cast down his staff before Pharaoh and the staffs turned into serpents. However, Aaron's staff, which at that point was a serpent, swallowed up the magician's serpent staffs.

In spite of all this, Pharaoh behaved as Yahweh had said. He remained stubborn and refused to listen to Moses and Aaron.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 6:28–7:13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has eight scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- Pharaoh king of Egypt
- People of Israel
- The Egyptians
- Aaron's staff and the serpent it turned into
- Pharaoh's servants
- Pharaoh's wise men and sorcerers, also called magicians
- And staffs of Pharaoh's magicians and the serpents the staffs turned into

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

When Yahweh spoke to Moses in the land of Egypt, he said to him, "I am Yahweh! Tell Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, everything I am telling you." But Moses argued with Yahweh, saying, "I can't do it! I'm such a clumsy speaker! Why should Pharaoh listen to me?"

Pause the drama.

Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Pay close attention to this. I will make you seem like God to Pharaoh, and your brother, Aaron, will be your prophet. Tell Aaron everything I command you, and Aaron must command Pharaoh to let the people of Israel leave his country. But I will make Pharaoh's heart stubborn so I can do many miraculous signs and wonders in the land of Egypt. Even then Pharaoh will refuse to listen to you. So I will bring down my fist on Egypt. Then I will rescue my forces-my people, the Israelites-from the land of Egypt with great acts of judgement. When I raise my powerful hand and bring out the Israelites, the Egyptians will know that I am Yahweh."

Pause the drama.

So Moses and Aaron did just as Yahweh had commanded them. Moses was eighty years old, and Aaron was eighty-three when they told their demands to Pharaoh.

Then Yahweh said to Moses and Aaron, "Pharaoh will demand, 'Show me a miracle.' When he does this, say to Aaron, 'Take your staff and throw it down in front of Pharaoh, and it will become a serpent.'"

So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and did what Yahweh had commanded them. Aaron threw down his staff before Pharaoh and his officials, and it became a serpent! Then Pharaoh called in his own wise men and sorcerers, and these Egyptian magicians did the same thing with their magic. They threw down their staffs, which also became serpents! But then Aaron's serpent staff swallowed up their serpent staffs.

Pharaoh's heart, however, remained hard. He still refused to listen, just as Yahweh had predicted.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 6:28–7:13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

On the day when **Yahweh** spoke to Moses in the land of Egypt, Yahweh said to Moses, "I am Yahweh; tell **Pharaoh** king of Egypt all that I say to you."

Yahweh is the personal name for God, and it is used throughout this passage. Use the same name for Yahweh that you have used in previous passages. Look up Yahweh in the Master Glossary for more information.

Use the same word or phrase for **Pharaoh** that you have used in previous passages. Look up Pharaoh in the Master Glossary for more information.

And Yahweh said to Moses, "See, I have made you like **God** to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron shall be your **prophet**."

Use the same word or phrase for **God** that you have used in previous passages. Look up God in the Master Glossary for more information.

A **prophet** is someone who takes God's message to people. Here God would give his message to Moses and Aaron, as Moses' prophet would give God's message to Pharaoh.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **prophet**. Look up prophet in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

"But I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and though I multiply my **signs** and wonders in the land of Egypt, Pharaoh will not listen to you."

Use the same word or phrase for **signs** that you have used in previous passages. Look up signs in the Master Glossary for more information.

"When Pharaoh says to you, 'Prove yourselves by working a **miracle**', then you shall say to Aaron, 'Take your staff and cast it down before Pharaoh, that it may become a serpent.'"

Use the same word or phrase for **miracle** that you have used in previous passages. Look up miracle in the Master Glossary for more information.

Then Pharaoh summoned the wise men and the sorcerers, and they, the **magicians** of Egypt, also did the same by their secret arts.

Magicians used special powers to control parts of nature. Magic was the use of miraculous or occult powers by carefully specified methods to achieve ends otherwise unattainable. Magicians also interpreted dreams and signs or omens. Kings especially used magicians to interpret dreams. The magician used magical powers to treat some diseases. Throughout the scriptures, God shows that God has more power than the magicians and their magic powers. Moses performed miracles in later passages of Exodus that Pharaoh's magicians could not duplicate. Eventually, in the book of Acts, the Ephesian believers burned their books of magic.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **magician**. Look up magician in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 6:28–7:13

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (5092181 KB)

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Exodus 7:14–25

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 7:14–25 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 7:14–25 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 7:14–25 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The previous passage began by retelling what Yahweh had already said and done. Yahweh had commanded Moses to be Yahweh's spokesman to Pharaoh. Yahweh would make Pharaoh stubborn and then perform great acts of judgement against Egypt and lead his people Israel out of Egypt. Then the passage introduced new events when Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh who asked them to prove themselves by performing a miracle. Aaron threw his staff down to the ground and it became a serpent. Pharaoh's magicians performed the same miracle, but Aaron's serpent staff ate their serpent staffs. Pharaoh's heart became hardened and he did not listen to Moses and Aaron.

Then Yahweh said to Moses that Pharaoh's heart was still hard. Here the word for hard means heavy or dull. Yahweh was informing Moses that nothing has changed as a result of the miracle of Yahweh turning Aaron's staff into a serpent. Yahweh said that Pharaoh was refusing to let the people of Israel leave Egypt. This was a result of his stubborn heart.

Stop here and tell the group a story about a time when someone in authority, for example, your boss or older family member, wanted you to give an instruction to someone who you knew was stubborn and difficult to deal with. How did you do it? How did the person react? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh told Moses to go and see Pharaoh the following morning, as Pharaoh was going out to the water. The water was the Nile River. The Nile is the longest river in Africa and it runs throughout Egypt. It was Egypt's greatest landmark. The people of Egypt relied on the Nile as the source of life, agriculture, and survival. The Nile was a major transport route. We don't know why Pharaoh went down to the water in the morning. He may have gone there to worship the Nile River god Hapi. Or he may have gone down to bathe. Pharaoh's palace was probably not far from the river. Yahweh told Moses to stand on the bank of the Nile to meet Pharaoh. Moses was to bring with him his staff, or walking stick. It was the staff which Yahweh turned into a serpent at Horeb, the mountain of Yahweh before Moses came back to Egypt. It was not Aaron's staff from the previous passage. The word for serpent here is the common word for "snake."

Stop here and look as a group at a map of Egypt with the Nile River. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh told Moses to say this to Pharaoh, "Yahweh, the God of the Hebrews, sent me, Moses, to you, Pharaoh, and Yahweh is saying, 'Let my people go, that they may serve me, in the wilderness.'" Moses then was to say to Pharaoh, "But until now you have refused to listen to Yahweh." Yahweh gave Moses a speech to Pharaoh, which clearly described that Moses represented Yahweh, "the God of the Hebrews, or Israelites" and that Yahweh was demanding that Pharaoh release Yahweh's people Israel to leave Egypt. The speech also explained that Yahweh was about to release his judgements on Pharaoh and the whole of Egypt because Pharaoh refused to listen so

far. Moses was to continue by telling Pharaoh, "But thus says Yahweh, 'By this you shall know that I am Yahweh.'" The phrase "By this" refers to the plague that would soon take place, and so it introduces the warning to Pharaoh. The phrase "you shall know" means "you will find out." Yahweh wanted to teach Pharaoh who he, Yahweh, was. Yahweh wanted Pharaoh to know His greatness and power to save, not just his name. Previously Yahweh only announced who he was to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Moses and the Israelites. Now, for the first time, Yahweh was revealing the meaning of his name to a non-Israelite. Moses' speech continued, "Look! With the staff that is in my hand I will strike the water of the Nile, and the river will turn to blood." When Moses does the things that Yahweh commands it is like Moses's hand is Yahweh's hand. Yahweh uses Moses' hand as his own hand to strike the water. So he says "I will strike the water." Taking into account what the passage says later, it seems certain that Yahweh is the one performing the miracle and striking the water with his power, or symbolically with his staff. Moses' movement with the staff will symbolise Yahweh's power and the miracle of Yahweh changing water into blood. The Hebrew word for blood refers to the blood of either man or animal or the colour of blood.

Yahweh continued to tell Moses what he was to say to Pharaoh: "The fish in the Nile shall die, and the Nile will stink, and the Egyptians will grow weary of drinking water from the Nile." Moses was to make Pharaoh aware of the consequences the plague would have for the Egyptians. The word for fish refers to all the different kinds of fresh water fish and living creatures in the Nile River. They would die because the water of the river would become blood. The bad smell of the Nile would possibly come from the dead fish rather than the blood. The Egyptians would become tired of looking in vain in the Nile for water fit to drink. Some Bible scholars believe that the water did not turn into real blood, but instead Yahweh commanded natural phenomena to cause the temporary reddening and contamination of the Nile and other surface water. This would make the water in the Nile undrinkable and would kill its fish. Other Bible scholars believe the water turned into blood.

Yahweh told Moses to speak to Aaron and give him the following instructions: "Aaron, take your staff and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt, over their rivers, their canals, and their ponds, and all their reservoirs, so that they may become blood, and there shall be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, even in vessels of wood and in vessels of stone." Aaron was to take his own staff and stretch out the hand in which he was holding the staff. He was to stretch his hand symbolically over all the bodies of water in Egypt, so that they would turn into blood. Aaron's staff was a symbolic reminder that Yahweh, not Aaron or Moses, was actually performing the miracle of turning water into blood. Some English translations use the word "streams" instead of rivers. Other English translations use the word "streams" instead of canals. Streams, or small rivers, were branches of the Nile River, which formed naturally. Canals were branches of the Nile, which people dug to water and nourish their fields. Ponds were pools of water left from when the Nile overflowed. Reservoirs were pools of water which people dug to store water for later use. There would be blood instead of water in all the bodies of water in the whole of Egypt as soon as Aaron stretched out his arm with his staff in it.

Stop here and look as a group at a picture of a Nile canal. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and tell the group a story about a time when someone told you to carry out their instructions and it was important that you did exactly what they asked you to do. What would have happened if you did not follow all of their instructions? Pause this audio here.

Moses and Aaron obeyed Yahweh following everything that Yahweh commanded them to do. While Pharaoh and his officials were watching, Moses by his words directed Aaron. Aaron then lifted up the staff for everyone to see and struck the surface of the water in the Nile. Water in the entire Nile River changed into blood.

And the fish in the Nile died. The word "fish" included all species of fish plus other living creatures in the river. They died as a result of the water changing into blood. And the water in the Nile stunk because of the dead fish. As a result the Egyptians could not drink the water from the Nile. And everywhere in Egypt the water became blood.

But the Egyptian magicians did the same miraculous sign as Moses and Aaron did by using their secret powers. The magicians were Pharaoh's wise men and sorcerers. They turned the water into blood. We are not sure which water the magicians changed into blood, as all the water in Egypt Yahweh had already changed into blood through Moses and Aaron. It may have been the water that the Egyptians were digging up to drink, or it may have been drinking water that the magicians had with them. Pharaoh's magicians performed their "miracle" either by illusion and deceptive tricks just making the water red, or they used demonic power of their

gods. But just as Yahweh told Moses, Pharaoh's heart remained stubborn. Seeing that his magicians performed the same miracle, Pharaoh had an excuse not to listen to Moses and Aaron and he did not let the Israelites go.

Pharaoh had been standing beside the river with his officials. He turned away from Moses and Aaron, and possibly from his own magicians as well, and went into his house. The phrase "went into his house" suggests that the palace was close to the river. The passage then says, "and he did not take even this to heart." This phrase means that Pharaoh did not even pay any attention to what happened. The word "heart" may also refer to Pharaoh's mind. You could also translate this sentence as "Pharaoh dismissed the matter from his mind."

And all the Egyptians dug along the Nile River for water to drink, because they could not drink the water of the Nile. The phrase "all the Egyptians" may mean all the Egyptians who lived near the river, not every single Egyptian. However, most of the population did live along the Nile River, so it may also mean "very many Egyptians," so that it seemed like all of them. The phrase "all the Egyptians" implied that the plague only affected the Egyptians and not the Israelites. The Egyptians, by digging holes in the sand and silt probably expected to find "drinking water" without the smell and impurities of the blood water from the Nile. They were not able to drink the water from the Nile, but we don't know whether this was because of the blood or because of the bad smell, or both.

The passage says, "Seven full days passed after Yahweh had struck the Nile." The sentence concludes the first plague and begins the second plague, with which Yahweh would afflict Egypt. The sentence may mean that the first plague lasted for seven days, or it may simply indicate that the second plague began one week after Yahweh turned the water into blood. Since the passage does not state when the first plague ended, it is reasonable to assume that it took seven days for the effects of the blood and dead fish to disappear. The phrase "after Yahweh had struck the Nile" refers to the time when Moses by his words directed Aaron and Aaron lifted up his staff and struck the surface of the water in the Nile. Then Yahweh changed water into blood.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 7:14–25 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has seven scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh tells Moses that Pharaoh's heart is still hard and he is still refusing to let the people of Israel leave Egypt.

In the second scene: Yahweh commands Moses to take his staff and go to the bank of the Nile River the following morning and talk to Pharaoh.

In the third scene: Yahweh tells Moses exactly what to say to Pharaoh. Moses was to say that:

- Yahweh sent Moses to Pharaoh to represent Yahweh and speak to him.
- Yahweh is telling Pharaoh to let his people Israel go and worship Him in the wilderness.
- Pharaoh hasn't listened up till then.
- The plague Yahweh was about to release on Egypt would show Pharaoh who Yahweh was—his greatness and power.
- Yahweh would strike the Nile with his staff, or his power, and the Nile would turn into blood.
- The fish in the Nile would die, the Nile would stink and the Egyptians would get tired trying to find water to drink.

In the fourth scene: Yahweh tells Moses to instruct Aaron. Moses is to tell Aaron to take his staff and stretch out his hand over the waters of Egypt and all the bodies of water in the whole of Egypt would become blood.

In the fifth scene: Moses and Aaron carry out Yahweh's commands. Aaron lifts up his staff in the presence of Pharaoh and his servants and all the water in the Nile turns to blood. The fish in the Nile die and the river stinks.

In the sixth scene: Pharaoh's magicians do the same miracle by their secret arts. Pharaoh's heart remains stubborn and he goes back to his palace.

In the seventh scene: The Egyptians cannot drink the water from the Nile and they have to dig along the Nile to find drinking water. The effects of the plague clear after seven days from Yahweh striking the Nile.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Pharaoh
- People of Israel
- Moses' staff
- Fish in the Nile River
- The Egyptians
- Aaron
- Aaron's staff
- Pharaoh's officials
- And Egyptian magicians

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Yahweh told Moses that Pharaoh's heart was still hard and he was still refusing to let the people of Israel leave Egypt.

Yahweh instructed Moses saying that the following morning Moses was to go to see Pharaoh, as Pharaoh was going out to the Nile River. Pharaoh's palace was probably not far from the river. Yahweh told Moses to stand on the bank of the Nile to meet Pharaoh. Moses was to bring with him his staff, or walking stick. We know that Aaron was with Moses, even though the story does not say that at this point.

Stop here and look as a group at a map of Egypt with the Nile River. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh told Moses exactly what to say to Pharaoh. Yahweh gave Moses the complete speech, including the words Moses was to say himself when addressing Pharaoh and the words he was going to say on behalf of Yahweh to Pharaoh. When retelling this passage act out the speech. Choose three people to play Moses, Yahweh, and Pharaoh. The actor playing Pharaoh will be standing and listening while the actors playing Moses and Yahweh will deliver the speech.

Yahweh commanded Moses to say the following to Pharaoh: "Yahweh, the God of the Hebrews, has sent me to say to you, 'Let my people go, so that they may worship me in the wilderness.' But until now you have not listened. This is what Yahweh says, 'By this you will know that I am Yahweh; With the staff that is in my hand I will strike the water of the Nile, and it will be changed into blood. The fish in the Nile will die, and the river will stink; the Egyptians will not be able to drink its water.'"

Stop here and discuss as a group: In your culture how do you give instructions to someone that somebody else gave you ahead of time? What words or phrases do you use to say that the instructions come from someone else? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh told Moses to speak to Aaron and give him the following instructions, "Aaron, take your staff and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt, over their rivers, their canals, and their ponds, and all their reservoirs, so that they may become blood, and there shall be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, even in

vessels of wood and in vessels of stone." Aaron was to take his own staff and stretch out the hand in which he was holding the staff. He was to stretch his hand symbolically over all the bodies of water in Egypt, so that they would turn into blood.

Stop here and look as a group at a picture of a Nile canal. Pause this audio here.

Moses and Aaron obeyed Yahweh, following everything that Yahweh commanded them to do. Although the story does not repeat the instructions from Yahweh here, Moses would have told Pharaoh everything Yahweh told him to say to Pharaoh. The story then says that "he" lifted up the staff for everyone to see and struck the surface of the water in the Nile. It is not totally clear if the word "he" refers to Moses or Aaron. It is more likely that it was Aaron and that while Pharaoh and his officials were watching, Moses by his words directed Aaron. You can choose to either use the word "he" not mentioning either Moses or Aaron, or you can say "Aaron," because Aaron is the more likely one. When Aaron lifted up the staff, water in the entire Nile River changed into blood.

And the fish in the Nile died as a result of the water changing into blood. And the water in the Nile stunk because of the dead fish. As a result the Egyptians could not drink the water from the Nile. And everywhere in Egypt the water became blood.

But the Egyptian magicians did the same miraculous sign as Moses and Aaron did by using their secret powers. They turned the water into blood. We are not sure which water the magicians changed into blood, as all the water in Egypt Yahweh had already changed into blood through Moses and Aaron. It may have been the water that the Egyptians were digging up to drink. But just as Yahweh told Moses, Pharaoh's heart remained stubborn. Seeing that his magicians performed the same miracle Pharaoh had an excuse not to listen to Moses and Aaron and he did not let the Israelites go.

Pharaoh had been standing beside the river with his officials. He turned away from Moses and Aaron, and possibly from his own magicians as well, and went into his house. The phrase "went into his house" suggests that the palace was close to the river. The passage then says, "and he did not take even this to heart." This phrase means that Pharaoh did not even pay any attention to what happened. The word "heart" may also refer to Pharaoh's mind. You could also translate this sentence as "Pharaoh dismissed the matter from his mind."

And all the Egyptians dug along the Nile River for water to drink, because they could not drink the water of the Nile. The phrase "all the Egyptians" implied that the plague only affected the Egyptians and not the Israelites. The Egyptians, by digging holes in the sand and silt probably expected to find "drinking water" without the smell and impurities of the blood water from the Nile. The effects of the plague clear after seven days from when Yahweh struck the Nile.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 7:14–25 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has seven scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Pharaoh
- People of Israel
- Moses' staff
- Fish in the Nile River
- The Egyptians
- Aaron
- Aaron's staff
- Pharaoh's officials
- And Egyptian magicians

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Pharaoh's heart is stubborn, and he still refuses to let the people go. So go to Pharaoh in the morning as he goes down to the river. Stand on the bank of the Nile and meet him there. Be sure to take along your staff that turned into a snake.

Pause the drama.

Then announce to Pharaoh, "Yahweh, the God of the Hebrews, has sent me to tell you, 'Let my people go, so they can worship me in the wilderness.' Until now, you have refused to listen to him. So this is what Yahweh says, 'I will show you that I am Yahweh. Look! I will strike the water of the Nile with this staff in my hand, and the river will turn to blood. The fish in it will die, and the river will stink. The Egyptians will not be able to drink any water from the Nile.'"

Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Tell Aaron, 'Take your staff and raise your hand over the waters of Egypt-all its rivers, canals, ponds, and all the reservoirs. Turn all the water to blood. Everywhere in Egypt the water will turn to blood, even the water stored in wooden bowls and stone pots.'"

So Moses and Aaron did just as Yahweh commanded them. As Pharaoh and all of his officials watched, Aaron raised his staff and struck the water of the Nile. Suddenly, the whole river turned to blood! The fish in the river died, and the water became so foul that the Egyptians couldn't drink it. There was blood everywhere throughout the land of Egypt.

Pause the drama.

But again the magicians of Egypt used their magic, and they, too, turned water into blood. So Pharaoh's heart remained hard. He refused to listen to Moses and Aaron, just as Yahweh had predicted. Pharaoh returned to his palace and put the whole thing out of his mind. Then all the Egyptians dug along the riverbank to find drinking

water, because they couldn't drink the water from the Nile. Seven days passed from the time Yahweh struck the Nile.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 7:14–25 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Then **Yahweh** said to Moses, "Pharaoh's heart is hardened; he refuses to let the people go."

Yahweh is the personal name for God, and it is used throughout this passage. Use the same name for Yahweh that you have used in previous passages. Look up Yahweh in the Master Glossary for more information.

Use the same word or phrase for **Pharaoh** that you have used in previous passages. Look up Pharaoh in the Master Glossary for more information.

Yahweh spoke to Moses and told him to go and speak to Pharaoh the next morning when Pharaoh went down to the river. Yahweh told Moses to say the following to Pharaoh: "Yahweh, the God of the **Hebrews**, or Israelites, sent me to you, saying, 'let my people go, that they may **worship** me in the **wilderness**.'"

The word **Hebrews**, or Israelites is the name of a people group of Abraham's descendants. Use the same word or phrase for Hebrews you used in previous passages. Look up Hebrews in the Master Glossary for more information.

The word **worship** here implies showing love for Yahweh by serving him. Use the same word or phrase for worship you used in previous passages. Look up worship in the Master Glossary for more information.

Use the same word or phrase for **wilderness** you used in previous passages. Look up wilderness in the Master Glossary for more information.

And Yahweh said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Take your staff and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt, over their rivers, their canals, and their ponds, and all their reservoirs, so that they may become blood, and there shall be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, even in the vessels of wood and in vessels of stone.'" **Canals** were branches of the Nile, which people dug to water and nourish their fields. **Streams**, or small rivers, were branches of the Nile River, which formed naturally. **Ponds** were pools of water left from when the Nile overflowed. **Reservoirs** were pools of water which people dug to store water for later use.

Stop here and discuss as a group what words or phrases you will use for all the different bodies of water. If you have already translated these words in another book of the Bible, use the same words that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

After Yahweh changed the water to blood, the **magicians** of Egypt did the same by their secret arts.

Use the same word or phrase for **magicians** that you have used in previous passages. Look up magicians in the Master Glossary for more information.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. *Pause this audio here.*

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 7:14-25

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (5953396 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Exodus 8:1-15

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 8:1-15 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 8:1-15 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

- 1. What do you like in this passage?**

Pause this audio here.

- 1. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?**

Pause this audio here.

- 1.** What does this passage tell us about God?

Pause this audio here.

- 1.** What does this passage tell us about people?

Pause this audio here.

- 1.** How does this passage affect our daily lives?

Pause this audio here.

- 1.** Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Pause this audio here.

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 8:1-15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last passage, Yahweh commanded Moses to tell Aaron his brother to strike the Nile River. Suddenly, all the water stored in the dams, jars, buckets, and the reservoirs all turned into blood. Then the Egyptians had to dig new wells to get drinking water. This passage happens 7 days after Yahweh turned the water to blood.

Seven days later, Yahweh told Moses to go back to Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, and tell him to let his people, the Israelites, go so that they may worship or serve Yahweh. This time, Moses is not asking for the Israelites to go away for just a short time. Yahweh told Moses to tell Pharaoh, "If you refuse to let the Israelites go and worship me, Yahweh will punish you with a plague, or attack, of frogs all over the country of Egypt. The Nile River will be filled up with frogs which will come into your palace and bedroom, into your bed and into your officials' and people's house, and into your ovens and kneading bowls." This is the first time that Pharaoh himself will be affected by the plagues. When Yahweh said that the Nile River will be full of frogs, Yahweh is showing that no place will be free of frogs and no one can avoid them. Every part of the house will be full of frogs-even the ovens and the wooden or clay bowls where people mixed the flour for the bread.

Show the picture of the frogs, oven, and kneading bowls. Pause this audio here.

Egyptians worshipped a goddess with the head of a frog. This goddess helped give life, so Egyptians may have hesitated to kill the frogs that invaded their homes.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group. Discuss animals or reptiles that people consider sacred in your culture. And if someone kills it, what often happens to such a person? Pause this audio here.

We only hear what Yahweh tells Moses to say to Pharaoh. We assume that Moses really goes to say this to Pharaoh. Then Yahweh told Moses again to tell his brother Aaron to hold the rod or staff with his hand and stretch it over the rivers, canals, and ponds. Canals are long bodies of water that a person can ride a boat on or could be used to irrigate fields. Ponds are small, still bodies of water. So, Aaron stretched out his hand over all the water in Egypt and the frogs covered all the land of Egypt. But the magicians in Egypt also caused frogs to cover all the land of Egypt by their secret powers or magic. However, the magicians' power was limited. Pharaoh had to rely on Moses and Aaron to fix the problem.

Then Pharaoh invited Moses and Aaron into his palace and begged them to pray and ask Yahweh to take away the frogs from him and his people, then he will let the people of Israel go to sacrifice to Yahweh and come back to Egypt again. When Pharaoh invited Moses and his brother Aaron, it now shows that God has succeeded in forcing Pharaoh to recognize him and accept the fact that no one in Egypt has the power to deliver the Egyptians and the land from the judgement of God.

Show the picture of rivers, canals, and ponds. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group. In your culture, discuss situations where magicians use evil power to change the forces of nature. Pause this audio here

But Moses also said to Pharaoh, "When do you want the frogs to go away so that I can pray to Yahweh on your behalf, your servants and your people, that the frogs shall go away from you and your houses, and the frogs should remain only in the Nile River?" Then Pharaoh said to Moses "tomorrow." Moses replied, "Yes just as you've said, It shall be done by tomorrow. This will help you to understand that there is no one like our God. The frogs shall depart from you, your houses and your servants and your people. The frogs shall only be in the Nile River." Then, Moses and his brother Aaron left Pharaoh's palace and Moses prayed to God concerning the frogs, as he had agreed with Pharaoh. So, God answered Moses' prayers and all the frogs died in the houses, the courtyards and in the fields. God causes all the frogs to die to show Pharaoh that the authority of Pharaoh's gods are not equal to the authority of Yahweh, the creator. All the frogs were gathered together in heaps, and the land was full of unpleasant smells. However, when Pharaoh noticed that all the frogs were wiped out, he again hardened his heart against God, just as Yahweh earlier told Moses Pharaoh would do. This means that Pharaoh became stubborn.

Stop here and tell a story as a group when a king or ruler made a promise or entered an agreement with his people but failed to fulfill his promise. Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 8:1-15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has three scenes.

In the first scene: God commanded Moses to tell Pharaoh to let the Israelites go and worship him. And if Pharaoh refuses, he will attack them in the form of frogs all over Egypt.

In the second scene: God commanded Moses to tell Aaron to hold the staff in his hands and stretch it over the rivers, canals, and the ponds to cause the frogs to cover the land of Egypt. The Egyptian magicians did the same thing.

In the third scene: Pharaoh invited Moses and his brother Aaron to pray to God to take away all frogs back into the Nile River. And Pharaoh hardened his heart against God when God took all the frogs away.

The characters in this passage are:

- God
- Moses and his brother Aaron
- Pharaoh
- The magicians

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

This passage happens seven days after all the water in the dams, reservoir, and jars turned into blood. Yahweh commanded Moses to go tell Pharaoh that Yahweh says let his people go and worship him. And if Pharaoh refuses, Yahweh will send frogs all over the land of Egypt to punish him. The Nile River will be covered with frogs and the frogs will come into Pharaoh's palace and bedroom, his sleeping bed and into the houses of his officials and the houses of everyone in Egypt. The frogs will come into where the Egyptians are cooking and fill their cooking plates and pots. We only hear about Yahweh's instructions to Moses. We must assume that Moses really did go to Pharaoh and tell Pharaoh all these things.

In the second scene, God commanded Moses to tell Aaron his brother to place the staff he is holding in his hand over the rivers, canals, and the ponds all over the land of Egypt. So Aaron stretched out his staff over the rivers and the frogs suddenly covered all the land in Egypt. Then Pharaoh called his magicians and they did the same thing with their secret powers. Then Pharaoh invited Moses and Aaron into his palace and begged them to pray and ask Yahweh to take away the frogs from him and his people. Then Pharaoh said that when the frogs go away the people can go make sacrifices to Yahweh. This is different from what Moses asked him to do. Moses

asked Pharaoh to let the people go serve or worship Yahweh. Pharaoh is more specific about what the people can do, because Pharaoh wants the people to come back afterwards.

In the third scene, Moses talks to Pharaoh respectfully. Moses asks Pharaoh to give Moses the honor of telling him when to pray to Yahweh to ask him to stop the punishment of frogs. When Pharaoh tells Moses when to pray, Pharaoh is also showing that he knows that Yahweh is the God with all power. Pharaoh asks Moses to pray "tomorrow," or the next day. Moses tells Pharaoh that the frogs will stop the next day just as Pharaoh has asked. Then Pharaoh will understand that he is not equal to God and there is no other power and authority like God. Moses tells Pharaoh exactly what the frogs will do-they will leave the houses, the officials, and the people, and they will only be in the Nile River.

Then Moses leaves. Moses does exactly what he said he would do. Yahweh does exactly what he said he would do. This information is repeated here-first we hear what Pharaoh asks and what Yahweh says he will do, and now we hear that these things actually happen. All the frogs were dead and gathered together in heaps, and the land was full of unpleasant or bad smells.

The moment Pharaoh discovered that Yahweh had answered his prayers and all the frogs were out of the Egyptians' houses and back into the Nile River, this gave Pharaoh a good relief and he hardened his heart towards the instructions Yahweh gave Moses and his brother Aaron to deliver to him.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 8:1-15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the team will dramatize the story.

This passage has three scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh commanded Moses to tell Pharaoh to let the Israelites go and worship him. And if Pharaoh refuses, he will strike in the form of frogs all over Egypt.

In the second scene: God commanded Moses to tell Aaron to hold the staff in his hands and stretch it over the rivers, canals, and the ponds to cause the frogs to cover the land of Egypt and the Egyptians magicians did the same thing.

In the third scene: Pharaoh invited Moses and his brother Aaron to pray to God to take away all frogs back into the Nile River. And Pharaoh hardened his heart against God when all the frogs were taken away.

The characters in this passage are:

- God
- Moses and his brother Aaron
- Pharaoh
- The Magicians

Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story. Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

In the first scene, God told Moses to go to Pharaoh and tell him to let his people, the Israelites, go so that they may worship or serve me. But if you refuse to let them go, I God will attack you with frogs all over the country

of Egypt. The Nile River will be filled up with frogs which will come into your palace and bedroom, unto your bed and into your officials and people's house, and into your ovens and kneading bowls. And all the frogs shall come upon you, your people and on all your officials.

Stop the action. Stop the action.

In the second scene, God told Moses to tell his brother Aaron to stretch out his hand with his staff over the rivers, the canals, and over the ponds, to make the frogs to cover all the land of Egypt. So Aaron stretched out his hand over the rivers of Egypt and the frogs covered the land of Egypt. But the magicians also made frogs to cover all the land of Egypt by their secret powers.

Stop the action. Stop the action.

In the third scene, Pharaoh invited Moses and his brother Aaron to pray to God to take away all frogs back into the Nile River. Moses is asking Pharaoh to set the time. Moses says he is giving Pharaoh the honor of setting the time when Moses will pray to Yahweh on his behalf, his servants and his people that the frogs should go away from him, and the frogs should remain only in the Nile River. Then Pharaoh said "by tomorrow." Moses replied, "Yes just as you've said, it shall be done by tomorrow, this will help you to understand that there is no one like our God. The frogs shall depart from you, your houses and your servants and your people; they shall be left only in the Nile." Thereafter, Moses and his brother Aaron left Pharaoh's palace and prayed to God concerning the frogs, as he had agreed with Pharaoh. So, God answered Moses' prayers and all the frogs died in the houses, the courtyards and in the fields. It smelled bad. However, when Pharaoh noticed that there was some relief after all the frogs were wiped out, he hardened his heart against God. He decided to stop listening to Moses and his brother Aaron, just as God earlier told Moses that Pharaoh would.

Stop the action. Stop the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 8:1-15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Yahweh told Moses to go to Pharaoh again and tell him to let his people, the Israelites, go so that they may worship or serve me. Yahweh is the personal name of God. Use the same name for Yahweh that you used in previous passages, and remember that Yahweh is in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh told Moses to go to **Pharaoh** again and tell him to let his people, the Israelites, go so that they may worship him. Pharaoh refers to the title for the kings of Egypt. Translate Pharaoh in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that Pharaoh is in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh told Moses to tell Pharaoh, "If you refuse to let the Israelites go, Yahweh will **plague** you with frogs all over the country of Egypt." Plagues are not diseases; they are harsh punishments or disasters on people or nature that cause many problems for people.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will translate plague. Pause this audio here.

"The frogs shall depart from you, your houses and your **servants** and your people; they shall be left only in the Nile." A servant is someone who lives in the same household as his master to serve him in some way. A servant could be male or female. In this case, these servants were Pharaoh's special servants. Translate servants in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that servants is in the Master Glossary.

So, Aaron stretched out his hand over the rivers of Egypt and the frogs covered all the land of Egypt. But the **magicians** in Egypt also cause frogs to cover all the land of Egypt by their secret powers or magic. Magicians are people with special powers to control parts of nature. They used miraculous or occult powers carefully to interpret dreams and treat some diseases. Throughout the scriptures, Yahweh shows that he has more power than the magicians and their magic powers. Translate magician in the same way you have in previous passages and remember that magician is in the Master Glossary.

Then Pharaoh invited Moses and Aaron into his palace and begged them to pray and ask the Lord to take away the frogs from him and his people. Then he will let the people of Israel go to **sacrifice** to Yahweh. A sacrifice is

something offered to God to thank him or ask forgiveness from him. Translate sacrifice in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that sacrifice is in the Master Glossary.

However, when Pharaoh noticed that there was some relief after all the frogs were wiped out, he decided to **harden his heart** against God, Moses and his brother Aaron just as Yahweh the Lord earlier told Moses that Pharaoh would do. The hardened heart means to become very stubborn. Translate the hardened heart in the same way as in previous passages.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in their own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 8:1-15

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3352736 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Exodus 8:16–19

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 8:16–19 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 8:16–19 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?

Pause this audio here.

1. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?

Pause this audio here.

1. What does this passage tell us about God?

Pause this audio here.

1. What does this passage tell us about people?

Pause this audio here.

1. How does this passage affect our daily lives?

Pause this audio here.

1. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Pause this audio here.

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 8:16–19 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last passage, Yahweh struck Egypt with frogs all over the land. Moses prayed and the frogs died, but Pharaoh again hardened his heart and would not allow the Israelites to go. Therefore, after some time, Yahweh commanded Moses to tell his brother Aaron to use the staff he was holding and strike the dust on the ground. The dust is the loose top dirt on the ground. This dust all over Egypt will turn into gnats. We do not know what type of insect those gnats were. They could possibly be some flying, biting insects like gnats, lice, or maybe mosquitoes that sting the people and animals all over Egypt. We do not know the exact number of such insects at that time. Moses and Aaron did exactly as Yahweh told them. All the dust in Egypt turned into these gnats.

Stop here and show the picture of a staff and gnats. Pause the audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, discuss situations where some bees or insects come all over your community and begin to sting or bite people, animals, or destroy some farm land. Pause this audio here.

The magicians tried to use their secret power to produce gnats, but this time they could not. Maybe the magicians also tried to strike the dust with their staff like Aaron did, or maybe they tried to chant some secret chants to produce gnats. Whatever they did, none of this worked. The gnats were all over the people and animals, causing so much destruction and problems in the land of Egypt. The magicians may have been with Pharaoh the entire time, or they may have come to him now. In any case, the magicians said to Pharaoh, "This must be the finger of God!" The magicians confessed to Pharaoh that they believed that only God's power could have produced these gnats.

The magicians were not saying that they believed in Yahweh, but the magicians knew that a god of some sort had brought on this plague. But Pharaoh's heart became more hard, or stubborn, and he would not listen to Yahweh. This is what Yahweh had told Moses and his brother Aaron that Pharaoh would do.

Stop here and tell a story as a group about times when you have seen different spiritual powers working against each other. What happened? How did people respond to this?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 8:16–19 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualise this passage.

This passage has two scenes.

In the first scene: Some time later Yahweh commanded Moses to tell his brother Aaron to use the staff he is holding and strike, or hit, the dust on the ground and the dust all over Egypt became gnats.

In the second scene: The Egyptian magicians by their secret power also strike the dust to become gnats and fail in their efforts to also bring out gnats. The magicians say that this is the "finger of God." Pharaoh hardened his heart and did not listen, just as Yahweh had said would happen.

The characters in this passage are:

- God
- Moses and his brother Aaron
- Pharaoh
- The magicians

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In the first scene, Yahweh commanded Moses to tell his brother Aaron to use the staff he is holding and strike the dust on the ground. Remember that the dust on the ground is the loose topsoil, or loose dirt, on the top of the ground. Yahweh promised Moses and Aaron that the dust all over Egypt will turn to gnats, or small biting insects. Moses and Aaron did exactly as Yahweh told them and all the people and animals in Egypt were covered with gnats.

In the second scene, the Egyptian magicians wanted to use their secret power to make gnats come. But this time it is different. The magicians probably also struck the dust or recited their secret chants, but it did not work. They could not produce the gnats. The magicians may have already been with Pharaoh, or they may have come to Pharaoh at this time. The magicians said, "This is the finger of God." The "finger of God" is special language that means "the power of God." They used the finger of a hand to represent the whole hand. God's hand showed God's power. The magicians were saying that only a god could produce gnats like this. But Pharaoh remained very stubborn. Moses reminds us that Yahweh had told Moses and Aaron already that Pharaoh would remain stubborn.

Stop here and discuss the following: How do you talk about the mighty power of God? Tell a story about a time when only God could have done something. How do you describe God's power in this story? Listen carefully for words or phrases you use to describe how powerful God is. Pause this audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualise the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 8:16–19 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the team will dramatize the passage.

This passage has two scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh commanded Moses to tell his brother Aaron to use the staff he is holding and strike the dust on the ground and the dust all over Egypt became gnats.

In the second scene: The Egyptians magicians by their secret power also strike the dust to produce gnats and fail in their efforts to also bring out gnats. The magicians say that this is the "finger of God." Pharaoh hardened his heart and did not listen, just as Yahweh had said would happen.

The characters in this passage are:

- God
- Moses and his brother Aaron
- Pharaoh
- The magicians

Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story. Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama. Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

In the first scene, Yahweh commanded Moses to tell his brother Aaron to use the staff he is holding and strike the dust on the ground and the dust all over Egypt will turn into gnats. Then Moses and Aaron did exactly as Yahweh told them. And suddenly the gnats came upon the people and animals.

Stop the action. Stop the action.

In the second scene, when the magicians tried to produce gnats by their secret powers, they said, "Pharaoh, this must be the finger of God." But Pharaoh's heart became more hard and he would not listen to Yahweh, just as Yahweh had told Moses and his brother Aaron would happen.

Stop the action. Stop the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 8:16–19 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Yahweh commanded Moses to tell his brother Aaron to use the staff he is holding and strike the dust on the ground and the dust all over Egypt will turn into gnats. Yahweh is the personal name of God. Use the same name for Yahweh that you used in previous passages, and remember that Yahweh is in the Master Glossary.

So, when the magicians saw **gnats** hurting their people and animals, gnats refers to a very small insect or lice serving as God's judgements against Pharaoh in the land of Egypt. How would you describe a very small insect that can hurt both people and animals, like bees, lice, and mosquitoes?

Then the **magicians** also made efforts and struck the dust on the ground to become gnats, but they failed this time around. Magicians are people with special powers to control parts of nature. They used miraculous or occult powers carefully to interpret dreams and treat some diseases. Throughout the scriptures, Yahweh shows that he has more power than the magicians and their magic powers. Translate magician in the same way you have in previous passages and remember that magician is in the Master Glossary.

The magicians called **Pharaoh** and said to him, "Pharaoh, this must be the finger of God." Pharaoh refers to the title for the kings of Egypt. Translate Pharaoh in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that Pharaoh is in the Master Glossary.

But Pharaoh's heart became more hard and he would not listen to Yahweh. Yahweh had warned Moses and his brother Aaron that Pharaoh would not listen to them. The hardened heart means to become very stubborn. Translate the hardened heart in the same way as in previous passages.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in their own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 8:16-19

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (2162508 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (3668678 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Exodus 8:20–32

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 8:20–32 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 8:20–32 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 8:20–32 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last passage, Yahweh struck the people of Egypt with gnats. Now in this passage, Yahweh tells Moses to meet Pharaoh at the river in the morning, much like he did earlier when the water changed to blood. Yahweh tells Moses to ask again that Pharaoh let Yahweh's people go worship him. If Pharaoh does not, Yahweh warns Pharaoh that Yahweh will send a swarm of flies to fill everywhere in Egypt, even covering the ground. The flies were probably some sort of biting flying insect. These large numbers of flies went into the Egyptians' homes and ruined the entire land in Egypt. Moses also told Pharaoh that the land where the Israelites live in Goshen would be free of this swarm of flies. The land of Goshen is the area in Egypt where the Israelites live. When Yahweh said that Goshen would be free from the swarms of flies, Yahweh is showing that he is powerful over nature. Yahweh can decide who the flies bother, and who the flies leave alone. Yahweh says that the next day, this sign shall happen. And Yahweh made it happen.

This is the first time in the plagues that we hear specifically that the Israelites were not harmed by the plague. It is possible that the Israelites were not harmed by any of the previous plagues either, but this time Yahweh specifically says it. It became very clear that the gods or magicians in Egypt were not capable of protecting the Egyptians against the swarms of flies. So the suffering from the swarms of flies made Pharaoh understand that Yahweh is in charge of the earth.

Stop here and show the photo of swarms of flies. Pause the audio here.

Stop here and show the map of Egypt and Goshen. Pause the audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, tell a story about a time when some parts of your land were attacked by an insect. What happened? Did every part of your land get attacked? Who suffered, and how did they suffer? Pause this audio here.

Then immediately, Pharaoh called Moses and his brother Aaron and said to them to quickly go and make sacrifices to Yahweh within the land of Egypt. Pharaoh wanted to keep the Israelites close to him so he could watch out that they did not escape. But Moses said that the Israelites could not sacrifice in the land of Egypt. First, their sacrifices would be offensive to the Egyptians, because the Egyptians looked down on people who raised sheep and goats. Sheep and goats are what the Israelites would sacrifice to God. Then Moses explains that the Egyptians would want to stone, or kill, the Israelites, if they saw them sacrificing like this because it would be so offensive to them. Moses says again that the Israelites need to obey Yahweh and leave Egypt in order to take a three-day journey into the wilderness to offer sacrifices to Yahweh, as he had commanded them. Pharaoh said to Moses, "I will let you go and make a sacrifice to Yahweh in the wilderness." Then Pharaoh told Moses to not go too far. It must have been difficult for Pharaoh to admit this, because it meant that Pharaoh's belief in his own power and in his own magicians is coming to an end.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about a time when a leader in your community changed his mind about an important decision. What made him change his mind? Pause this audio here.

"But pray for me before you leave," said Pharaoh. Pharaoh is asking Moses to pray that the swarms of flies will leave. So, Moses said to Pharaoh, "If you want me to pray for you, then you must make sure you do not deceive or lie to me like you did last time. Don't refuse to let us go the moment Yahweh answers your prayers over the plague of frogs and gnats. If you agree, then by tomorrow all the swarms of flies will leave you, your people and your officials." Again Moses prays and Yahweh answers. Here Yahweh is establishing his complete power over people and his creatures. All the swarms of flies left Pharaoh, his people and his officials. The entire land of Egypt was completely free from the swarms of flies. Again the moment Pharaoh discovered that all the swarms of flies were gone, Pharaoh hardened his heart against Yahweh or became very stubborn and refused to let the Israelites go to worship or serve Yahweh.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 8:20–32 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualise this passage.

This passage has three scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh told Moses to tell Pharaoh that Yahweh wants the Israelites to leave Egypt to go and worship. And if Pharaoh refuses to let them go, Yahweh will strike the people and the land with swarms of flies.

In the second scene: Yahweh struck the people with swarms of flies. Pharaoh agreed and told Moses that the Israelites can go and make sacrifices in the land of Egypt to worship or serve Yahweh. Moses insists that the Israelites leave Egypt. Pharaoh agrees and asks Moses to pray for him.

In the third scene: Pharaoh pretends to have agreed to Yahweh's commandments to him but later hardened his heart after Yahweh decided to free the Egyptians from the swarms of stinging flies.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses and his brother Aaron
- Pharaoh
- Pharaoh's officials and the people of Egypt

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In the first scene, we don't know how much time has passed since the plague right before this, and we don't know how the plague before this ended. When Yahweh spoke to Moses to go and meet Pharaoh early in the

morning as soon as the sun was rising, Aaron was not with him. Yahweh wanted Moses to go and wait or stand in Pharaoh's path as Pharaoh walked to the Nile River. The Nile River was probably not far from Pharaoh's palace. Yahweh told Moses to command Pharaoh that Yahweh wants his people to go and perform the proper ceremonies to worship him. And if Pharaoh does not listen to Yahweh's warning, by tomorrow Yahweh will send large painful biting insects on Pharaoh, and the Egyptians themselves. The ground and the Egyptians' houses will be filled with these biting insects, and there would be no place where the Egyptians could escape from these terrible biting insects. But Yahweh will protect the area or treat the land of Goshen differently; no single biting insect shall be found in Goshen. Yahweh says, "Then you will recognize that I am Yahweh, I am here in Egypt. I will protect or preserve my people the Israelites from these painful biting insects that will strike the Egyptians."

The second scene starts two days after Moses received these instructions from Yahweh, and the next day after Moses warned Pharaoh. The day after Moses warned Pharaoh, Yahweh sent large biting insects into Pharaoh's palace, into the houses of his servants and all over. The land of Egypt was almost destroyed with the large painful biting insects. So, when Pharaoh discovered that the biting insects were striking the Egyptians, Pharaoh quickly sent his servants to go and bring Moses and Aaron and told them now they can go and offer proper sacrifices of animals to worship Yahweh, but they had to stay in Egypt. Then Moses said to Pharaoh, it is not proper for us to make our sacrifices here in Egypt. It will be offensive to the Egyptians because the act of sacrificing our kind of animal is believed by the Egyptians should not be sacrificed. So, Moses demanded that Yahweh has ordered us to walk three days into the wilderness to make proper sacrifice of animals as he demands.

In the third scene, Pharaoh agreed to allow the Israelites to go worship Yahweh. But he told them not to go very far to make sacrifices and worship Yahweh. Pharaoh asked Moses to ask Yahweh to take away these painful biting insects. Then Moses agreed and said, as soon as I leave you, I will ask Yahweh to take away the biting insects from you, your servants and from your people. When Moses talked to Pharaoh, he was very polite. Moses used Pharaoh's title and talked to Pharaoh like he was talking about someone else, rather than talking directly to Pharaoh. This was a polite way to talk with a king.

Stop here and discuss as a group: In your culture, how do you talk to the important king or leader? How do you address him, and how do you act? Pause this audio here.

And Yahweh answered Moses' request and caused all the biting insects to leave Egypt completely. The story emphasises that Yahweh completely removed the insects—the story says "not a fly remained." But Pharaoh hardened his heart again or became stubborn by refusing the Israelites to go and offer proper sacrifice of animals to worship Yahweh.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualise the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 8:20–32 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the team will dramatise the story.

This passage has three scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- God
- Moses and his brother Aaron
- Pharaoh
- Pharaoh's officials and the people of Egypt

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

In the first scene, Yahweh said to Moses, "In the morning Pharaoh will be on his way to the Nile River. I want you to get up and meet him on the way. Tell Pharaoh that Yahweh wants the Israelites to leave Egypt to go and worship or serve me. And if he refuses to let them go, I will strike him, his servants, and his people, and his houses with swarms of flies. And all the ground in Egypt will be filled up with swarms of flies." Moses also told Pharaoh that the land where the Israelites live in Goshen would be free of this swarm of flies. Then Yahweh told Moses to tell Pharaoh that this strike against him will also mark a difference between his people the Israelites and the Egyptians.

Pause the action.Pause the action.

In the second scene Yahweh did everything he told Moses to tell Pharaoh that he would do. Big swarms of flies poured into Pharaoh's palace and into the houses of his officials; throughout Egypt the land was ruined by the flies. Pharaoh called Moses and his brother Aaron and said to them to quickly go and make sacrifices inside the land of Egypt. But Moses said, "This will never happen for the Israelites to make any sacrifice to Yahweh in the land of Egypt. The people in Egypt will hate us and it will be a disgrace in the land of Egypt and don't you think the Egyptians might even kill us? We just need to obey Yahweh and take a 3-day's journey into the wilderness and make our sacrifices to Yahweh as he has commanded us. Pharaoh said to Moses, "I will let you go and make sacrifices to Yahweh in the wilderness."

Pause the action.

Ask the person playing the Pharaoh, "How are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "I think I'm overstepping my boundaries and taking Yahweh for granted. However, I'm just buying time to see if Yahweh would give me some kind consideration to still have my way." [!end] Continue the drama.

In the third scene, Pharaoh said to Moses, "But kindly pray for me before you leave." Then Moses said to Pharaoh, "If you want me to pray for you, then you must make sure you do not deceive or lie to me like you did last time. If you agree, then by tomorrow all the swarms of flies will leave you, your people and your officials." Again Moses prayed and Yahweh answered. All the swarms of flies left Pharaoh, his people and his officials. The entire land of Egypt was completely free from the swarms of flies. Again the moment Pharaoh discovered that all the swarms of flies were gone, Pharaoh hardened his heart against Yahweh and refused to let the Israelites go to worship or serve Yahweh.

Pause the action.Pause the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 8:20–32 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Yahweh said to Moses, "In the morning **Pharaoh** will be on his way to the Nile River. I want you to get up and meet him on the way." Yahweh is the personal name of God. Use the same name for Yahweh that you used in previous passages, and remember that Yahweh is in the Master Glossary. Pharaoh refers to the title for the kings of Egypt. Translate Pharaoh in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that Pharaoh is in the Master Glossary.

Then Yahweh said that he will put a division between His people and Pharaoh's People. Tomorrow this **sign** shall happen. And Yahweh made it happen. A sign is something unusual that is happening for a special reason. Yahweh can give a sign to tell people that something he tells them is true. For instance, when God promised Noah that he would never again destroy the earth through water, he placed the rainbow in the sky as a sign.

Every time people would see the rainbow, they could remember God's promise. Translate sign in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that sign is in the Master Glossary.

Pharaoh called Moses and his brother Aaron and said to them to quickly go and make **sacrifices** in the land of Egypt. Translate sacrifice in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that sacrifice is in the Master Glossary.

Moses says again that the Israelites need to obey Yahweh and leave Egypt in order to take a three-day journey into the **wilderness** to offer sacrifices to Yahweh, as he commands us. A wilderness or desert is a lonely, barren place without water. There are almost no trees or bushes growing in the desert. The ground is dry and rocky, and there are wild animals roaming around. People do not live in the wilderness or desert. Translate wilderness in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that wilderness is in the Master Glossary.

Again the moment Pharaoh discovered that all the swarms of flies were gone, Pharaoh **hardened his heart** against Yahweh and refused to let the Israelites go to worship or serve Yahweh. The hardened heart means to become very stubborn. Translate the hardened heart in the same way as in previous passages.

Show the photo of swarms of flies.

Show map of Egypt and Goshen.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in their own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 8:20–32

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (2984640 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (5103511 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Exodus 9:1–7

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 9:1–7 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 9:1–7 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 9:1–7 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Moses continues to try to get Pharaoh or the King of Egypt to let the Israelites leave Egypt. This is the fifth plague or disaster that comes to the Egyptian people. As with the plague of flies, this disaster does not touch the Hebrews. This plague touches all Egypt but not the area where the Hebrews live. This is the first of the plagues where the plague causes death of significant animals, in this case death of the livestock or farm animals. This is a narrative story of the events of this plague.

Yahweh tells Moses to go to Pharaoh. God does not include Aaron in this command to Moses.

This passage uses both names for God. Yahweh is the personal name for God and God, or Elohim, is the general name for God. Both names are the same person. God identifies himself as Yahweh, the God of the Hebrews. By saying his name like this, God is giving Pharaoh the personal name of God, Yahweh. This shows that Yahweh is

the Israelite God. The Hebrews is the name for the descendants of Jacob who came to live in Egypt during the time of the famine when Joseph was the governor of Egypt. They are also called the Israelites since Israel was the name Yahweh gave Jacob. This Pharaoh or the King of Egypt does not recognize the God of the Hebrews as a true, powerful God.

God identifies himself as the God of the Hebrews. After this, the people are referred to as Israelites in the passage. The Israelites were descendants of Jacob who was also named Israel. The Israelites spoke Hebrew. The names Hebrews and Israelites are interchangeable and refer to the same people.

The Egyptians worshiped many gods. Among these gods was a goddess represented by a cow and a god represented by a bull. These were important gods to the Egyptians. This plague against the livestock proves that God is superior to these Egyptian gods.

Stop and show a picture of the sacred bull statue, Apis, that the Egyptians worshiped as a god.

Show a picture of the sacred cow statue, Hathor. Pause the recording here.

God says to tell Pharaoh that the "Hand of the Lord will strike..." The Hand of the Lord is a word picture that refers to the complete power of God. God is going to intervene in whatever is going on. When God talks about using His hand, God is talking about bringing all His power to the event. We can't see God's hand. We see the results of God using this power. This image of God's hand working is a way of helping us understand God's ultimate power and authority over everything. In the first plagues, Aaron used his staff to start the plague. Here, Aaron does not use his staff. God sends the plague directly. God shows that God does not need Aaron's staff to start the plague. God uses His mighty hand to start the plague.

God tells Moses to tell Pharaoh that the power of God is going to strike the Egyptian livestock. Livestock are the animals that have been tamed or controlled by the people and used for work and food. These animals included horses, donkeys, camels, cattle, sheep, and goats. Cattle is the word that includes more than one or many cows and bulls. The other animal types include the male and female animals in the name.

Stop and show a picture of each of these animals: horse, donkey, one-hump camel, cow, bull, ram, ewe, goat. Pause the recording here.

God is going to strike these animals with a deadly plague which means that the animals will die. The plague would be for the Egyptian animals but not the livestock of the Israelites. God said that not one of the Israelite animals would die. God set a specific time for the plague against the livestock to start. Moses was talking to Pharaoh. Moses told Pharaoh that the plague will start tomorrow.

The next day, God did exactly what God said he would do. God sent the plague on the animals. Just as God said, Egyptian livestock died. Just as God said, Israelite livestock did not die.

In scripture, many times, there is an intentional increase of numbers or saying that huge numbers of people were present when the number might have been less. The text may say all Israel or all Jerusalem or all Egypt did something. It means that a large number of people did something. Here, the text says all the livestock of the Egyptians died. All the livestock did not die. However, a very large number of animals died from this plague.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story that involves a very large event with many people. The storyteller should use words that are overly large or increased in number to describe this event using words that show that there was a very large group there. How does the storyteller describe this? How does the audience understand that this is intentional exaggeration? Pause the recording here.

After the Egyptian livestock died, Pharaoh sent his officials to see what had happened to the Israelite livestock. The officials discovered and reported back to Pharaoh that not a single Israelite animal died.

Pharaoh's heart remained stubborn or hardened or unyielding. One translation says, the King was still too stubborn to let the people go. This is a word picture that means that Pharaoh or the King of Egypt was not convinced even by this disaster that God was all-powerful. Pharaoh was not convinced that he needed to let God's people leave Egypt.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 9:1-7 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

In the first scene: God sends Moses to tell Pharaoh that the next plague will cause livestock to die.

In the second scene: Egyptian livestock die but Pharaoh refuses to let the people go.

The characters in this passage are:

- Pharaoh
- Moses
- God or Yahweh
- The king's officials
- Israelites and their livestock
- Egyptians and their livestock

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

The passage starts with a time word or a connecting word. The previous passage ends with the statement that Pharaoh has hardened his heart or Pharaoh has become stubborn and refused to let the Hebrews leave. Then, Yahweh tells Moses to go back with the announcement of the next plague. Then is a word that connects the current passage to the previous passage.

Stop and tell a story that includes a sequence of events. Listen carefully to the storyteller. What word or words does the storyteller use to say that one event starts as soon as the previous event ended? Pause the recording here.

In scene 1, Yahweh speaks to Moses and tells Moses to go to Pharaoh with a specific message. Yahweh does not include Aaron in this command. Yahweh gives Moses a very specific message with details about what Yahweh is going to do for the next plague. Moses says, "This is what Yahweh, the God of the Hebrews says." In the Old Testament, prophets often started their messages from God with this phrase to show that the words they are going to speak are from Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss as a team: What kinds of ways do you introduce important messages from prophets or teachers in your culture? Pause the recording here.

This time, the plague will cause animals to die. This is the first time that death results from the plague. Also, Yahweh is going to treat the Egyptians and the Israelites differently this time. Egyptian animals will die. There will be no death among the Israelite animals. This means that the plague will only touch the Egyptians. Moses tells Pharaoh that Yahweh has already decided when the plague will start. Yahweh says the plague will start tomorrow. Moses goes to give Pharaoh Yahweh's message. The message is only recorded once. We don't know if this is a direct quote of Yahweh's message or if this is the message as given by Moses to Pharaoh. The translation remains the same.

In scene 2, Yahweh does exactly what Yahweh said he was going to do. The text says that all the Egyptian animals died. It is important to translate this as written-all the animals died. However, we need to understand that all the animals did not die. This is a way of saying that a very large number of animals died. Pharaoh sends officials to see what happened to the Israelite livestock. The officials reported that none of the Israelite livestock died. Even with this, Pharaoh was not convinced. The text uses a word picture to describe Pharaoh's actions. Pharaoh's heart was hardened or stubborn or unyielding. Pharaoh refused to let the people go.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 9:1–7 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Pharaoh
- Moses
- God
- The king's officials
- Israelites and their livestock
- Egyptians and their livestock

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

In scene 1, Yahweh tells Moses to go back to Pharaoh with the message that Yahweh is going to send another plague. Moses is to demand that Pharaoh allow the Israelites to leave Egypt. If Pharaoh refuses, the hand of Yahweh will strike the livestock of the Egyptians. This time the plague will cause the livestock of the Egyptian people to die but the plague will not touch the livestock of the Israelites. Moses obeys and goes to Pharaoh and gives this message.

Pause the drama.

Ask Pharaoh, "How are you feeling as you hear this message?" You may hear, "This is nonsense. There is no way that this God no one can see is more powerful than the Egyptian gods. Moses says the livestock of the Israelites won't be touched. I don't believe that. No one can send such a disease on the livestock and not get all of them. This will come to nothing." [!end] Continue the drama.

In scene 2, The next day, Yahweh sends the plague on the Egyptian livestock and the Egyptian livestock dies. Pharaoh sends officials to find out what happened with the Israelite livestock. The officials report that none of the Israelite livestock died. But even with this information, Pharaoh remained stubborn. Pharaoh refused to allow the Israelites to leave Egypt.

Pause the drama.

- I don't understand. How can this be? How can all those Egyptian animals die and the Israelite animals live? This is not normal.
- They say this proves that their God is more powerful than our gods. It certainly seems like this is true. I need to know more.

Ask the Israelites, "How are you feeling today?" You may hear:

- I am relieved. My animals are all alive and healthy.
- Yahweh is all powerful. This proves that our God is more powerful than the Egyptian gods.

Ask Pharaoh, "How are you feeling today?" You may hear:

- I am angry. I'm frustrated. This is some kind of trick.
- I have to talk with my magicians. Moses has learned some kind of magic while he was away.
- There is no way that their God is more powerful than the Egyptian gods.
- I won't let these people go. It would hurt our economy if I let them go. [!end] Continue the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 9:1-7 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

This is the fifth **plague** or disaster that God sends to Egypt. Use the same word for plague that you have used for the previous four plagues.

God identifies himself as **Yahweh**, the **God of the Hebrews**. Yahweh, Hebrews and God are discussed in the Master Glossary. Use the same word for Yahweh and for God that you have used in previous passages.

Yahweh tells Pharaoh to let the people go so that they can **worship** God. Use the same word for worship that you have used in previous passages.

Some translations use the name **Pharaoh** which is the title for the king of Egypt. Each king is called Pharaoh and then has his own name to follow. This passage does not give us the king's name. Some translations use the word king instead of the title Pharaoh. Use the same term you have used in previous passages. Pharaoh is discussed in the Master Glossary.

The **hand of Yahweh** is a word picture that describes the full power or might of God. You had the same expression when Moses and Aaron approached Pharaoh and Aaron's staff became a serpent. Use the same wording that you used for that passage.

Yahweh will not allow the livestock of the Israelites to die. Translate Israelites in the same way as you have before, and remember that Israel is in the Master Glossary.

Pharaoh's heart remained stubborn or was hardened. Use the same translation that you have previously used for this expression. This is a word picture to explain that Pharaoh refused to acknowledge the power of God. Pharaoh refused to listen to Moses. Pharaoh refused to allow the Israelites to leave.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 9:1–7

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3025000 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
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Exodus 9:8–12

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 9:8–12 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 9:8–12 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 9:8–12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

After the death of the livestock, Yahweh again spoke to both Moses and Aaron and told Moses and Aaron to go again to Pharaoh. This is a narrative account of the sixth plague.

The word "then" introduces the next plague. The passage is a list of events with one event occurring after the next. "Then" is the word in English used to connect the sequence and introduce the next event.

This time Yahweh spoke to both Moses and Aaron and gave them instructions. This time, Moses and Aaron did not speak to Pharaoh first. Instead, Yahweh told Moses and Aaron to go and perform an action while Pharaoh watches. Moses does not warn Pharaoh of what is about to happen. Moses does not give Pharaoh a chance to let the Israelites depart before Moses throws the soot into the air. This is different from the accounts of the previous plagues.

Yahweh told Moses and Aaron to take soot or ashes from a kiln. Then Moses was to throw the soot in the air. Throwing the soot upwards towards the sky allows the wind to catch the soot and scatter it widely. When something is burned up, what remains is the fine dust or ashes. The ashes lie in a heap until disturbed in some way. When disturbed, these ashes, which are extremely light, float in the air and the wind carries them to other places. Soot is the same as ashes except finer. Soot is more like a black dust. A kiln is a type of furnace that gets really hot. The kiln is used to bake clay so that it turns into a hard substance that is hard to break. The clay can become hard clay or porcelain or brick or tiles. A kiln or furnace can also be used to bake food such as bread or to burn trash. The kiln can also be used to burn the carcass of a dead animal or person. The scripture does not tell which kind of kiln this was but says that there were ashes or soot. The language makes it sound like Moses and Aaron were to fill both hands with ashes and then Moses would throw the ashes in the air. This would be four hands-full of ashes to throw. Yahweh told Moses and Aaron to make sure that Pharaoh was watching when Moses threw the ashes in the air. Yahweh told Moses and Aaron that the ashes would cause boils to break out on people and on animals all over Egypt.

- Stop and show a picture of a kiln.
- Show a picture of ashes.
- Show a picture of something covered in soot.
- Activity: take some ashes and throw them into the air on a windy day. Watch the ashes float in the wind. Pause the recording here.

Moses and Aaron obeyed Yahweh. Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh with each man carrying soot in both hands. Then Moses took the soot and threw the soot into the air. The next part of what happened is implied. Yahweh told Moses that the soot would spread over the country of Egypt and cause boils. The text does not repeat this. The text does not say that the dust went all over Egypt. However, people all over Egypt and animals all over Egypt got boils. This means that the air carried the soot all over Egypt. Boils broke out on people and animals. Some translations use the word man. Here this word man is a general term meaning all mankind or people or humans. The ashes fell on everyone including men, women, and children. Everyone or all humans or all people were affected by the boils. All the animals that had not died in the previous plague also had boils erupt on their skin. This passage does not mention the Israelites with this plague. We don't know if the Israelites also had boils from this plague.

A boil is an inflamed, painful, pus-filled swelling on the skin caused by some sort of infection. A boil feels hot when touched. The boil will increase in size until the boil ruptures and becomes an open, draining sore. Because this is an infection, the whole body will feel tired and sick. The individual will probably have fever or raised temperature. A person or animal with boils is really sick and cannot do his work.

Stop here and show a picture of a boil on someone's skin. Pause the recording here.

With this plague Yahweh was attacking at least 3 Egyptian gods related to health. Yahweh was showing that these three gods could not protect the people's health. Yahweh defeated these three gods.

The boils affected all Egypt. The words "all Egypt" really mean that a large number of people from all parts of Egypt were affected. This does not mean that every single person, man, woman and child and every single animal in Egypt had boils. This means that the boils were widespread over all the land of Egypt. This did not just occur where Pharaoh lived. When this story was written, the people understood that not every person had a boil and not every animal had a boil.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story about something that happened in your village or town. The storyteller says that everyone participated in the event. You know that not everyone participated. How do you know that? How does the storyteller let you know that when he says all, he means a lot of people but does not mean every single person? Pause the recording here.

This plague crippled the magicians. The magicians were so affected by the boils that they could not even stand up. The magicians were not able to come before Moses and Aaron. This is the last time the magicians are mentioned with the plagues.

Pharaoh saw all this happen. Pharaoh's heart remained hard. The passage says Yahweh hardened Pharaoh's heart. This is a word picture that means that Pharaoh refused to listen or refused to believe. Pharaoh was stubborn. Yahweh had told Moses that Pharaoh would not listen and Pharaoh did not listen.

Stop and discuss. Tell a story that has a prediction that something will happen. That something does happen. At the time it happens, we learn that someone had predicted beforehand that this event would happen. Listen to how the storyteller explains that this had been predicted. Pause the recording here.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 9:8–12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron to go to Pharaoh and throw ashes or soot in the air with Pharaoh watching.

In the second scene: The ashes scatter all over Egypt and cause boils to appear on both people and animals. Pharaoh remains stubborn and does not let the Israelites leave.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- Pharaoh
- Magicians
- People of Egypt

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

This passage starts with the word "then" which means that this is the next event or next plague. We don't know how much time has passed since the plague against the livestock.

In scene one, Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron to go and get handfuls of soot from a kiln. Moses would fill each hand with soot and Aaron would fill each hand with soot. Then Moses and Aaron were to go to Pharaoh and make sure that Pharaoh watched Moses throw the soot into the air. Yahweh told Moses and Aaron that the soot would scatter over all Egypt and cause boils to break out on people and on animals wherever the soot landed. At some point before the soot causes the boils to form, Yahweh tells Moses that Pharaoh will not listen to Moses and Aaron, even after Pharaoh sees this plague.

This passage uses the same way of talking about the number of people involved in the plague as in other plagues. The soot spread over the whole land of Egypt. This is like saying that the soot went everywhere. This does not mean that every person got sick with the boils. Not every animal got sick with the boils. Many people and many animals from across Egypt became sick with the boils.

Stop here and discuss how to say this part of the story so that people understand what happened. Pause the recording here.

In scene two, Moses and Aaron get the handfuls of soot and go and stand before Pharaoh. Then with Pharaoh watching them, Moses threw the soot into the air. The passage implies that the soot traveled by air all over Egypt and everywhere the soot landed, the people and animals broke out with boils on their skin. Remember that ashes are the residue from a fire that has burned something up. When the ashes break apart, they become fine black dust called soot. This is so fine that any slight wind will carry the soot far and wide.

Stop and tell a story. The storyteller should tell a story about something that happened that caused something else to happen. The storyteller needs to leave out some of the steps in the process. Listen carefully. How do you know that the first action caused the result? How do you know that the boils in this story were caused by the soot falling on people? Pause the recording here.

Even the magicians had boils that were so severe, the magicians could not come before Moses. Pharaoh saw all this happen. Yahweh hardened Pharaoh's heart. Yahweh had already predicted to Moses before Moses threw the soot into the air that Pharaoh would refuse to let the people go. Just as Yahweh had said, Pharaoh refused to let the people go. Pharaoh refused to listen.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 9:8-12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- Pharaoh
- Magicians
- People of Egypt

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron to go to a kiln and fill each hand with soot. Moses and Aaron go to the kiln and fill each hand with soot. Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron to go before Pharaoh and with Pharaoh watching, Moses is to throw the soot into the air. Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron that the soot will spread all over Egypt. People and animals all over Egypt will break out in boils.

Stop the action.

In scene two, Moses and Aaron obey Yahweh. Moses and Aaron go to the kiln and get the handfuls of soot. Moses and Aaron go to Pharaoh and with Pharaoh watching, Moses throws the soot into the air. Suddenly boils are breaking out on Egyptians and their animals all over the land. Even the magicians get boils. The boils are so severe and painful that the magicians cannot come and stand before Moses and Aaron. Pharaoh sees everything that is happening. Yahweh hardens Pharaoh's heart. Yahweh has already told Moses that this hardening will happen. Pharaoh refuses to listen.

Stop the action.

Ask the people, "How are you feeling now?" You may hear, "I'm tired of this stuff. These boils hurt. I'm losing money when I lose my animals like this," or, "I'm angry. I want Pharaoh to get rid of these foreigners. The Israelites have never become part of us," or, "It sure seems like the Israelite God is more powerful than the Egyptian gods. Otherwise, our gods would protect us from these disasters." [!end] Continue the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 9:8-12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

This passage uses **Yahweh** as the name for God throughout the passage. Use the same word for Yahweh that you have used in previous passages. Yahweh is discussed in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh told Moses and Aaron to go to **Pharaoh**. Pharaoh is the name or title used by the kings of Egypt. Use the same word for Pharaoh that you have used in previous translations.

Yahweh told Moses and Aaron to take handfuls of soot or ashes from a kiln. In the original language, the direction seems to be that each man is to take a handful in each hand making the total amount four handfuls of soot. The word in the Hebrew language refers to a powdery substance left from burning something. Either ashes or soot is a correct translation. In English, soot is a finer powder and lighter than ashes which means that soot would scatter even farther with the wind. Your language may have one word for this substance. If you have more than one word, choose the one that is the finer, lighter weight. A kiln is an oven or furnace used to dry or bake or burn something. Any kiln would have ashes or soot left in the kiln. Most English translations use the word soot.

Stop and show the pictures of the kiln, ashes, and soot. Pause the recording here.

The ashes or soot scattered over Egypt and caused boils to appear on the skin of the people and the animals. These boils were painful and made the people sick.

Stop and show the picture of a boil on a person. Pause the recording here.

The **magicians** of Egypt were so sick from the boils that they could not come before Moses. Use the same word for magicians that you used in previous translations.

All Egyptians had boils. The writer intends to use the word all. People in that time understood that this meant a lot of people or many people but not every single person. You need to use a similar expression that indicates a large number of people in your translation. Review how you translated "all Egypt" in the previous passage. Use the same type of language here.

Yahweh hardened Pharaoh's heart. This expression is a word picture that means that Yahweh caused Pharaoh to remain stubborn and refuse to let the Israelites leave Egypt. Yahweh had told Moses before Moses went to Pharaoh that this hardening of Pharaoh's heart would happen. Use the same expression you have in previous passages to describe what happens to Pharaoh's heart. Your language should make it clear that Yahweh had already told Moses how Pharaoh would react to this plague.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 9:8-12

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3421365 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (5874764 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Exodus 9:13–21

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 9:13–21 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 9:13–21 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 9:13–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

After the plague of boils on the people and animals, Pharaoh refused to allow the Israelites to leave Egypt. Yahweh then sent another plague to the Egyptians. This is a narrative account of the next plague, the plague of hail which is the seventh plague.

Then, Yahweh spoke to Moses. Aaron doesn't appear until after the plague when Pharaoh sends for both Moses and Aaron. We don't know how much time has passed since the last plague of boils. This time Yahweh said for Moses to go at a very specific time, early in the morning, and stand in front of Pharaoh. It seems that Moses went without Aaron and delivered the message to Pharaoh.

Yahweh gave Moses a very specific message for Pharaoh. Yahweh identifies Himself as Yahweh, the God of the Hebrews. In this way, Yahweh is making sure that Pharaoh remembers who Yahweh is. Yahweh tells Pharaoh to "let my people go" so that the people can worship Yahweh. My people means God's chosen people or the descendants of Jacob, the Israelites who are now slaves in Egypt. The Israelites were to go away from Egypt and worship God. The idea of worship includes the sacrifice of animals that were offered to God. Worship also includes the idea of love, awe, and wonder of God.

Yahweh tells Moses to speak directly to Pharaoh using direct speech.

Stop here and discuss as a team. How do you normally speak to someone in high authority? Do you talk directly to this person? If not, how would you give the message to him? Pause the audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses to tell Pharaoh that there will be more plagues and these plagues will be worse than the ones that have already come. Yahweh tells Pharaoh that now Pharaoh along with the people will be punished. With this plague not only animals but people will die. Yahweh says that Pharaoh will know that there is no one like God in all the earth. The Egyptians worshiped many gods. Each of the plagues attacked one or more of the Egyptian gods and proved that God was more powerful than the Egyptian gods. Some think that the plague of hail attacked at least 4 of the Egyptian gods. None of them proved able to withstand Yahweh.

Yahweh refers to "My hand." This is the hand of God. When Yahweh talks about using Yahweh's hand to do something, Yahweh is talking about the might and strength of God. Yahweh says that God could have used his hand to strike the Egyptian people and wipe them from the face of the earth. This is a word picture that means that the Egyptian people would disappear completely.

Pause and discuss:

Yahweh says that Pharaoh and the Egyptians are still living because God has a purpose. God wants to prove to everyone that there is no other God like God. God is using His power to spread His fame through all the earth.

This means that people everywhere will hear about what God has done in Egypt. Pharaoh still refuses to accept that Yahweh has this power. Pharaoh still believes that the Egyptian gods will prove their power.

Yahweh says that if Pharaoh doesn't let the Israelites leave Egypt, then Yahweh will send a plague of hail. This will be a thunderstorm accompanied by hail. A thunderstorm usually has lightning which causes the sound of the thunder. Most thunderstorms produce heavy rain. Sometimes, under certain conditions, the rain comes as frozen rain that collects into frozen balls as it falls. We call these frozen balls hail and we call the storm a hailstorm. Some of the balls are very small like a pea or even smaller, but some are large enough to be the same size as a ball that you would toss or maybe 2 to 4 centimeters in diameter. We call these frozen balls of ice, hailstones. Because these balls are frozen ice, they are heavy and destructive. The larger the ball of frozen ice that falls, the more the damage to plants, trees, buildings, and even vehicles. Large hailstones can go through the roof of a house.

- *Stop and show a picture of hail that includes both small and large-sized balls.*
- *Show a short video of hail falling and bouncing.*
- *Show a picture of something damaged by hail such as damaged crops or a damaged roof or a damaged/dented vehicle.*

Yahweh tells Pharaoh that the hail will be devastating. Any animal or any person who is outside during the hailstorm will be killed by the hail. Yahweh gives Pharaoh until the next day at the same time to get all the livestock and people inside or in shelter. The livestock are the domestic animals used in farming and for eating. Some of Pharaoh's officials listened to the word of Yahweh and brought their animals and servants inside under shelter. Here, the word of Yahweh refers to the warning that Yahweh has already given. This word of Yahweh is a divine message from Yahweh. Here, the word of Yahweh means the whole speech that Yahweh gave to Moses. People should respect or fear or honor the word of Yahweh. They should treat the word of Yahweh with awe. Other officials did not listen to the word of Yahweh and left their animals and servants outside in the open.

The passage does not say that Moses went to Pharaoh and repeated this message. This is implied by the passage. Everything happens just as Yahweh has said it will happen.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 9:13–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh tells Moses to go to Pharaoh and announce another plague unless Pharaoh allows the Israelites to leave. Moses does as commanded.

In the second scene: Some officials listen to Moses and protect their animals and servants. Other officials do not listen to Moses and do not protect their animals and servants.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Yahweh
- Pharaoh
- Officials of Pharaoh

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

The passage starts with a word that indicates that this is the next event. Pay attention to how your language introduces the next event.

The message that God tells Moses to give to Pharaoh uses direct speech. Some languages have a formal second person or "you" and an informal or familiar second person or "you" pronoun. Most translations that have these formal and informal speech patterns use the informal "you" in this passage for talking to Pharaoh. Yahweh uses this informal "you" in Yahweh's instructions to Moses. Yahweh says to Moses, "Say to Pharaoh," "Then you will know..." This "you" is the informal you. This speech pattern is not what we would normally think to use. Since most languages with the two forms of the second person pronoun "you" would probably use the formal "you" for talking with Pharaoh, you may want to practice this speech ahead of time.

In scene one, Yahweh speaks to Moses telling Moses to go early in the morning and give this message to Pharaoh. Then Yahweh gives quite a long speech telling Moses what to say to Pharaoh. God seems to expect Moses to repeat the message exactly as God gives it. God has Moses speaking directly to Pharaoh.

God explains again who God is, why God is doing this and what Pharaoh is to do. God clearly says that if Pharaoh refuses to let the people go, God will send a hailstorm that will kill people and animals and destroy the crops. But God gives Pharaoh 24 hours notice so that Pharaoh can warn the people to protect themselves and their animals.

In scene two, some of the officials hear the warning and bring their livestock and servants in from the fields. These animals and people have shelter from the coming storm. Other officials ignore the warning. These other officials do not bring their livestock and servants in from the fields. These people and animals are left out in the open with no shelter.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 9:13–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Yahweh
- Pharaoh
- Officials of Pharaoh

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

In scene one, Yahweh speaks to Moses telling Moses to go see Pharaoh early in the morning. Yahweh tells Moses exactly what to say to Pharaoh. The message tells Pharaoh what to do and why. Then Yahweh gives a warning. If Pharaoh refuses to let the Israelites leave, Yahweh will send a hailstorm. Yahweh gives Pharaoh 24 hours warning that the hailstorm is coming. Yahweh tells Pharaoh to bring in the servants and livestock from the

fields for their protection. Yahweh says that any livestock or any people outside at the time of the hailstorm will die.

Stop the action.

- I'm glad this is finished. It felt strange to talk so familiarly with Pharaoh but I repeated the message exactly as Yahweh gave it to me.
- I hope Pharaoh will listen this time and let the people go. I hate to think of Egyptians dying because Pharaoh won't listen.

Ask Pharaoh, "How are you feeling now that you have heard this message?" You may hear:

- What a message! This is all nonsense. Our Egyptian gods are powerful. They will protect us from this storm.
 - This storm won't even happen. No one will die.
 - No one can even see this God of theirs.
 - The Egyptians will see and the Israelites will learn that our gods are able to protect us.
- [!end] Continue the drama.

In scene two, some of Pharaoh's officials decided to listen to the warning that Moses gave them. These officials went and quickly got all their servants and all their livestock and brought them to shelter. But other of Pharaoh's officials ignored the warning. These officials left their servants and their livestock out in the fields to continue working.

Stop the action.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 9:13–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

With each plague, Yahweh uses the same command. Let my people go so that they can worship me. You would be using the same words for this command each time. Use the same word for plague that you have been using.

Yahweh is the name that God used. Yahweh is discussed in the Master Glossary. Use the same word for Yahweh that you have been using.

Yahweh identifies himself as the **God of the Hebrews**. The word God is the same word for God that you have been using. God of the Hebrews is the title that God claims. This means that Yahweh is the God of the descendants of Jacob who live in Egypt. Their language is Hebrew. Use the same title that you have previously used.

Pharaoh is the title used for the king of Egypt. Use the same translation that you have been using for Pharaoh or the King of Egypt.

Yahweh said that Pharaoh was to allow the Hebrews to go and **worship** God. Use the same word for worship that you have been using. Worship is discussed in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh talks about using his hand to strike Pharaoh and the Egyptian people and wipe them from the face of the earth. Use the same expression you have used to express the hand of God in previous passages. Wiping a people from the face of the earth is a word picture that says that the people will disappear and it will be as if they had never existed. Use the expression from your language that you decided for this word picture.

Yahweh tells Pharaoh that Yahweh will send a hailstorm that is the worst the people have ever seen in the history of Egypt. A hailstorm is a thunderstorm in which the rain falls as frozen balls of ice. This storm can be described as a rain of frozen balls of ice or frozen stones of ice. The balls can range in size from very small like a pea or a few millimeters in diameter to very large like a baseball or more than 3 centimeters in diameter. The

larger the stone of ice, the more damage that it does. However, all hailstones, even the really small ones like a pea cause damage to plants and trees or anything that the stone hits as it falls.

- *Stop and show the picture of hailstones.*
- *Show the video of falling hail.*
- *As a translation team, discuss the best way to describe hail to your audience.*

God uses familiar language rather than formal language for the message to Pharaoh. If your language has a formal language used for visitors and leaders and a familiar language used for family and close friends, use the familiar forms of the language.

Yahweh warns Pharaoh to get all the livestock and servants to shelter before the hailstorm occurs. Livestock are the domesticated animals used in farming and for eating. Some of Pharaoh's officials listened and some did not. Officials would be people who worked for Pharaoh in an official capacity such as a government minister or military officer.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 9:13–21

Audio Content

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Exodus 9:22–35

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 9:22–35 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 9:22–35 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 9:22–35 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last passage, Yahweh sent Moses to tell Pharaoh that Yahweh would send a plague of hail unless Pharaoh allowed the Israelites to go into the desert to worship Yahweh. Some of Pharaoh's officials heard Moses and moved their servants and animals to safety or to shelter. Others ignored the warning and left the servants and the animals in the fields or outside in the open air with no protection over them. This passage is a narrative telling of what happened with the plague of hail after Moses left the presence of Pharaoh.

This plague occurred sometime between the months of January and April. This is the time when the cattle were put out in the field to graze or eat from the field. This season is the only time of the year that the cattle would find something to eat in the fields. More likely the plague was in February or March when the barley was ready to harvest.

Stop and show a picture of barley ready to harvest. Pause the audio here.

As the passage begins, Moses lifts his staff to the sky. The passage does not say that Moses left Pharaoh before doing this. However, later, after the plague of hail starts, Pharaoh sends for Moses and Aaron. This means that Moses had left Pharaoh when the plague of hail started.

Yahweh tells Moses to lift his hand to the sky. Moses had his staff or his rod in his hand. The staff or rod was a stick that Moses used as a shepherd. The shepherd would use the staff for help with walking and for protecting the animals. Moses and Aaron each carried a staff. Yahweh used Moses' staff to demonstrate Yahweh's power at the Burning Bush in the desert. Aaron used his staff with most of the previous plagues. This time Yahweh uses the staff of Moses to start the plague of hail.

Stop and show a picture of a shepherd's staff. Pause the audio here.

When Moses lifted the staff toward the sky, Yahweh sent a thunderstorm with hail. In this situation the staff that Moses usually used for help and protection now represents the power and presence of Yahweh. The sentence structure shows that as Moses lifted his staff towards the sky, the storm started and was immediately violent or very strong. This is a simultaneous action-the staff is lifted up and the hail starts falling. This was a thunderstorm with lightning, wind, rain, and hail. Some translations describe lightning as fire running to the earth or even balls of fire.

Stop and show a picture of streaks of lightning coming from the sky towards the earth. Discuss the picture. What do you call the streaks of light? What do you call the sound that comes after the streaks of light? Reshow the picture of hail. Reshow the video of hail falling and bouncing. Pause the audio here.

According to the text, the storm covered all of Egypt except the area of Goshen where the Israelites lived. The storm was violent. The storm continued without stopping. This was not a normal storm. Normally the wind moves thunderstorms quickly across an area but this storm remained in place over all of Egypt. The hail was devastating and continuous or did not stop. The text says that this was the worst storm since the beginning of time in Egypt. Since the beginning of time is one way to say that there had never before been such a storm. There was no storm, no hail in the area of Goshen.

Stop here and show the map of Egypt with the area of Goshen marked.

Stop and discuss: Talk about bad thunderstorms you have experienced. Describe the storm, how long it lasted, and the kind of damage done by the wind and rain. Talk about how you felt during the storm.

Stop and discuss: Talk about the worst storm that ever happened in your area. How do people describe this storm? Pause the recording here.

The hail was so bad that it destroyed everything that was out in the open. The hail, which is frozen balls of ice, killed any animal out in the field and any person out in the field or not under shelter. Larger balls of hail might have gone through the roof of a simple shelter. The hail tore the leaves and fruit off trees and the hail made the grain fall off the plants. The hail ruined or destroyed crops and animals in all of Egypt except the area of Goshen.

The storm was still happening when Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron to come to Pharaoh. Pharaoh says, "This time I've done wrong, and Yahweh has done the right thing." Some translations say, "I and my people have done wrong or been wicked but Yahweh has done the right thing." Here doing right and wrong are legal terms that would be used in court or before a judge. Pharaoh is not saying that Pharaoh is evil or has done evil things. Pharaoh is simply saying that this time Yahweh has won.

Then Pharaoh asks Moses to beg Yahweh to end the storm. Pharaoh agrees to let the Israelites go. Moses agrees to ask Yahweh to end the storm. However, Moses believes that Pharaoh has not learned to fear God, Yahweh. Moses uses both names for God. As Moses talks to Pharaoh, Moses uses direct speech.

Moses says that Moses and Aaron will leave the city and then pray that Yahweh will stop the storm. This means that Moses and Aaron will walk through the streets or in open places with the lightning and the hail falling all around. Moses believes that God will protect Moses and Aaron from the hail. Moses will lift his hands to pray. This means that Moses will lift his hands over his head as Moses prays.

Moses says to Pharaoh, "I know that you do not fear Yahweh." This is the first time this phrase has been used. Fear of Yahweh means that someone is in awe of God. This person knows the greatness of God and knows that God is greater than or stronger than any other being. The person who fears Yahweh is afraid of what might happen if this person disobeys one of Yahweh's commands. The person who fears Yahweh makes sure to respect every part of the agreement with Yahweh because to ignore this might result in bad consequences or even be fatal.

The hail along with the wind destroyed the flax and barley crops. These crops are ready for harvest much earlier than the wheat. This means that the storm occurred during February or March. Flax is a plant that was used to make linen cloth. Barley is a grain that is used to make bread. The other plants of smelt and wheat ripen later. These plants would have been young tender shoots just coming up. The hail would have damaged these plants but they would be able to recover and still produce crops later. Smelt is a type of grain. Some translations just say the wheat crops or the other grain crops or the cereal crops.

Stop and show a picture of flax. Show a picture of barley plants ready to harvest. Show a picture of young wheat plants. Show a picture of spelt or emmer wheat as a young plant. Pause the audio here.

After Moses left the city, Moses lifted his hands to Yahweh. Yahweh caused the thunderstorm and hail to stop. As soon as Pharaoh saw the rain and hail stop, Pharaoh hardened his heart and refused to allow the Israelites to leave. This was exactly what Yahweh had told Moses would happen. Some translations say that Pharaoh became stubborn again.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 9:22–35 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Moses leaves Pharaoh and goes out to pray to Yahweh. The hailstorm starts and destroys everything in the open spaces in Egypt. The storm does not touch the area where the Israelites live.

In the second scene: Pharaoh calls for Moses and Aaron. Pharaoh begs them to stop the storm. Pharaoh promises to let the Israelites leave.

In the third scene: Moses prays for the storm to stop and the storm stops. Pharaoh immediately becomes stubborn again and refuses to let the people leave.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Yahweh
- Pharaoh
- Aaron
- Egyptian people
- Israelites
- Pharaoh's officials

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

The first scene starts with a time linking word, "then." This word introduces the next event in a series of events.

Stop and tell a story that has several events that happen, one after the other. Notice how the story teller tells you that the next event in the series is starting. Pause the audio here.

After Moses leaves Pharaoh, Moses lifts his staff towards the sky or towards where Yahweh is and the hailstorm starts. This storm is severe with lightning, thunder, wind, rain, and hail. Hail is frozen balls of rain. The hail kills everything out in the open or not under a shelter—people, animals, and crops that are ready to harvest. The hail beats down young plants that are just coming up from the earth but does not destroy those plants. The storm covers all of Egypt. The storm does not touch the area of Goshen where the Israelites live. The storm continues without stopping.

In scene two, Pharaoh calls for Moses and Aaron to come. Then Pharaoh tells Moses and Aaron, "I and my people have done wrong this time and Yahweh has done right." Pharaoh asks Moses to ask Yahweh to stop the storm. During this conversation, the storm is continuing. Pharaoh promises to let the Israelites depart after the storm ends.

Moses agrees to leave the city and then beg Yahweh to end the storm. Moses talks to Pharaoh using direct speech. Moses says that Pharaoh and the Egyptians will learn that the earth belongs to Yahweh. Moses tells Pharaoh, "I know you do not fear Yahweh, God."

The author gives us extra information about what the storm did to the crops. By this time, the storm had been going on long enough that all the crops ready to harvest including flax and barley were destroyed. Any fruit on the trees as well as the leaves on the trees were destroyed. Two types of wheat that were just coming up from the ground were not destroyed.

In scene three, Moses leaves Pharaoh and walks outside the city. Moses is walking in the open air with the rain and hail falling and the strong wind blowing. When Moses gets outside the city, Moses lifts his hands towards the sky and Yahweh stops the storm. Notice that this time, Moses uses his hands but not his staff. Aaron went with Moses to see Pharaoh but Aaron is not mentioned in scene 3.

When the storm stopped, Pharaoh immediately changed his mind. The text says that Pharaoh again became stubborn. Pharaoh and his officials sinned or disobeyed God. Pharaoh's heart was hard. Pharaoh refused to let the Israelites leave Egypt. Yahweh had already told Moses that this would happen.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 9:22–35 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Yahweh
- Pharaoh
- Aaron
- Egyptian people
- Israelites
- Pharaoh's officials

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

In scene one, the hailstorm starts and continues over all Egypt. Everywhere at the same time, wind, rain, thunder, lightning, and hail are going continuously. People who are caught outside die when the hail falls on them. Animals left outside die. The crops that are ready to harvest are all being destroyed.

Pause the drama.

In scene two, Pharaoh calls Moses and Aaron to the palace. Pharaoh asks Moses to ask Yahweh to stop the hail. Pharaoh says, "This time I've done wrong, but God is in the right." Pharaoh promises to let the Israelites leave

Egypt. Moses agrees to ask God to stop the hail. However, Moses does not believe that Pharaoh has learned to fear Yahweh.

Pause the drama.

Ask Moses, "What led you to feel that Pharaoh doesn't fear Yahweh?" You may hear, "Every time, Pharaoh says something that he thinks Yahweh wants to hear in order to stop the plague. Then as soon as it stops, Pharaoh returns to his previous actions and refuses to let us leave Egypt. I don't trust him. I think he is just saying something again and won't keep his word." [!end] Continue the drama.

In scene three, Moses leaves Pharaoh and walks through the storm to go outside the city. The storm continues all around Moses as he walks.

Pause the drama.

- I know that hail is dangerous. I know that lightning is dangerous and can kill people. I also know that Yahweh has asked me to do this so I believe that Yahweh will protect me.
- If Yahweh allows this storm to kill me, then Yahweh will have another plan for the Israelites. I'm not afraid. [!end] Continue the drama.

When Pharaoh saw the storm stop, then Pharaoh and his officials sinned or disobeyed Yahweh again. Pharaoh became stubborn or had a hard heart. Pharaoh refused to let the Israelites leave Egypt. Yahweh had told Moses that this would be the result.

Pause the drama.

- I'm angry. I just lost all my crops and my animals that were grazing in the fields and my servants who were working in the fields.
- This isn't fair. I did nothing wrong. Why is the God of the Israelites punishing me?
- I don't want to let them go. They need to stay here and work harder to pay for all this damage.

Ask Moses, "How are you feeling right now?" You may hear:

- I'm disappointed but not surprised. Pharaoh does this every time.
- I was right. Pharaoh still hasn't learned to fear Yahweh.
- I wonder what Yahweh is going to do next.
- I believe Yahweh will make it happen that we can leave. I just don't know what the next plan will be. [!end] Continue the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 9:22–35 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

As the passage begins, Moses lifts his staff in the air. Use the same word for the shepherd's staff that you have been using.

As the staff was lifted, Yahweh started the storm. Use the same words for thunder, lightning, and hail that you used in the previous passage. There was no storm in the land of Goshen. Use the same translation for Goshen that you have used in previous passages.

Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron to come to Pharaoh. Pharaoh said, "I have sinned." Sin is discussed in the Master Glossary. Use the same word for sin that you have used in previous passages.

Pharaoh said that Yahweh was righteous or did the right thing. Righteous is discussed in the Master Glossary. In this context, the word righteous is more of a legal term of being in the right. Pharaoh is saying that Yahweh has won the case in court and Pharaoh has lost the case. Another way is to say that Yahweh was correct and Pharaoh and the people were incorrect. This means that Pharaoh was wrong to refuse to let the Israelites go to worship God.

Stop here and discuss what word you will use for righteous. Pause this audio here.

Moses said that Pharaoh did not yet fear Yahweh. This is the first time that this phrase of "fear Yahweh" is used. Fear of God is discussed in the Master Glossary. Fear of Yahweh means that someone is in awe of God. This person knows the greatness of God and knows that God is greater than or stronger than any other being. The person who fears Yahweh is afraid of what might happen if this person disobeys one of Yahweh's commands. The person who fears Yahweh makes sure to respect every part of the agreement with Yahweh because to ignore this might result in bad consequences or even be fatal. This is an important concept and will be used many times again in the scriptures.

Pause the recording and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for fear of Yahweh. Pause the recording here.

Moses uses both names for God, **Yahweh** and **God**, when Moses talks to Pharaoh. Moses says you have not yet learned to fear the Lord God. Lord is the English translation of Yahweh. God is the English translation of Elohim. The words Yahweh and God are discussed in the Master Glossary. Use the same words to translate these two names for God that you have previously used.

The passage says that the crops of flax and barley were destroyed. Flax is a plant that is used to make linen cloth. Barley produces a grain used to make bread and other foods for both people and animals. The passage mentions two types of wheat: spelt or emmer wheat and wheat. If you have multiple types of wheat, you may want to give the two names. Some translations just say that the wheat crops were not destroyed.

Stop and show a picture of flax, a picture of barley plants ready to harvest, a picture of young wheat plants, a picture of spelt or emmer wheat as a young plant. Pause the recording here.

Pharaoh became stubborn. Because his heart was hard, Pharaoh refused to let the Israelites leave Egypt. Each plague has described how Pharaoh's heart was hard or Pharaoh was stubborn. Use the same words you have been using to describe Pharaoh's heart.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 9:22–35

Audio Content

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Exodus 10:1–20

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 10:1–20 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 10:1–20 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 10:1–20 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The plague of hail has ended. We don't know how much time has passed since the plague of hail. Then Yahweh speaks to Moses again and introduces the next plague which is the plague of locusts. Since this plague of locusts destroys the crops that the hail didn't destroy, this plague probably came soon after the plague of hail. This is a narrative account of what happened with this plague.

Yahweh tells Moses that Yahweh has made Pharaoh stubborn or made Pharaoh's heart hard. To be stubborn is to refuse to yield to or obey someone. The stubborn person chooses to disobey or be obstinate. The stubborn person becomes unreasonable or no one can reason with this person and convince him to change his mind and obey. Some translations use the phrase of hardened heart. Here this means that Pharaoh's heart is heavy or dull. Yahweh states that Yahweh has done this to Pharaoh and the officials of Pharaoh. This is a change from the previous plagues. With most of the plagues, Pharaoh hardened his own heart. With the plague of boils, Yahweh hardened Pharaoh's heart. And now, here with the plague of the locusts, Yahweh makes Pharaoh and Pharaoh's officials stubborn or hardens their hearts.

Yahweh explains to Moses that Yahweh has hardened Pharaoh's heart so that Yahweh can do these miraculous signs. The plagues are miracles or miraculous signs. No one else can do these signs. Only Yahweh has been able to make them happen and make them stop. The Egyptian magicians have tried to show the same power but they did not succeed. Yahweh wants to show the Egyptians who Yahweh is. Yahweh also wants Moses and the Israelites to tell their children who will tell their children about these miraculous signs. Yahweh wants the Israelites to know that Yahweh is Yahweh. As with the other plagues, this plague of locusts attacks the Egyptian gods. Yahweh is proving that the Egyptian gods can do nothing. Yahweh is God.

Moses and Aaron go to Pharaoh with Yahweh's message. Moses and Aaron tell Pharaoh to let the Israelites go or Yahweh will bring a swarm of locusts on the country of Egypt.

Stop and show a picture of a locust. Show a picture of a swarm of locusts. Show a picture of a plant or tree after locusts have eaten the leaves. Pause the recording here.

Moses and Aaron speak to Pharaoh, they use direct speech. Moses speaks to Pharaoh using the words that God has given to Moses to say. Moses says, "Let my people go." My people refers to the Israelites.

Yahweh says that if Pharaoh refuses to allow the Israelites to go and worship Yahweh, then Yahweh will send a plague of locusts. The Egyptians knew about locusts. Locusts come in huge numbers like a cloud. The locusts in Egypt usually come from the south. The locusts eat every green thing in sight. The plague of locusts would be the second part of the disaster that knocks out completely Egyptian farming. The hail destroyed all the crops that were ready to harvest. Now the locusts will eat everything that is left, everything that was not ready to harvest but still growing. After the locusts all the crops will be destroyed. Normally locusts come in cycles every few years. Where the locusts land, they eat and destroy. Some area will be invaded by some locusts who will eat the crops. The area is usually small. The difference this time with this plague is the number of locusts and the location. The number of locusts was so large that they covered everything several layers deep. The locusts covered the entire land of Egypt. Yahweh told Pharaoh that the locusts would be in all the houses and palaces. The Egyptian people had never seen such an invasion of locusts before this time. Moses and Aaron left Pharaoh after giving this warning.

Pharaoh's officials who were with Pharaoh also heard the warning about the locusts. These officials begged Pharaoh to let the Israelites go. The officials knew that locusts eat anything growing. The officials recognized that the locusts would destroy all the food left in Egypt. The officials ask Pharaoh how long Pharaoh will allow Moses to be a snare or trap for them. A snare is a particular type of trap used to catch wild animals. The animal doesn't see the snare until trapped by it. The Egyptian officials are using the image of the snare as a word picture to describe how Moses is taking away the freedom of the Egyptians by sending these plagues.

Stop and show a picture of a simple snare. As a team talk about how people in your area hunt wild animals. What kinds of traps or snares do the hunters use? Tell a story in which someone tricks or traps someone else. Listen carefully to the image the storyteller uses to describe how the person was trapped. Pause the audio here.

Pharaoh had a servant bring Moses and Aaron back to the palace. Pharaoh asked Moses who would be going to worship Yahweh. Moses explains that Yahweh is demanding that all the people including women and children be allowed to go and worship Yahweh. Pharaoh seems to have trouble understanding why the women and children would need to go. In Egyptian religions, the men did the worship activities. Women and children did not participate. For the Israelites, the men offered the sacrifices needed for worship, but the women and children participated in the other acts of worship including eating the special meal prepared from the sacrificed animal.

Pharaoh says, "I see through your evil plan." Pharaoh is actually saying that Pharaoh knows that Moses is planning for the Israelites to leave Egypt and not return. This is why Pharaoh says, "Yahweh will need to be with you if I let you take your little ones." Pharaoh does not intend to let the Israelites leave Egypt. Pharaoh says that the men can go and worship Yahweh, but the women and children must remain in Egypt. Pharaoh threw Moses and Aaron out of the palace. One translation says the officials drove Moses and Aaron out. These verbs suggest violence or strong action. Moses and Aaron were cast out in some violent way rather than just walking out.

Yahweh told Moses to raise his hand over Egypt. Moses raised his staff. This is the shepherd's stick that Moses has been using.

Stop and show a picture of a shepherd's staff. Pause the recording here.

Yahweh told Moses to stretch out Moses' hand over Egypt. Moses raised the staff. To do as Yahweh said, Moses would have slowly turned in a circle so that the staff pointed to all directions of Egypt. Then Yahweh caused an east wind to blow. This wind brought the locusts. The locusts came in dense swarms that look like clouds.

Stop and show the picture of a swarm of locusts. Discuss as a group this picture. Have you ever seen a swarm of any insect such as bees? How do you describe a swarm? Show a map of Egypt. See where the direction east is located. The locusts were blown from this area to Egypt by the east wind. Pause the audio here.

The Egyptians would have seen locusts before this plague. The Egyptians had never seen this many locusts all over the country before. The locusts ate every green plant and every piece of fruit that had survived the hailstorm. Not a single leaf was left on the trees. There were so many locusts that it made the land seem dark. The passage says that this was the worst invasion of locusts in the whole history of Egypt. No one had ever seen so many locusts at the same time before.

Pharaoh quickly sent someone to bring Moses and Aaron back to the palace. Pharaoh says to Moses, "I have sinned against Yahweh, your God." Pharaoh is talking about Yahweh being the God of Moses, Aaron, and all the Israelites. Pharaoh uses both names for God: Yahweh and God.

Pharaoh asks Moses and Aaron to forgive Pharaoh's sin this time or just this once. To sin is to disobey Yahweh. This is not the first time Pharaoh asked for forgiveness for his sins, but it is the first time that Pharaoh says that Pharaoh has sinned against Yahweh. Pharaoh seems to understand that the plagues are leading towards the death of Egyptians. Pharaoh actually asks Moses and Aaron to pray to Yahweh and ask that this death be taken away. Pharaoh knows that with all the crops destroyed, the Egyptians will die of starvation.

Moses leaves the presence of Pharaoh and prays to Yahweh. Yahweh responded by changing the direction of the wind. Now the wind was blowing from the west. The wind blew all the locusts into the Red Sea. Not a single locust remained in Egypt.

Stop and look at the map. The Red Sea should be marked on the map. Pause the audio here.

Just as with the previous plagues, Yahweh hardened Pharaoh's heart. Pharaoh refused to let the Israelites leave Egypt.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 10:1-20 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 6 scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh tells Moses to go to Pharaoh again. This time Yahweh explains the purpose of all the miraculous signs.

In the second scene: Moses and Aaron go to Pharaoh and tell Pharaoh that unless Pharaoh allows the Israelites to leave, the next sign will be a plague of locusts which will destroy all the crops left living after the hail.

In the third scene: Pharaoh's officials plead with Pharaoh to let the people go.

In the fourth scene: Moses and Aaron return to the palace and talk with Pharaoh. Pharaoh throws them out of the palace.

In the fifth scene: The plague starts. The locusts cover Egypt and destroy every living plant.

In the sixth scene: Pharaoh summons' Moses and Aaron. Pharaoh asks that Yahweh stop the plague. Moses and Aaron pray and ask Yahweh to stop the plague of locusts. Once the plague has finished, Yahweh hardened Pharaoh's heart again. Pharaoh refused to let the Israelites leave Egypt.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- Pharaoh
- Pharaoh's officials

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Scene one starts with a connecting word. This word, "then" indicates that this event is the next thing to occur in a series of events. Your team should decide the connecting word to use.

Yahweh speaks to Moses and gives Moses an explanation of why Yahweh has been doing these miraculous signs or plagues. Yahweh wants the Israelites to tell their children and grandchildren about these events so that the descendants will know that Yahweh is Yahweh. Yahweh sends Moses and Aaron back to Pharaoh to announce the next plague.

In scene two, Moses and Aaron go to Pharaoh and tell Pharaoh what Yahweh says will happen if Pharaoh refuses to let the Israelites leave Egypt. Moses actually says, "This is what Yahweh, the God of the Hebrews says, 'How long will you refuse to submit to me?'" Here Yahweh is asking how much longer will you take? It is also a question that doesn't require an answer, and it shows Yahweh's frustration with Pharaoh. Yahweh uses the singular form of the you pronoun so it is clear that Yahweh is speaking directly to Pharaoh and not to the officials around Pharaoh. When Yahweh tells Moses what to say to Pharaoh, Moses repeats the message to Pharaoh, using direct speech. Moses tells Pharaoh that a plague of locusts such as Egypt has never seen will come and devour or eat any green plant or leaf left in Egypt.

Stop and discuss: How does your language ask questions that don't require an answer? Pause this audio here.

Moses uses the name, Yahweh, God of the Hebrews when talking to Pharaoh. Moses uses this full name so that Pharaoh can have no doubt as to who Yahweh is.

In scene three, Pharaoh's officials come to Pharaoh and beg Pharaoh to let the Israelites leave. The officials ask, "How long will Moses be a snare to us? Do you not know that Egypt is in ruins?" They use a word picture to illustrate what they think is happening. They say that Moses is like a trap or a snare-Moses is trying to trick them. Some translations say that Moses is holding the Egyptian people hostage.

Stop and choose the best way to describe this for your people. Pause the recording here.

In scene four, Pharaoh sends for Moses and Aaron. Pharaoh agrees to let the Israelite men go to worship Yahweh but says that the women and children must remain in Egypt. Moses says that the women and children must be allowed to go with the men. When Moses says this, Moses uses a poetic pairing of the groups. Moses says, young and old, sons and daughters, flocks and herds. This pairing makes it clear that everyone, person and animal, must be allowed to go. Pharaoh said that the women and children would never be allowed to leave Egypt. Then Pharaoh threw Moses and Aaron out of the palace.

Stop and discuss: How do you use force to make someone leave? What actions might be involved? Pharaoh did not pick Moses up and throw him. However, the verbs used mean that the action was strong or violent. Pause the recording here.

In scene five, Yahweh told Moses to raise his staff over Egypt. Moses raised his staff towards the sky. Probably Moses held the staff up and slowly turned so that the staff faces in all directions over Egypt. Then Yahweh sent an East wind to blow and bring in the locusts. The locusts swarmed all over Egypt. The locusts covered the entire country of Egypt. The locusts ate every plant and every leaf. Nothing was left growing. The locusts made the land seem dark. No one in Egypt had ever seen locusts like this before.

In scene six, Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron to return to the palace. This time Pharaoh said, "I have sinned against Yahweh and against you." Pharaoh asked Moses to forgive Pharaoh's sin. Pharaoh asked Moses to plead with Yahweh to take this death away. Moses left the palace and asked Yahweh to stop the plague. Yahweh changed the direction of the wind so that the wind came from the west. The West wind blew the locusts away from Egypt into the Red Sea. Then Yahweh hardened Pharaoh's heart again and Pharaoh refused to let the Israelites leave Egypt.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 10:1–20 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 6 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- Pharaoh
- Pharaoh's officials
- Egyptians

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Scene 1: Yahweh talks to Moses and Aaron and tells them that Yahweh has made Pharaoh stubborn for a reason. Yahweh wants everyone to know who Yahweh is. Yahweh wants the Israelites to tell their children and grandchildren about these miraculous signs. Yahweh wants all the Israelite descendants to know Yahweh and to know about these plagues. When Yahweh says to tell your children and grandchildren, Yahweh means that this goes for every generation in the future.

Stop the recording.

- This is really good. Yahweh wants everyone to know that Yahweh is Yahweh.
- Yahweh is telling us to make sure our children and grandchildren know about these things that Yahweh has done. This is right. We must tell them and make sure they tell their children. [!end] Continue the drama.

Scene 2: Moses and Aaron go to Pharaoh and speak directly to Pharaoh using direct speech. Moses tells Pharaoh God's message. Pharaoh must allow the people to go to worship Yahweh. If Pharaoh refuses, Moses warns Pharaoh that the next miraculous sign or plague will be terrible. Yahweh will send locusts to eat every living plant left alive by the hail. Moses tells Pharaoh that Egypt has never seen locusts like the plague that is to come. Then Moses and Aaron leave the palace.

Stop the action.

- Who do Moses and Aaron think they are talking to me this way!
- I will not let those people leave. We need them here in Egypt to do all this work. It would destroy our economy to let them go.
- I will never bow to someone else's god. My Egyptian gods are good for us. [!end] Continue the drama.

Scene 3: Pharaoh's officials, who were with Pharaoh, beg Pharaoh to let the Israelites depart. They say that Moses is like a trap for the people or is holding the people of Egypt hostage.

Stop the action.

- Moses has put us, the Egyptian people, into a position we don't want to be in.
- Moses is bringing this country to ruins. We need Moses and the Israelites to leave so we can stop this destruction.
- I want Pharaoh to understand that our country is in ruins. [!end] Continue the drama.

Scene 4: Pharaoh sends for Moses and Aaron. Pharaoh agrees to let the Israelite men go and worship Yahweh. Pharaoh refuses to allow the women and children to go with the men. Moses insists that the women and children must also go. Pharaoh says, "I can see through your evil plan." Pharaoh refuses to let the women and children go with the men to worship Yahweh. Pharaoh throws Moses and Aaron out of the palace.

Stop the action.

- I know what Moses is planning. If I let the women and children go, they will leave and never return. Then what will happen to the Egyptian economy?
- We need those slaves to do our building and other work for us. I can't let them go.
- Also I obey my Egyptian gods. Yahweh has nothing to do with me.

Ask Moses, "How are you feeling now?" You may hear:

- I'm tired of Pharaoh behaving like this.
- He really is stubborn.
- I think the Egyptian people are ready to believe that Yahweh is all powerful but Pharaoh is just too stubborn.
- He is going to regret this decision. The locusts will be terrible. [!end] Continue the drama.

Scene 5: Yahweh tells Moses to lift his hand over Egypt. Moses raises his hand with his shepherd's staff in it. Moses holds the staff out over Egypt. This probably means that Moses turned around so that the staff pointed

to each area of Egypt. Then Yahweh sent a wind from the east which blew in locusts like the Egyptians had never seen before. The locusts covered the land and ate every living plant and every leaf.

Stop the action.

- I'm terrified. I've never seen this many locusts. They have eaten everything.
- We have no food for this winter. My family is going to starve.
- I don't understand why these awful things are happening to us.
- I don't know how we will live until next year when we can have new crops. [!end] Continue the drama.

Scene 6: Pharaoh sends for Moses and Aaron. Pharaoh asks Moses to forgive Pharaoh's sin. Pharaoh says, "I have sinned against Yahweh and against you." Pharaoh asks that Yahweh take this death away. Pharaoh knows that with no food, people in Egypt will die. Moses leaves Pharaoh and prays. Yahweh sent a West wind which blew the locusts away from Egypt and into the Red Sea. Then Yahweh hardened Pharaoh's heart again. Pharaoh refused to let the Israelites leave Egypt.

Stop the action.

- I'm frustrated with this whole business. I want this to stop so that we can get on with life.
- I told Moses I have sinned so that Moses would ask Yahweh to get rid of the locusts. I don't like having to say these things to Moses. I'm Pharaoh. I shouldn't have to talk like this to anyone.

Ask Moses, "How are you feeling now?" You may hear:

- Yahweh is awesome. What amazing signs Yahweh is doing to prove that Yahweh is all-powerful.
- I'm sorry that Pharaoh is being so stubborn that the Egyptian people are having to suffer like this.
- I do know that Yahweh is going to win this and the people will be allowed to leave. I believe that. I don't know when this is going to end but I know it will. [!end] Continue the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 10:1–20 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Yahweh speaks to Moses. Use the same name for Yahweh that you have been using. Yahweh is discussed in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses that Yahweh is the one making Pharaoh and Pharaoh's officials hard hearted or stubborn. Use the same words or descriptions for hard heart that you have used in the previous passages.

Yahweh talks about the miraculous signs or the plagues that Yahweh has sent to the Egyptian people. Miracles, signs and wonders are discussed in the Master Glossary. A miracle is something that only Yahweh can do. A sign means that this is something really important. A sign shows the way or gives information to people. Miraculous signs would point the people to Yahweh.

When Moses gives Yahweh's message to Pharaoh, Moses uses direct speech.

Pharaoh is the title of the king of Egypt. Use the same title for the king that you have been using.

The government officials ask Pharaoh to let the Israelite men go and **worship** God. Worship is discussed in the Master Glossary. Use the same word for worship you have been using.

Moses raised his staff over Egypt. The staff is a stick that shepherds carried. Use the same word for the staff that you have been using.

Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said, "I have sinned against Yahweh, your **God**." Sin is discussed in the Master Glossary. Use the same word for sin you have previously used. God is the general name for God. God is discussed in the Master Glossary. Use the same word for God that you have been using.

Yahweh hardened Pharaoh's heart. This means that Pharaoh again became stubborn or refused to let the people go. Use the same way of translating this idea of hard heart or being stubborn that you have been using.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 10:1-20

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Exodus 10:21–29

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 10:21–29 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 10:21–29 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 10:21–29 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

After the plague of the locusts, Yahweh spoke to Moses and told Moses what to do for the next plague. We do not know how much time has passed since the plague of locusts. We do know that Pharaoh's heart was hardened or Pharaoh became stubborn again after the plague of locusts. Pharaoh refused to allow the Israelites to leave Egypt. This is a narrative account of the plague of darkness.

For this plague, Yahweh speaks to Moses and tells Moses what to do. Yahweh does not tell Moses to go to Pharaoh and announce the plague. Moses does not go to Pharaoh to warn Pharaoh about this plague or demand that Pharaoh allow the Israelites to leave Egypt. Aaron does not seem to be with Moses for this plague.

Yahweh tells Moses, "Raise your hand towards heaven." Heaven is the sky. The story indicates that Moses is to raise his hand. The story does not mention the shepherd's staff or stick that Moses usually carried. When Moses lifts his hand to the sky or towards heaven, darkness that is so thick that you can feel it will cover Egypt.

Stop and find a way to get into a totally dark place. This will probably be a small room or closet that you can shut the door and block all light from any opening. There should not be any light coming into the space. You may need to use something that blocks the door so that no light can shine through. When it is completely dark, the team members cannot see each other. If one lifts his hand, the team member cannot see the hand move. Have the team members discuss how this darkness feels. Pause the recording here.

The darkness covered the land of Egypt for 3 days. This means 24 hours per day. The darkness was not the normal dark of the night sky where the stars and moon provide some light. This was an abnormal darkness that allowed no light to show. No one could see even a shadow of something moving. As with the other plagues, Yahweh was showing that Yahweh was more powerful than the Egyptian gods.

The darkness was so thick you could feel it. This is a word picture for how thick or heavy the darkness felt to the people. Some people think that the best translation here is to say that the person would not be able to see anything which means that the person has to feel or grope around in order to move even a little bit.

Stop and put a blindfold over one person's eyes so that this person can see nothing. Then this blindfolded person needs to find a chair and sit down in it. You can assign another task if preferred. Now the team watches this blindfolded person feel and grope as he tries to find the target object. Describe what you see. Pause the recording here.

This type of complete darkness leads to confusion. The person can't tell where he is in relation to anything around him. He loses time which means he doesn't know if it is morning or evening or day or night because the darkness remains the same. This darkness lasted three days. The Egyptians didn't know that it would only last three days. The Egyptians did know that plants need light in order to grow. If the darkness continued, there would be no food.

During the three days of darkness no one in Egypt moved. Most people did not usually travel at night anyway because the stars did not give enough light to travel in safety, being able to see obstacles or the usual path. The darkness during the plague was so dark, that no one dared move because he could not see where he was going.

As with previous plagues, the plague or darkness did not reach the area where the Israelites lived. The Israelites had light as usual in their part of Egypt.

The plague of darkness ended after 3 days of darkness. Then Pharaoh called for Moses to come to see Pharaoh. The passage does not say that the plague had ended. However, the darkness had to be finished so that Pharaoh could send a messenger to get Moses. During the darkness the messenger would not be able to move to find Moses.

Pharaoh tells Moses to take the people and go and worship Yahweh. Pharaoh even gives permission for the children to go. However, Pharaoh says that the animals must remain in Egypt. Pharaoh has said that all the Israelites can leave. However, by keeping the animals in Egypt, Pharaoh will also keep some of the Israelites who will have to remain behind to look after the animals. It sounds like Pharaoh is allowing all the people to leave but in reality, some must remain in Egypt to look after the animals. By keeping the animals and some of the Israelites, Pharaoh is trying to make sure that the Israelites come back to Egypt after their time of worship.

Moses tells Pharaoh that all the animals must go with the Israelites. Sacrifice and burnt offerings are two of the ways that the Israelites worshiped God. The sacrifice usually involved offering a killed animal to God either to thank God or to ask for forgiveness. The people would sacrifice an animal and burn part of the animal as an offering to Yahweh. The people would keep part of the sacrificed animal and eat it together as a celebration meal which was part of the worship time. When the people offered a burnt offering, they did not keep part of the animal to eat. They burned the entire animal. Moses says that Pharaoh must allow all the animals to go. Domestic animals or livestock have a hoof as a foot. Moses says that not one hoof or one foot of an animal can remain in Egypt. This means that every single animal that belongs to the Israelites must be allowed to go. These animals had hooves or 4 feet.

Stop and show a picture of a hoof. This can be any domestic animal.

Moses tells Pharaoh that the Israelites won't know how they will worship Yahweh until they get to the place of worship. Yahweh might reveal further instructions about worship. Moses tells Pharaoh the truth when Moses says that they don't know yet just how they will worship Yahweh. Most people in that time sacrificed animals and made burnt offerings, but at this time, Yahweh had not yet given Moses specific instructions about the sacrifices the Israelites would make as they worshiped God.

Yahweh hardens Pharaoh's heart. This means that Pharaoh again is stubborn and refuses to allow what Moses has asked. Pharaoh strongly warns Moses. Pharaoh tells Moses to leave and never come back. Pharaoh does not want to see Moses again. Pharaoh tells Moses, "If you come back to see me, you will die. The day you see my face, you will die." This expression is a word picture which means that if Moses comes back to talk with Pharaoh or see Pharaoh in any way, Moses will be killed. The language that Pharaoh uses is strong language which indicates that Pharaoh is really angry.

Moses agrees with Pharaoh. Moses tells Pharaoh, "I will never see your face again." This means that Moses will not come back to talk with Pharaoh again.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 10:21–29 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh tells Moses to lift his hand to the sky. Darkness covers Egypt for 3 days.

In the second scene: Pharaoh sends for Moses and agrees that the Israelites can leave but not the animals. Then Pharaoh warns Moses and tells Moses to leave Pharaoh's presence and never return.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Pharaoh

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In scene one, Yahweh talks with Moses. Yahweh tells Moses to lift his hand towards the sky. When Moses lifts his hand towards the sky, darkness covers Egypt everywhere except in the part where the Israelites live. The darkness is so dark that no one can move because they can't see anything. The darkness lasts 3 days and is both day and night.

In scene two, when the darkness is over, Pharaoh calls for Moses to come before Pharaoh. Pharaoh tells Moses that the people including the children can go to worship God. But they must leave the animals in Egypt. Moses refuses. Moses tells Pharaoh that every animal must go with the Israelites. The Israelites don't know which animals will be needed for the sacrifice and burnt offerings. The Israelites will learn what they need when they get to the worship place.

Yahweh hardens Pharaoh's heart or causes Pharaoh to be stubborn and refuse to listen to Moses. Pharaoh strongly warns Moses. Pharaoh tells Moses to leave and never return to the palace or into Pharaoh's presence. Pharaoh tells Moses that if Moses returns to see Pharaoh, Moses will be killed. Moses agrees to leave and never return to see Pharaoh.

Stop and discuss the following question. Act out a scene in which one person is really angry with another person. This first person tells the second person to leave and never come back. The first person threatens to kill the second person if he does come back. Listen to the action words the person uses. Listen to the emotion in his voice. What words do you use to describe what just happened? Pause the recording here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 10:21–29 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Pharaoh

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

In scene one, Yahweh talks with Moses. Yahweh tells Moses to raise his hand to the sky. This action will cause darkness to cover the land of Egypt. The darkness will be complete. No one will be able to see anything. The darkness will feel thick or heavy and people will have to feel around in order to move from one place to another. Moses did as Yahweh instructed. The darkness covered Egypt for three days. But the light was normal in the area where the Israelites live.

Pause the drama.

- This darkness is really dark. I can't see anything moving. I can't even see my hand in front of my face.
- How does Moses do these things? My magicians can't do these things.
- I must find a way to stop this darkness. Everyone is afraid to move even one step.
- No work is being done. We can't go on like this. I'll agree to let the people leave but the animals will stay here. [!end] Continue the drama.

In scene two, Pharaoh calls for Moses to come before Pharaoh. Pharaoh agrees to let the people including the women and children go to worship Yahweh. Pharaoh says that the animals must remain in Egypt. Moses rejects this offer. Moses says that the animals are important for worship. The Israelites will sacrifice some of the animals. The Israelites will use some of the animals for burnt offerings. The people don't know how many animals they need until they arrive at the worship place and Yahweh gives them more instructions.

Pause the drama.

- If the animals remain, then some men must remain with them to take care of the animals. We must all go.
- Also, Yahweh will probably give us more instructions about how we are to worship. We must have all the animals so that we will be prepared.
- Pharaoh is just trying to keep some of the people here and also keep some of our wealth. I won't let Pharaoh do this. [!end] Continue the drama.

When Pharaoh hears this from Moses, Pharaoh becomes stubborn again. Pharaoh refuses to let anyone leave. Then Pharaoh gets angry with Moses and strongly warns Moses. Pharaoh tells Moses to leave and never return to see Pharaoh again. Pharaoh says, "If I see your face, I will kill you." Moses agrees to leave and never come back to see Pharaoh.

Pause the drama.

- Pharaoh has no idea of the power of Yahweh.
- Yahweh is telling me what to do. Yahweh has control over everything.
- I'm not afraid of Pharaoh's threats.

Ask Pharaoh, "Why are you so angry with Moses?" You may hear:

- Moses has too much power. I am King of Egypt. Not Moses.
- Moses should respect me more. How dare Moses keep coming here and threatening me and the Egyptians.
- The Israelites are my slaves. I'll never let them go. I'll kill Moses first.
- Moses and that God of his will see that I am Pharaoh. I am the king of Egypt.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 10:21–29 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Yahweh speaks to Moses. Use the same word for Yahweh that you have used in other passages. Yahweh is discussed in the Master Glossary.

Plague is a word that means attack or injury. The word plague can also mean to injure or to strike or to punish. The idea is that Yahweh is going to cause something bad to happen to the people of Egypt. In this case, the purpose of the plague is to convince the Egyptian people that Yahweh is more powerful than all the Egyptian gods. The people should obey and worship Yahweh. Use the same word for plague that you have been using.

Yahweh is going to cover the land of Egypt with darkness. This is the same word for darkness that is used in the creation story when Yahweh separated darkness from light.

Pharaoh gives permission for Moses and the Israelites to go and **worship** Yahweh. Use the same word for Pharaoh or the King of Egypt that you have been using. Pharaoh is discussed in the Master Glossary. Worship means to show awe and wonder for God. Worship usually involved some sort of offering to God such as an animal sacrifice. Use the same word for worship that you have been using. Worship is discussed in the Master Glossary.

Livestock is a plural word that means all the animals that the people used for farming or daily life. Livestock includes animals like sheep, goats, cows, and donkeys. Livestock does not include wild animals. Livestock have a hoof as a foot.

Stop and show a picture of a hoof.

The people were to offer a **sacrifice** or a **burnt offering** to God. A sacrifice involved burning part of the animal and keeping part of the animal for the people to eat. A burnt offering meant that the entire animal was burned. The people did not eat any of this animal. Both types of offerings were for worship and for forgiveness of sins. Sacrifice is discussed in the Master Glossary. Burnt offering is discussed in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 10:21–29

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Exodus 11:1–10

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 11:1–10 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 11:1–10 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.

4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 11:1–10 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Yahweh had already announced to Moses that there will be one more plague or punishment for the Egyptian people. Here Yahweh is repeating what Yahweh has already told Moses in previous announcements. This plague will be the tenth plague that Yahweh has sent. After this plague, Pharaoh will make the Israelites leave Egypt. This is a narrative account of what the plague will be. All of the plagues have attacked various gods that the Egyptians worshiped. This tenth plague shows that a number of different gods do not have the power that Yahweh has. The Egyptians worshiped Pharaoh as a god. This tenth plague shows that Yahweh has much more power than Pharaoh.

Yahweh tells Moses that after this tenth plague, Pharaoh will be so eager for the Israelites to leave Egypt that Pharaoh will actually force the people to leave. To force someone to leave suggests a strong, violent action. Some translations use the words, drive out or chase away.

Stop and tell a story about how a leader made someone or a group of people move to a different place. Describe how the leader did this. Listen carefully to the words the person uses to describe what the leader did to make the group leave. Pause the audio here.

Then Yahweh tells Moses to tell the Israelites to go to their Egyptian neighbors and ask for objects of gold and silver. Yahweh has already caused the Egyptian people to respect the Israelites or look at the Israelites with favor. This means that the Egyptians were ready to give these objects of silver and gold to the Israelites when the Israelites asked. The Israelites did not take the gold and silver objects by force. In addition, the Egyptians had great respect and admiration for Moses. Even Pharaoh's officials respected Moses. However, Pharaoh did not respect Moses.

As with the other plagues, Moses announced to Pharaoh what was going to happen. Probably Moses announced this before Moses left Pharaoh's presence after the plague of darkness. Moses said to Pharaoh, "This is what Yahweh says." This means that Moses is repeating to Pharaoh what Yahweh said to Moses. Yahweh says that about midnight, Yahweh will pass through all of Egypt. Midnight does not mean 12 a.m. Midnight means in the middle of the night when everyone would be at their deepest sleep. This is the deepest or darkest time of the night. At this time, the first-born of every Egyptian will die. Some people think that the first-born refers to sons, but other translators believe that the first-born means just that-first child, either boy or girl. Most likely, the word first-born refers only to sons or males. The first-born son of Pharaoh will die. The first-born of the lowest servant girl, the one who grinds or mills the flour will die. The servant who grinds the flour sits at a mill made up of two stones and puts the wheat between the two stones. Then by turning the top stone, the wheat turns into flour that can be used for baking bread. This servant was usually the least important of all the servants. Moses says that the first-born from the most important person to the least important person in Egypt will die. In a later passage, we will learn that someone died in every house in Egypt.

Stop and show a picture of a hand mill such as would have been used by Egyptian servants. Pause the audio here.

Yahweh says that from the first born of Pharaoh to the first-born of the lowest servant will die. This means that the first-born child of every family in Egypt will die. In addition, the first-born of all the livestock or domestic animals will die. As a result of all this death happening in every house at the same time, there will be a loud cry. This crying sound or wailing is a cry that expresses great sorrow or grief. Wailing is a cry of grief.

Stop and discuss the following question: Tell a story about the sudden death of a loved person. Listen carefully to the description of how the family members express their sorrow. What words does the storyteller use to describe the crying? Pause the audio here.

Yahweh says that this terrible death of the first-born will happen to the Egyptians. However, in the area where the Israelites live, nothing will happen. It will be so quiet and peaceful that even the dogs won't bark. During

the night, the dog will bark at any unusual sound. But during this plague there would be no unusual sounds, so the dogs don't bark. Moses tells Pharaoh that Yahweh treats the Egyptians differently from the Israelites.

Stop and discuss the following question: Talk about dogs who roam around during the night near where you live. What causes these dogs to bark? When one dog barks, what do the near-by dogs do? How do the people react when they hear the dogs barking? Pause the audio here.

Moses tells Pharaoh that the high officials in Egypt will run to Moses, bow down to Moses, and beg Moses to take the Israelites and leave Egypt. Moses uses a word picture to describe the urgency that the Egyptians will feel. To run towards someone and fall to the ground before that person is a violent action that suggests that the person is in great distress.

When Moses left Pharaoh's presence, Moses was hot with anger. This means that Moses was very angry. One word picture says that Moses burned with anger. This means that Moses was so angry that his skin probably felt hot to the touch. Someone hot with anger means that this person is like a pot of water on a stove about ready to boil. Some people would say that this person is about ready to explode from anger.

Stop and discuss the following: Tell a story about someone who was extremely angry about something. This person was so angry that his face was red and his skin felt hot. Listen carefully for any word pictures that the storyteller uses to describe the person's anger. Pause the recording here.

Before Moses went to Pharaoh to tell Pharaoh about the tenth plague, Yahweh had told Moses that Pharaoh would not listen. Yahweh says that Pharaoh's hard heart means that Yahweh will perform even more miracles in Egypt. Pharaoh refused to let the Israelites leave Egypt. Yahweh had hardened Pharaoh's heart or caused Pharaoh to be stubborn. Pharaoh had seen all these miracles that Moses and Aaron had performed but Pharaoh remained stubborn or with a hardened heart.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 11:1-10 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh has already told Moses about the tenth plague that is to come. Yahweh has instructed Moses to tell the people to ask for gold and silver objects from the Egyptians.

In the second scene: Moses has already announced to Pharaoh before Moses left Pharaoh's presence that the first-born of every house will die. There will be no deaths among the Israelites. Then Pharaoh will force Moses and the Israelites to leave Egypt. Yahweh had also told Moses that Pharaoh would not listen to Moses. Yahweh has hardened Pharaoh's heart.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Yahweh
- Pharaoh
- Pharaoh's officials
- The lowest servant girl
- The Israelites
- The Egyptians
- Aaron is mentioned at the end

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In scene one, Yahweh has told Moses that there will be one more plague. When this plague is over, Pharaoh will force the Israelites to leave Egypt. Yahweh has told Moses that the Israelites are to go to their Egyptian neighbors and ask for objects of gold and silver. Yahweh has already caused the Egyptians to be willing to give these objects to the Israelites. The Egyptian people and the Egyptian officials all had great respect for Moses. We are not sure if Moses has left Pharaoh's presence after the plague of darkness is over or if Moses is still with Pharaoh. Probably Moses says this to Pharaoh before Moses says that he will leave Pharaoh's presence and never return. This first scene is additional information that Moses gives us to remind us of what Yahweh has already said to Moses.

In scene two, Moses announces the tenth plague to Pharaoh. Yahweh is going to pass through Egypt in the middle of the night. As Yahweh passes, the first-born in every house will die. This death will touch every Egyptian from Pharaoh who sits on his throne to the lowest, least important servant in the home. A throne is a special chair that kings or rulers sit on to show their authority and power. No one except the ruler is allowed to sit on this special chair. Even the first-born of the domestic animals or those animals used in farming will die. Most people believe that this means that the first-born male animals would die. The people will cry out with cries of great sorrow. However, there will be no death among the Israelites. It will be so calm and peaceful where the Israelites live that the stray dogs won't even bark. When this night ends, the Egyptian officials will run to Moses, fall down before Moses and beg Moses to take the Israelites and leave Egypt.

Stop and act out the scene of the officials running and falling before Moses and begging Moses to leave Egypt. First act this scene by having some officials walk calmly to Moses, stop and bow, and then politely ask Moses to leave Egypt. Then repeat the scene by having the officials run to Moses, fall before Moses and beg Moses to leave Egypt. After acting this scene, describe what happened the second time you act this out. Decide what words you will use to show the urgency and violence of the officials. Pause the audio here.

Just as with the other plagues, Pharaoh refused to listen to Moses. Yahweh had already told Moses that Pharaoh would refuse to listen because Yahweh had hardened Pharaoh's heart or made Pharaoh stubborn. Pharaoh refused to allow the Israelites to leave Egypt.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 11:1–10 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Yahweh
- Pharaoh
- Pharaoh's officials
- The lowest servant girl
- The Israelites
- The Egyptians
- Aaron is mentioned at the end

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

In scene one, act out the message that Yahweh has already told Moses. Yahweh has told Moses that there will be one more plague against Egypt. After this plague, Pharaoh will force the Israelites to leave Egypt. Yahweh tells Moses to have the Israelites ask the Egyptians for their gold and silver objects. Yahweh had already prepared the Egyptians so that the Egyptians would be willing to give these objects to the Israelites. The Egyptians also had great respect for Moses.

Stop the action.

- The Israelites don't have beautiful things like these. We should help them have beautiful things.
- They have worked so hard for us, it's only fair that they have some sort of reward. Besides Moses is such a great man, we should help him also.

Ask the Israelites, "How do you feel asking the Egyptians for their gold and silver objects?" You may hear:

- It feels strange to ask for such gifts. These things are really valuable.
- I can't believe that the Egyptians are just giving them to use like this.
- I don't understand what is happening here but I'm glad they are willing to give us the gold and silver since Moses told us to ask for it.
- I have never had such beautiful things in my home. I wonder if this means that we are going to be free. [!end] Continue the drama.

In scene two, Moses is still with Pharaoh after the plague of darkness and he tells Pharaoh about the next or tenth plague. This time Yahweh will pass over Egypt during the middle of the night. The first-born in each family will die beginning with the son of Pharaoh and going to the lowest or least important servant. The first-born of each of the domestic animals will die. The people from all over Egypt will cry out with cries of great sorrow. No one will die in the Israelite area. Yahweh will make a distinction between the Egyptians and the Israelites. After this event, the Egyptian officials will run to Moses, fall on their knees and beg Moses to take the Israelites and leave Egypt. After saying these things Moses left Pharaoh. Moses was extremely angry when Moses left Pharaoh.

Stop the action.

- I'm not worried. My son is in good health. I have him well guarded. No one can get to my son to harm him.
- I'm Pharaoh. No one would dare touch my son. This is just idle threats from Moses.

Ask Moses, "Why are you so angry?" You may hear:

- I'm angry because of what is going to happen to the Egyptians. It is Pharaoh's fault.
- Because Pharaoh is so stubborn, all the people of Egypt are going to suffer greatly.
- Pharaoh should stop this and let us go.

Ask the Egyptian officials, "How are you feeling right now?" You may hear:

- I am frightened. Moses says my oldest child is going to die. I think that might happen. Everything else that Moses has said would happen has happened.
- I wish Pharaoh would listen to Moses and let the Israelites leave. Our country is being destroyed because Pharaoh is so stubborn.
- Yahweh is a strong God. Yahweh seems to be much stronger than our Egyptian gods. I am thinking about worshiping Yahweh. [!end] Continue the drama.

Previously Yahweh had told Moses that Pharaoh would not listen. Just as Yahweh said, Pharaoh did not listen. Yahweh hardened Pharaoh's heart and Pharaoh again became stubborn. Pharaoh refused to let the Israelites leave Egypt.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 11:1–10 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Yahweh speaks to Moses. Yahweh is the name for God. Yahweh is discussed in the Master Glossary. Use the same word for Yahweh that you have been using.

Pharaoh is the title used for the King of Egypt. Use the same title that you have been using for the King of Egypt. Pharaoh is discussed in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh announces that there will be one more plague for the Egyptians. **Plague** means to injure or strike or punish. Use the same word for plague that you have used in previous passages.

Yahweh says that Yahweh will pass through Egypt at midnight. Midnight in this passage means the deepest, darkest part of the middle of the night. The word midnight does not refer to an hour such as 12 a.m.

Yahweh says that the first-born of each family will die. Some translations translate this as the first-born son. Other translations translate this word as the first-born child which could be boy or girl. Later, a passage tells us that death happened in every house in Egypt.

A throne is a special chair or seat used by a king or ruler that symbolized that authority and power of the king. The king or ruler is the only person who can sit in such a chair.

Livestock is a general term used for any domestic animal or group of animals. These animals are used in farming or travel or different kinds of labor. Cows, donkeys, horses, sheep, and goats are examples of livestock.

Moses says that the Egyptian officials will fall to the ground before Moses. Officials were people who helped Pharaoh in various aspects of ruling over Egypt. Some of them would be high servants. They were important men. This means that the officials will bow down to Moses as a sign of respect. The image of the officials falling to the ground indicates that there is urgency in their request. The bowing accompanies the request that Moses leave Egypt. The officials will bow to Moses and beg Moses to leave at the same time.

Moses and Aaron performed **miracles** in Pharaoh's presence. Miracles are signs and wonders that only God can perform. Use the same word for miracle that you have used in previous passages. Miracles are discussed in the Master Glossary.

Moses was very angry or burned with anger or was hot with anger. Use the word picture to describe Moses' anger that you have decided to use.

Yahweh hardened Pharaoh's heart. Yahweh caused Pharaoh to be stubborn and to refuse to let the Israelites leave Egypt. Use the same word for hardened Pharaoh's heart that you have used in previous passages.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 11:1-10

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3681016 KB)

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Exodus 12:1-13

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 12:1-13 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 12:1-13 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 12:1-13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Moses has given Yahweh's warnings to Pharaoh for the last time. In this passage, Yahweh explains to Moses and Aaron the things that the Israelites must do to prepare for Passover. Passover is a word that refers to the passing of Yahweh over the land where the Israelites were living. Yahweh skipped or passed over this area while in the rest of Egypt the first-born in each house died. Yahweh gives Moses instructions for what the Israelites are to do to prepare for this event. We don't know exactly when Yahweh gave these instructions to Moses. Later, Yahweh tells Moses that this event must be remembered and celebrated each year as a festival. The Festival of Passover will be an event celebrated every year so that the Israelites always remember what Yahweh did in Egypt. This is a narrative account of Yahweh's instructions.

Stop the audio here and discuss the following question. What are some of your special festivals of remembrance? How do you prepare for these festivals? Why are these festivals of remembrance important for the community? Pause the recording here.

Yahweh gave these instructions to Moses and Aaron. Aaron's descendants will become the worship leaders of the Israelites. Yahweh does not give Moses and Aaron the instructions about how to lead the people in worship yet. However, it is significant that Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron what instructions to give to the Israelites at this time for a feast that they will repeat every year in remembrance of what Yahweh did for them.

Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron that this month will become the first month of the year for the Israelites. This month was in the spring and probably the same time as sometime between mid-March and mid-April in today's calendar. The month does not yet have a name. The month was to start with the first new moon after the equinox which occurs in March. The equinox is the time of the year when the sun crosses the Equator or middle line of the earth. This equinox happens twice each year, in September and in March.

Stop the recording here and discuss the following question. How do your people count the months and years? When does a new year begin? Does your calendar follow the moon, or do you have another way to start the year? Pause the recording here.

Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron to tell the Israelites that each family is to choose a lamb or kid, which is a young goat, for a sacrifice. Yahweh gives very specific instructions. The lamb or kid must be one year old and have no defects. A defect would be some sort of flaw such as lameness or blind in one eye or some other problem. Yahweh was asking that they use a perfect animal. A year-old lamb or kid is nearly the same size as an adult sheep or goat.

Stop the recording here and show a picture of a year-old lamb with an adult ram.

Show a picture of a year-old kid with an adult goat. Pause the recording here.

Each family was to kill an animal, either a lamb or a kid. The family would eat the entire animal that same night. They were not to keep any of the meat for another meal and they were not to throw out any uneaten meat. The family was supposed to determine how much each person would eat and share with another Israelite family if they could not eat the entire lamb. Everyone participating would have enough meat to eat but there would be no meat left over or thrown away.

Yahweh said that the family should select the year-old lamb or kid on the tenth day of the month. They were to keep the animal until the fourteenth day of the month. This would be the day of the full moon. At evening or when the sun was going down, they should sacrifice the lamb or kid. This would be the end of the fourteenth day. The actual festival takes place on the fifteenth day which starts at sundown, that same night right after they have sacrificed the lamb on the fourteenth day. The Israelites counted their days as being from sunset to sunset. Then after killing the animal, they were to take some of the blood of this animal and put it on the doorposts and lintel of the door. The door posts were on each side of the door. The lintel is the beam or stone that goes across the posts and is over the door. The Israelites were to put the blood on the doorposts and lintel of the house where they were eating the lamb or kid. Another way to say this is that the blood was to be on each side of the door and over the top of the door.

Stop the recording here and show a picture of a small house with blood on the doorposts and lintel. Pause the recording here.

Yahweh tells the Israelites that the lamb or kid must be roasted over a fire and eat the meat with bitter herbs. Bitter herbs were green leafy vegetables that grew in that area. The bitter herbs might have been chicory, bitter cress, wild lettuce, hawkweed, or sow thistles. We don't know what the herbs were. We do know that they were readily available to the people and that they had a bitter rather than sweet taste. These herbs did not need to be cooked.

Stop the recording here and show a picture of a whole animal roasting over a fire.

Show a picture of a plate of bitter herbs such as chicory or wild lettuce or bitter cress. This picture can have more than one type of bitter herb. Pause the recording here.

Yahweh also told Moses and Aaron that the Israelites were to eat bread made without yeast. Yeast is the agent that causes the bread to rise as it cooks. Bread made with yeast takes time to prepare because the dough must be left to rest while the yeast works and the dough rises. The yeast makes the bread soft and easy to chew. Bread made without yeast can be made very quickly. Bread without yeast or anything to make the bread rise would be flat and hard to chew.

Yahweh said that the people could not eat the meat raw. The people could not boil the meat. Boiling the meat until it is done takes much longer than roasting over a fire. Yahweh said that they were to roast the whole animal including the head, legs, and feet and internal organs. They were to eat the entire animal during the night. Anything not eaten must be burned before morning comes. All three elements of the meal could be prepared quickly and eaten quickly. The meat was to be roasted, the bitter herbs didn't require cooking and the bread had nothing to make it rise so it could also be cooked quickly.

After telling them how to cook the meal, Yahweh then tells Moses and Aaron how the people are to eat the meal. The people must be fully dressed, even with their sandals on, their cloak belted on so that it was tight around their waist, and their walking stick in one hand. The Israelites would be dressed to travel. Yahweh gives these specific instructions because people usually don't dress for travel at night. The people must eat the meal quickly or urgently. This night has a full moon which provided plenty of light for the people to see if they needed to travel.

Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron that while the Israelites in their area are eating this meal, that same night Yahweh will go throughout Egypt and strike dead the first-born son of every family and every first-born male animal in Egypt. This will happen during the night while the Israelites are eating their meal. Yahweh says that this action is to bring judgment on all the Egyptian gods. The Egyptians considered Pharaoh as a god also. The Egyptians will know that Yahweh is God. Then Yahweh makes a promise. Yahweh says that when Yahweh sees the blood on the door of a house, Yahweh will pass over that house. No one in that house will die. The blood on the doorposts and lintel will be a sign so that Yahweh will know where the Israelites are and will not touch one of them with death on this night.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 12:1-13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 1 scene.

In the first scene: Yahweh gives Moses and Aaron instructions for how to prepare the special meal that they were to eat on the night that Yahweh went across Egypt killing the first-born son of every Egyptian family.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- Israelites

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Before walking through this passage, the team should decide on the term to use for Passover. This word has the idea of protecting someone or shielding someone from harm or delivering someone from danger. This term will be used repeatedly in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. When the word is used, the people remember what happened in Egypt when Yahweh passed over the Israelites and no one in their homes died.

Stop the audio and play a game. In this game, you may line people or objects up. The person playing will then go to each object or person and touch it. The person playing will decide to skip or not touch one or two of the people or objects. The person playing has passed over these objects. The word used for this action should also include the idea of protecting from harm or shielding that person from harm. By not touching that person or object, no harm came to that person. Now what do you call this action? Pause the recording here.

This passage is one scene with Yahweh giving instructions to Moses and Aaron who are to repeat these instructions to the Israelites. Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron how to prepare for the first Passover. Passover is a festival that celebrates how Yahweh delivered the Israelites from Egypt.

First Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron that this month is to become the first month of the year for the Israelites. On the tenth day of this month, the Israelites are to choose a year-old lamb or kid that has no defects. They are to keep the animal until the fourteenth day and then at sundown, they should sacrifice this animal. In preparation for this event, the family must decide how much meat each person will eat. If they think there will be meat left over from this meal, then the family should share the animal with another family. They are to plan carefully so that everyone has enough to eat and there is nothing left over.

They are to kill the animal on the fourteenth day at sundown. They are to take the blood of this animal and put blood at each side of the door and over the top of the door. Yahweh will see the blood on the doorposts and will know that an Israelite family lives in this house. Yahweh will not touch this house as Yahweh goes through Egypt killing the first-born sons of every Egyptian family.

Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron that the animal is to be roasted over a fire. The entire animal including the head, legs, and internal organs will be roasted. The Israelites cannot eat the meat uncooked or raw and they cannot boil the meat. With the meat, they are to eat bitter herbs. These herbs are green leafy vegetables that don't require cooking. They must bake the bread without yeast. Using yeast takes time for the bread to rise. Without yeast, the bread can be cooked quickly. In this way all three elements of the meal can be prepared and eaten quickly. Those eating the meal must be dressed for travel. They should have their cloak on and belted close to the body. They should be wearing their sandals and have their walking stick in one hand. They are to eat the meal with a sense of urgency or that they must eat quickly.

This meal occurs on the night of the full moon. Thus, the people can travel quickly if they need to travel.

Everything must be eaten. They cannot keep any of the meat for another meal. If something is left in the morning, then that part must be burned.

Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron that while the Israelites are eating this special meal, Yahweh will be going across the land of Egypt and will strike down every first-born male of every Egyptian family and domestic animal. This is an act of judgment against the gods of Egypt which include Pharaoh. Everyone in Egypt will know that Yahweh is God.

Yahweh reminds Moses and Aaron that the blood on the doorposts and over the door of the houses of the Israelites will be a sign that this is an Israelite home. Yahweh will not touch these homes. Everyone in this home will be safe.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 12:1-13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 1 scene.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- The Israelites

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Yahweh begins giving instructions regarding a special festival meal that the Israelites are to prepare and eat. Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron that from now on, they are to count this month as the first month of the year. Then on the tenth day of this month they are to choose a year-old lamb or kid.

Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron that the Israelites are to prepare a special meal using a year-old lamb or kid. The entire animal must be eaten during the meal. The family needs to decide how much meat each person will eat. Then if the family can't eat the entire animal during that meal, they should find another family to share with. The entire animal must be eaten with nothing left over or thrown away.

Pause the drama.

- Yahweh is being very exact.
- Yahweh is giving us specific days and times.
- Yahweh is telling us the exact age of the animal for the meal.
- This sounds like it is really important. I think we must pay careful attention to these details. I don't want to forget one of the details. [!end] Continue the drama.

Yahweh continues the instructions. On the fourteenth day of the month, at sundown, the Israelites are to kill the lamb or kid. They are to take some of the blood and put this blood on the doorposts and lintels of the houses where they will eat the meal.

Pause the drama.

- Yuck! This sounds messy. What a mess to clean up later!
- I don't know why Yahweh wants us to do this.
- The blood must be some sort of sign and must be important.
- I don't think Yahweh would ask us to do this unless it's important.
- I think I have to make sure the people understand that they must obey this instruction even if it does seem strange to them." [!end] Continue the drama.

Yahweh continues the instructions. Yahweh tells Moses that the entire lamb must be roasted over an open fire. The people are to eat bitter herbs with the meat. The bread must be cooked without yeast. Everything about the way the meal is to be prepared and eaten suggests urgency. The people are to eat all the meat during this meal. If anything is left, it must be burned. Yahweh tells Moses that the Israelites are to wear traveling clothes or be dressed to leave in a hurry while they eat the meal. Their cloaks must be tightened around the waist with a belt. They are to wear their sandals and they are to keep their walking stick in one hand even while eating.

Pause the drama.

- This is really strange. I never heard of eating a meal with your sandals on. We usually take our shoes off when we are in the house.
- This is at night. People want to use their cloak as a cover to keep warm.
- Yahweh is telling them to put a belt on so that the cloak is tight around the waist.
- Why would we need a walking stick in the house?
- These instructions sound strange but they are very specific and direct.
- I must tell the people that they must do exactly what Yahweh says. This seems like it is important. [!end] Continue the drama.

Yahweh continues to explain what is going to happen to Moses and Aaron. Yahweh is going to go throughout the land of Egypt. Yahweh will kill the first-born son of every Egyptian home and the first-born of all the animals. Yahweh tells them, "I will pass judgment on the gods of Egypt so that they will know that Yahweh is God." Yahweh also tells Moses that the blood on the doorposts will keep the Israelites safe. This blood will be a sign that this is an Israelite home. Yahweh won't touch these homes. No one in a house with blood on the doorposts will die.

Pause the drama.

- Now I understand why we must put the blood on the doorposts. This will be a sign to Yahweh that this is an Israelite home.
- I must make sure that the Israelites obey this instruction.
- This is good that Yahweh is taking care of us all like this.
- Yahweh is protecting us from the death plague.
- I'm so grateful that Yahweh wants to protect us and help us get free.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 12:1–13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Yahweh gives the instructions to Moses and Aaron for the first **Passover**. Passover is one way to translate this Hebrew word. The word has the meaning of to protect from harm, shield from danger or deliver someone from

danger or harm. In deciding what word to use, you should not borrow a word from another language or the trade language. Review the game you played and the words you used to describe the action.

Stop here and decide what word you will use for Passover. For more information about Passover, see the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh gave instructions to Moses and Aaron. Yahweh is discussed in the Master Glossary. Use the same word for Yahweh that you have been using.

Yahweh told Moses and Aaron that the month was to be the first month of the year from this point on. Yahweh was changing the way the Israelites counted years. They followed a lunar calendar. The month isn't named in this passage. It is a month that occurs between the middle of March and the middle of April. The month was to start with the first new moon after the equinox which occurs in March. The equinox is the time of the year when the sun crosses the Equator or middle line of the earth. This equinox happens in the fall or September and in the spring or March. Yahweh doesn't include these details in the instructions.

Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron that the people are to select a perfect lamb or kid that is one year old. The animal should have no defects or it should be perfect. A defect is something that makes the animal less desirable such as lameness or being blind or having some other defect.

The roasted animal is to be eaten with bitter herbs or salad greens. These green leafy vegetables were common in Egypt. The people ate these raw or without cooking them. The taste is bitter rather than sweet. The passage doesn't give us the name of the herbs. Most translations just say bitter herbs.

Yahweh says I will execute **judgments** on the gods of Egypt. Judgments is a word that means more than one punishment. Yahweh says, I will punish the gods of Egypt, or I will severely punish the gods of Egypt.

The blood on the doorposts is a **sign**. This is the same word that means something miraculous. However, here the word sign means distinguishing mark. The blood will show me where you live. This blood is protecting you because when Yahweh sees it, Yahweh knows that Israelites live in this house. Use the same word for sign as you have used in previous passages, and remember that sign is in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 12:1–13

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3848924 KB)

- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

[mp3 zip](#) (6480512 KB)

- [FIA Step 2](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Exodus 12:14–28

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 12:14–28 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 12:14–28 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 12:14–28 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Yahweh gave Moses the instructions that the Israelites were to follow as they prepared a festival meal to celebrate Passover on the night when Yahweh passed judgment on the Egyptians. This passage continues the instructions that Yahweh gives to Moses. Yahweh says that the Israelites are to celebrate a festival every year so that the Israelites will always remember what Yahweh did for them. This is a narrative description of the instructions for preparation of the feast.

The passage doesn't mention Aaron. However, Yahweh was giving these instructions to both Moses and Aaron in the previous passage. This passage is a continuation of the instructions. Aaron was with Moses when Yahweh gave these instructions.

Yahweh says that this festival is to be celebrated generation to generation. This means that parents are to teach their children how to celebrate this festival. Each generation must teach the next generation or each parent must teach his child. Yahweh says that this is a law for all time. Yahweh is telling the Israelites that this law will last forever and that they cannot change the law or forget the law.

In the previous passage, Yahweh told the people this month would be the first month of the year. The month starts with the first new moon after the equinox which occurs in March. The equinox is the time of the year when the sun crosses the Equator or middle line of the earth. This equinox happens in the fall or September and in the spring or March. The Israelites make adjustments to their lunar calendar so that the new year always starts in the spring after the equinox.

This passage tells us about two events or festivals that occur at the same time. The feast of Passover occurs on the fifteenth day of the first month of the year. This day starts at sundown and is the night of the full moon. This feast celebrates the event in Egypt when Yahweh passes over the homes of the Israelites and kills the first-born son of the Egyptians. At the same time, this fifteenth day of the month is the start of a 7-day festival of Unleavened Bread. Yahweh has commanded that the Israelites eat unleavened bread as part of the Passover Feast. Now Yahweh gives additional instructions for a 7-day festival with another special meal at the end of the seven days.

The first day of the festival is the fifteenth day of the month. At the end of the fourteenth day, the Israelites will kill the lamb or kid. This must be done before sundown. The new day or the fifteenth day starts at sundown. The festival actually starts on the fifteenth day. This is the time of the full moon.

On the first day of the festival or the fifteenth day of the month, the Israelites must remove all yeast from the house. Then for seven days, they will eat bread made without any yeast. Bread made without yeast is unleavened bread. Yahweh says that anyone who eats bread made with yeast must be cut off from the community. This means that this person will no longer be considered an Israelite.

Stop here and discuss the following question: What would cause a person to be cast out from your community and no longer be considered as one of your family or group? Pause the recording here.

Stop here and eat some bread made without any yeast or other rising agent such as baking powder. Talk about the texture of the bread and the taste of the bread. Pause the recording here.

The Israelites are to celebrate a holy assembly on the first day and on the seventh day. A holy assembly is a time to gather as a group and worship Yahweh. This is a command. You must meet together to worship Yahweh. The Israelites must not do any work on the first day and seventh day of the festival—the days when they gather to worship Yahweh. The only work they can do on those two days is to prepare food to eat.

Then Yahweh explains the purpose of the Festival of Unleavened Bread. This festival will remind the Israelites that Yahweh brought them out of Egypt on this very day. Yahweh uses the term armies or military forces. The Israelites would eventually organize themselves into armed forces ready to conquer the land and defend the land that Yahweh gave them. This day is the fifteenth day of the month. Yahweh says that the bread must be made without yeast from the evening of the fourteenth day to the evening of the twenty-first day. The evening of the fourteenth day means that this is actually the fifteenth day.

Stop and discuss the following question: How do you count days in your culture? When does the new day start? Pause the recording here.

Yahweh says that no one will use yeast to prepare the bread during these seven days. Yeast must be removed from their homes before the start of this festival. Yeast can float unseen in the air if left in the house. This floating yeast can actually land on the flour and become part of the bread. By removing the yeast from the house, there is no possibility that the bread will have any yeast in it. Yahweh again tells the Israelites that anyone eating bread made with yeast must be cut off from the community. Then Yahweh says that even foreigners who live among the Israelites must follow these rules about the bread. Later, when the Israelites were settled in the land that Yahweh gave them, some foreigners or people who were not Israelites decided to live there also. Yahweh

says that even these people must celebrate this special feast. Then Yahweh says that the Israelites, wherever they live, must observe the feast. This means that if the Israelites move to another country to live, they still must observe the feast.

After Yahweh finishes the instructions, Moses calls the elders of the Israelites together. The elders were the senior members. The elders were the leaders.

Stop and discuss the following question: How are the elders or leaders of your community chosen? What are their responsibilities? Pause the recording here.

Moses gives the elders the instructions that Yahweh has just given Moses. These instructions have additional details. The people are to choose a kid or lamb. They are to kill the animal and drain the blood in a basin. They must use a bundle of hyssop branches. Hyssop is a bush that has green leaves and purple flowers. The Israelites were to take a bundle of hyssop branches, dip the bundle into the basin of blood, and then put the blood on the doorposts and lintel of the house. The lintel is the piece of wood or stone that goes across the top of the two doorposts and forms the upper frame of the doorway. Once the blood was on the door, no one could go out that door until the morning. This was done at the end of the fourteenth day or the beginning of the fifteenth day—at sundown of the fourteenth day.

Stop here and show a picture of hyssop.

Show a picture of someone using hyssop to put blood on the doorposts and lintel of a house. Pause this audio here.

Moses tells the elders to tell the people that Yahweh is going to pass throughout Egypt during the night. Yahweh is going to kill the first-born son of every Egyptian family. Yahweh will see the blood on the doorposts and lintel of the Israelite house. When Yahweh sees this blood, Yahweh will pass over or go past this house. Yahweh will not enter the house with the blood on the doorposts and lintel. Yahweh will not allow the angel of death to enter this house. Some translations use the title Destroyer rather than Angel of Death. The angel of death goes with Yahweh over all of Egypt. The angel of death will go into the house of the Egyptians and kill the first-born son in each house.

Moses continues with the instructions to the elders who are to tell these instructions to their people. The Israelites are to remember this event and celebrate this feast even when they get to the land that Yahweh is giving them. When the children ask what the ceremony means, the people are to teach the children that this is a sacrifice to Yahweh because Yahweh passed over the houses of the Israelites when Yahweh killed the first-born of all the Egyptians. When Moses finished giving these instructions, the elders bowed to the ground and worshiped Yahweh.

Stop the recording and show a picture of a group of men bowing to the ground in worship. Pause this audio here.

The Israelites obeyed the commandments of Yahweh. They did everything that Moses told them to do, exactly as Moses said to do it.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 12:14–28 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh gives Moses additional instructions for the Passover feast as well as the Feast of Unleavened bread. These two feasts occur at the same time.

In the second scene: Moses calls the elders of the Israelites to come and hear the instructions for the Passover Feast and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. After the elders have all the instructions, the elders bow to the ground and worship Yahweh.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Aaron
- Yahweh
- The elders of the Israelites
- The Israelites
- The children of the Israelites

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Before visualizing this passage, the team needs to decide how to explain the way the Israelites counted days and years.

Stop here and discuss the following question. Talk about how your way of counting days is different from the Israelite way of counting days. How can you explain when the festival is to start so that your people can understand? Pause the recording here.

This passage talks about two feasts. The Feast of Unleavened Bread lasts for seven days. The feast of Passover occurs on the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Stop here and work out the timeline for these two feasts. The Israelites were to start preparations on the fourteenth day of the first month of their year. The Passover Feast and the first day of the Unleavened Bread feast occurred on day fifteen. How can you explain this to your people? Pause the recording here.

In scene one, Yahweh continues to talk to Moses and Aaron. Yahweh has been telling Moses and Aaron how to prepare for the night when Yahweh will pass over the land of Egypt. In this scene, Yahweh gives additional instructions. Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron that there will be a feast of Unleavened Bread. For this feast, the Israelites must remove all yeast from their homes. Then they will eat bread made without yeast for 7 days. If anyone eats bread made with yeast during these seven days, this person must be cut off from the rest of the Israelites. Even foreigners who live among the Israelites must avoid eating anything with yeast during these seven days. On the first day and the seventh day of this festival, they will gather as a special group to worship Yahweh. They should not do any work on the first and seventh day except they can prepare food to eat.

Yahweh gives instructions and then repeats the instructions with more details. Repetition helps the people learn and remember. Repetition also demonstrates the importance of these instructions.

In scene two, Moses calls the elders of the Israelites. Moses gives these elders the instructions which they are to repeat to their people. Now Moses gives additional instructions for the Passover Feast. The lamb or kid is to be killed at sundown of the fourteenth day or the end of the fourteenth day. The people should collect the blood from the animal in a bowl. Then the people must use the branches of a leafy plant. They will dip the leaves into the bowl of blood and put the blood on the doorposts and lintel of the house. Once the blood has been applied, no one may go out through that door until the morning. Everyone must remain in the house during the night.

Moses tells the elders that Yahweh is going to pass through Egypt during the night. A death angel will accompany Yahweh. The death angel will enter the Egyptian houses and kill the first-born son. However, when Yahweh sees the blood on the doorposts and lintel of the house, Yahweh will go past that house. The death angel will not enter that house. The family inside the house will be safe.

Moses tells the elders that the Israelites are to remember these instructions and celebrate a feast every year as a remembrance. When the Israelites get to the land that Yahweh has promised them, they must remember this night. The children will ask what the ceremony means. The Israelites are to tell the children that this feast is a sacrifice to Yahweh because Yahweh spared the Israelite families. The Egyptian families lost their first-born sons but the Israelite families were spared. When Moses finished speaking, the elders all bowed with their faces to the ground to worship Yahweh. Then the Israelites did everything just as Moses had told them to do it. The Israelites did all that Yahweh had commanded.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 12:14–28 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Aaron
- Yahweh
- The elders of the Israelites
- The Israelites
- The children of the Israelites

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

In scene one, Yahweh gives additional instructions about the Passover feast and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron that the Israelites must remember this feast and celebrate it every year. This is a law that will last forever.

Pause the drama.

- This sounds like this is really important. Yahweh wants us to remember always.
- We must not forget this. It sounds like it will be one of the most important things for us to do. [!end] Continue the drama.

Yahweh gives Moses and Aaron very specific instructions about the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Yahweh says that the people must make sure that they remove all yeast from the house. They must prepare the bread without any yeast. They also must meet together to worship God on the first day and seventh day of the festival. They must not do any work on the first day and the seventh day. On those days the only work allowed would be the work that was necessary for the preparation of food. Yahweh says that anyone who eats bread made with yeast must be cut off from the Israelites.

Pause the drama.

- It sounds really bad. I think this means that Yahweh is serious about this.
- It means that people have to take this search for yeast seriously.
- To be cut off from our people would be a terrible thing. Yet, we have all been warned. We know the consequences if we ignore this command. [!end] Continue the drama.

Yahweh repeats the instructions but adds more details. The people must get rid of all yeast in the house. The Israelites will eat bread made without yeast during the seven days. Foreigners who live among the Israelites must eat bread made without yeast. Even if the Israelites live in another land, they must eat bread made without yeast.

In scene two, Moses calls the elders of the Israelites to come and hear the instructions. Moses tells the elders what Yahweh has told Moses. Moses adds more details that we didn't hear before. When the Israelites kill the lamb, they must collect the blood of the lamb in a bowl. Then the Israelites will use hyssop which is a bush that has leaves on the branches. They will dip the hyssop in the blood and put the blood on the doorposts and lintel of the house. Once the blood has been placed, no one can go out that door again until the next day. Yahweh will pass through Egypt. The death angel will be with Yahweh. The death angel will enter the Egyptian houses and kill the firstborn son. When Yahweh sees the blood on the doorposts and lintel, Yahweh will not allow the death angel to enter that house. The Israelites will be safe.

Pause the drama.

- At first I was afraid. These instructions are strange. It sounded so odd to put blood on the doorposts and lintel. But now I understand that by doing this, my family will be safe. No harm will come to us if we do what we are told to do.
- I plan to do this. I want my family to be safe.
- Yahweh has kept the other promises. I believe Yahweh will keep this promise.

Ask Moses, "How are you feeling as you give these instructions?" You may hear:

- I am relieved. I think this is over.
- I think that Pharaoh is going to allow us to leave when this night is over.
- I believe that Yahweh will keep us safe if we follow Yahweh's instructions.
- I've done my best to tell the people exactly what to do.
- I'm glad we are going to leave Egypt. [!end] Continue the drama.

Moses tells the elders that they are to remember this night and the special feast forever. They must celebrate this feast every year. They must make sure the children know why they are celebrating this feast. Yahweh wants people to remember that Yahweh spared the Israelite families. The first-born son of the Egyptians died but the Israelites were safe.

When Moses finished speaking, the elders bowed their faces to the ground and worshiped Yahweh.

Pause the drama.

- Yahweh is an awesome God.
- Yahweh has saved us.
- Yahweh is going to take care of us.
- When we hear the wonderful news that Yahweh is going to protect us, what can we do but worship Yahweh? We must worship Yahweh! [!end] Continue the drama.

The people did everything exactly as Yahweh had said to do.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 12:14–28 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

From generation to generation means that each parent must teach his child. This must continue through all generations to come.

Yahweh is the name for God. Use the same word for Yahweh that you have used in previous passages. Yahweh is discussed in the Master Glossary.

A law for all time means that the law is permanent and cannot be changed.

Yeast is the leavening agent that causes bread to rise. Yeast is such a small organism that you can't see it unless it is collected into a pile such as in a teaspoon. Yeast is found in nature and is so light it can float in the air. Yeast mixes with flour and causes the dough to rise or become light and airy. Without yeast, the bread would be flat and tough. Because dry yeast floats in the air, Yahweh tells Moses that the Israelites must search the house and make sure that they remove all yeast from the house.

This passage talks about two feasts. The Passover feast occurs on the fifteenth day of the first month. This feast is to remind the people that Yahweh went past the Israelite homes so that the angel of death did not enter the Israelite homes. Use the same word for **Passover** that you used in the previous passage, and remember that Passover is in the Master Glossary.

The Festival of Unleavened Bread also starts on the fifteenth day of the first month. This feast lasts for 7 days. The people are to stop work and gather in groups to worship Yahweh on the first and seventh day of the month. The Festival of Unleavened Bread reminds the people that Yahweh took them out of Egypt.

*Stop here and discuss what you will call the **Festival of Unleavened Bread**. Festival of Unleavened Bread is in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.*

Yahweh took the forces or armies out of Egypt. This refers to the Israelite men who would serve in the army to defend the Israelites from their enemies.

Foreigners refers to those people who are not descended from Abraham and Jacob but live in the land with the Israelites.

Hyssop is a small plant that grows into a bush with green leaves. If no one knows hyssop in your culture, you may say, small bushy plant.

Stop the recording and show the picture of hyssop. Pause the recording here.

The Israelites were to put the blood of the lamb on the doorposts and lintel of the house.

Stop the recording and show the picture of the blood being put on the doorposts and lintel of a house. Pause the recording here.

Yahweh passed through the land of Egypt. Yahweh had a death **angel** with Yahweh. The death angel went into the Egyptian houses and killed the first-born son. Use the same word for angel that you have used in previous passages. Angel is discussed in the Master Glossary.

The Passover feast is also called the Passover sacrifice. Sacrifice is discussed in the Master Glossary. Use the same word for sacrifice that you have used in previous passages.

The land Yahweh has promised to give you refers to the promise that Yahweh made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Yahweh promised the land to their descendants. In this passage, Yahweh has repeated this promise. Use the same terminology for this land that you have used in previous passages.

The elders of the Israelites bowed to the ground to worship Yahweh. Use the same word for worship that you have used in previous passages. Worship is discussed in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 12:14–28

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3178363 KB)

- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

[mp3 zip](#) (5337259 KB)

- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

Exodus 12:29–42

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 12:29–42 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 12:29–42 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 12:29–42 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Yahweh has told Moses and the Israelites everything they needed to do to prepare to leave Egypt. Yahweh told Moses to tell the Israelites to put the blood of the lamb on their doorposts and lintels of their houses so that they would be protected from the death angel when Yahweh passed over Egypt during the night. Yahweh has given them instructions about the meal they are to eat including how they are to prepare their bread. Once Yahweh finished giving all these instructions to the Israelites, Yahweh began to pass through Egypt accompanied by the death angel. This passage is a narrative account of what happened next.

Stop and show the picture of blood on the doorposts and lintels of the houses. Pause the recording here.

The people have done everything that Yahweh commanded. Then at midnight of the fifteenth day of the first month, Yahweh caused every first-born son in Egypt to die. These boys and men all died at the same time—at midnight. Pharaoh who was sitting on his throne lost his first-born son. The prisoner in the dungeon lost his first-born son. This means from the most important person in Egypt to the least important person, everyone lost their first-born son. Even the first-born of the livestock or domestic animals died. When Yahweh told Moses that the first-born would die, Yahweh used the servant girl or the girl who had to grind the wheat to make flour as the example of the least. Now Yahweh uses the example of the lowest prisoner in a dungeon as an example of the least important person in Egypt. A dungeon would be a prison that is underground. People who had committed crimes would usually be in prison. A dungeon or a pit underground would be a prison where the criminal could not escape.

Pharaoh and the Egyptian people woke up during the night and discovered that their sons were dead. They would also have discovered that the first-born males of their livestock were dead. There was loud wailing all over Egypt. Wailing is a cry of great sorrow or grief.

Stop and discuss the following question: Tell a story about someone who is young who dies suddenly. In the story describe what this person's family members do to show their sorrow and grief. Listen carefully to the words used to describe their actions. Pause the recording here.

Every house had someone who died. Every house could refer to extended families, meaning that every extended family had at least one person to die. Couples without children usually lived with their parents. Unmarried individuals usually lived with their parents. A house could have several generations of people plus other relatives all living in the same space. The Egyptians probably woke up to check on their children or may have stayed awake that night. Most Egyptians would have heard of the prediction that the first-born sons would all die around midnight. Even if some went to sleep, they would have woken up from the noise of their neighbors who were crying or wailing from grief.

Stop and discuss the following question: Talk about how and where your families live. In your culture, describe who lives in one house. When a couple marries, where does this couple live? Ask someone from the translation team to describe his family. Pause the recording here.

That same night, Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron. This was during that same night or soon after midnight when all the first-born sons died. This does not mean that Moses and Aaron actually came to Pharaoh's palace. Most likely this means that Pharaoh sent the message to Moses and Aaron who were probably in the area of Goshen preparing the Israelites for the coming of the death angel. Pharaoh told Moses and Aaron to leave Egypt. Moses and Aaron were to take all the Israelites and leave Egypt immediately. Pharaoh said that the Israelites

were to take all their animals with them. The Israelites were to go and worship Yahweh as they wished. Pharaoh asked Moses and Aaron to bless Pharaoh before departing.

After commanding Moses and Aaron to do all these things, Pharaoh asks Moses to bless Pharaoh before leaving Egypt. This request that Pharaoh makes for a blessing seems to suggest that Pharaoh finally accepts the power and authority of Yahweh. Another way to say this is that Pharaoh asked Moses to ask Yahweh to be kind to Pharaoh or to show mercy to Pharaoh. When Pharaoh asks Moses to bless Pharaoh, Pharaoh is really asking Moses to pray and ask Yahweh to bless Pharaoh. The blessing comes from Yahweh not Moses. The only other time that an Israelite blessed Pharaoh is when Jacob came to Egypt and met the Pharaoh who was king at that time. Jacob blessed that Pharaoh. Now 430 years later, this king or Pharaoh is asking for an Israelite to give a blessing.

The Egyptians all begged the Israelites to leave Egypt at once. The Egyptians thought that they would all die if the Israelites remained in Egypt.

The Israelites gathered their possessions. They put their bread dough which had no yeast in it into the bread making bowl. Then they put their bread making bowls with the dough into their cloaks or coats and wrapped this so that they could easily carry the bowls and dough. Then they put these on their shoulders. They did all this before they had put the yeast with the dough. Therefore, the dough has no yeast. This was exactly as Yahweh had instructed them in the previous passage.

The Israelites had already asked the Egyptians for their precious objects of gold and silver which the Egyptians gave the Israelites. Yahweh had caused the Egyptians to respond favorably to the request of the Israelites. The Egyptians showed their respect for the Israelites by giving them these gold and silver objects. In this way, the Israelites took the wealth of Egypt with them as they left Egypt. Some translations use the word plundered. The Israelites plundered the wealth of the Egyptians. This is the same word used in a military campaign when the army that wins the battle goes through the possessions of the losing army and takes anything of value. Plunder is a violent, action word.

Stop here and discuss the following question. Tell a story about a battle that your people won. Describe how the winning army took anything of value from the losing army and brought it home. Listen carefully to see if the storyteller uses specific words to describe the actions of the winning army. Pause the recording here.

That very night, the Israelites got up and left their homes. They started on their journey. They left the area called Rameses and headed for an area called Succoth. This is still the same night, the fifteenth day of the month. The sun has not yet come up and the Israelites are on the road departing Egypt. The passage says that 600,000 men plus the women and children started on this journey. The Israelites took their flocks and herds. This means that the Israelites took all their domestic animals or livestock. Flocks usually refers to sheep and goats. Herds usually refers to cows, horses, donkeys, and camels. In addition, a large group of people who were not Israelites decided to go with the Israelites as they left Egypt.

Stop here and show a map with Rameses and the probable location of Succoth marked. Pause the recording here.

The passage stops at this point to give a summary. The Israelites had lived in Egypt 430 years. Yahweh had promised to take the Israelites out of Egypt. The night that the Israelites left Egypt which is the fifteenth day of the first month was the last day of the 430 years. Moses repeats the instructions already given regarding this night. The Israelites must remember this night and celebrate it every year from generation to generation. This means that the celebration must happen on this night every year that is coming in the future. This is the night that Yahweh watched over or guarded the Israelites and protected the Israelites from harm. The Israelites must remember this.

Stop here and discuss the following question: Talk about how you remember important events in your culture. How do you remember and celebrate events that happened long before you were born? How do you teach your children to remember and celebrate these important events? Pause the recording here.

The passage does not remind us of this, but when Jacob went to Egypt the family had seventy people. Now there are six hundred thousand men plus the women and children who are leaving Egypt.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 12:29–42 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

In the first scene: At midnight all the first-born sons of the Egyptians died. Then Pharaoh sends a message to Moses and Aaron telling them to leave Egypt and take all the Israelites including their animals with them.

In the second scene: The Israelites gather their possessions in haste and depart that very night. They leave so quickly that they don't have time to put the yeast in the bread and wait for the bread to rise. The Israelites take the wealth of Egypt with them.

The characters in this passage are:

- Pharaoh
- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- The Israelites
- The Egyptians
- The group of people who go with the Israelites

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: Every word in this passage suggests haste. Pharaoh uses strong action words to tell Moses and Aaron to get out of Egypt. Then the Israelites gather their possessions in great haste and depart. Everything in this passage happened during the hours between midnight and daybreak. Remember that this is the night of the full moon which means that there would have been enough light for the people to see how to move about during the night. These events are happening quickly so that all the events described have finished by daybreak. Before the sun comes up, the Israelites have left their homes and are headed towards Succoth.

Stop and discuss words you might use. Tell a few stories of someone packing and leaving. Repeat the stories until you get the strongest action words that suggest great haste. For example, "They packed their bread bowls" might become something like, "They grabbed their bread bowls and wrapped them in their outer cloaks and threw them on their backs." Pause this recording here.

Scene one starts just after the angel of death has entered each house and caused the first-born son to die, including the first-born male animals. The original text just says first-born, but most people believe that this means the first-born son. Pharaoh summons' Moses and Aaron. Most likely, this means that Pharaoh sent Moses and Aaron an urgent message telling Moses and Aaron to gather the Israelites and leave Egypt at once. Moses and Aaron were probably with the Israelites during this night. This means that Moses and Aaron were far away from Pharaoh. Pharaoh says, "Be gone!" Pharaoh uses a series of strong action words to tell Moses and Aaron to leave Egypt, to take all the Israelites and their animals and go. These action words such as "get out," "go," "leave," and "take" are all plural words meaning that Pharaoh tells both Moses and Aaron to do these things. The Egyptians were also urging the Israelites to leave Egypt as quickly as possible. The Egyptians thought, "We will all die if they remain in Egypt." Pharaoh does ask Moses to bless Pharaoh before leaving. This means that Pharaoh wanted Moses to pray and ask Yahweh to bless Pharaoh.

In scene two, the Israelites pack their possessions to leave. They take their unbaked bread dough which does not yet have the yeast added and put this dough into their bread bowls—the bowls they use for making the bread. Then they use their coat or cloak or outer wrap to put around the bread bowl. The Israelites wrapped the bread dough in such a way that the whole packet can be put on their shoulder or back and easily carried. They had

also already asked the Egyptians for their objects of silver and gold. Yahweh had caused the Egyptians to give the Israelites all that they had asked for. The Israelites gathered these objects and departed.

"That very night" means the same night that the angel of death had caused the deaths of all the Egyptian first-born sons and cattle. That very night, the Israelites packed all these things and departed or started on their journey. They had no yeast in the bread so when they baked the bread later, the bread became like flat cakes.

Six hundred thousand Israelite men walking on foot left Egypt plus the women and children. To walk on foot means that these six hundred thousand men were able-bodied or able to fight. They took all their domestic animals with them. In addition, a large number of people who were not Israelites went with them.

The summary at the end of the passage reminds the Israelites that they have lived in Egypt 430 years. But on this night Yahweh kept His promise to take them out of Egypt. Yahweh again reminds the Israelites that they are to remember this night and teach their children about this night. Every generation must learn about this night and remember what Yahweh did for the Israelites.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 12:29–42 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Pharaoh
- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- The Israelites
- The Egyptians
- The group of people who go with the Israelites

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

In scene one, after the first-born Egyptian sons die, Pharaoh demands that Moses and Aaron take the Israelites and get out of Egypt immediately. Pharaoh uses strong action words to tell Moses and Aaron to leave. Everyone including their animals is to go. Pharaoh says, "Go but bless me as you leave."

Pause the drama.

- I am so angry.
- My son is dead. These Israelites are nothing but trouble to me.
- I want them gone now!

Ask Pharaoh, "Why have you asked for a blessing before Moses leaves?" You may hear:

- This Yahweh of theirs is very powerful. Yahweh is more powerful than any of the Egyptian gods.
- I want their God to bless me. I need to keep ruling the Egyptian people. They are going to be very angry with me because of all this death and because of the Israelites leaving.
- I may need this blessing from their Yahweh so I can keep ruling the people.

Ask Moses, "How are you feeling in this moment?" You may hear:

- I am so relieved and happy right now.
- This process has taken a long time with many bad things happening to the Egyptians but I think they finally see that Yahweh is God and they must do what Yahweh says.
- Yahweh has kept his promise to us. Yahweh is taking us out of Egypt and back to the land Yahweh promised to our ancestors. [!end] Continue the drama.

In Scene two, the Israelites pack quickly. They grab their bread dough before they have time to put yeast in it. They put the dough in the bread bowl, wrap it up and put it on their shoulders ready to carry with them. The Israelites also gather the gold and silver objects that they have collected from the Egyptians as Moses told them to do. The Israelites are packed and ready to go very quickly. They depart before the sun comes up.

Pause the drama.

- I am so excited.
- I'm relieved. We are going to be free!
- We won't be slaves any longer.
- Yahweh is taking us out of this place and back to the land Yahweh promised to our ancestors.
- Moses said this would happen but I didn't always believe Moses.
- Yahweh is an awesome God!

Ask the Egyptians, "What are you feeling at this moment?" You may hear:

- I am so sad. My son is dead. I just want these Israelites to leave.
- We have had one disaster after another. Our crops have been destroyed. Our animals have died. We have had miserable illnesses. Now we have all this death.
- I think that with the Israelites gone, these problems will stop.
- For some reason, their God wants them to go and their God has done all this to us.
- I wish Pharaoh had listened and let them go sooner.
- I think that when they are gone, we can get back to a normal life.
- It's worth giving them our gold and silver just to get them gone. [!end] Continue the drama.

During this same night six hundred thousand Israelite men plus the women and children left their homes and headed back towards the land Yahweh had promised to Abraham. They left in such a hurry that they did not have time to bake their bread. They had to prepare flat cakes to eat that didn't have any yeast in them. In addition, a group of people who were not Israelites went with them.

Pause the drama.

- I have seen what their God, Yahweh, has been able to do. There is no god in Egypt who can do these things.
- I think it's better to go with the Israelites and worship their god than to stay here.
- Yahweh is blessing the Israelites in some way. I want some of that blessing for myself and my family. [!end] Continue the drama.

The Israelites had been in Egypt 430 years. But on this night Yahweh kept his promise. Yahweh told them again that they must remember this night for all generations to come. This night belongs to Yahweh. This night refers to the fifteenth day of the first month of the year, the night when Yahweh passed through the land and the angel of death entered the homes of the Egyptians and killed the first-born sons. The Israelites who had blood on their doorposts and lintels were spared. Yahweh wants them to remember what happened for all generations to come.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 12:29–42 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

This passage uses the phrase first-born. This phrase generally means the first-born male or son of the people and the animals.

Pharaoh sent a message to Moses and Aaron. **Pharaoh** is the title used by the King of Egypt. Use the same word for Pharaoh that you have used in previous translations. Pharaoh is discussed in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh is the name of God. Yahweh is discussed in the Master Glossary. Use the same word for Yahweh that you have used in previous passages.

Pharaoh tells Moses and Aaron to go and **worship** Yahweh. In this story, the people thought of worshiping God as serving God by doing certain rituals or acts of worship. Worship is discussed in the Master Glossary. Use the same word for worship that you have used in previous passages.

Pharaoh asks Moses to **bless** Pharaoh. This means that Pharaoh wants Moses to ask for good things from God for Pharaoh in the future. Blessing is discussed in the Master Glossary.

*Stop here and discuss the word **bless**. Select the best word to use that means asking for good things for that person. If you have chosen a word for blessing in other passages, you may use the same word here. Pause the recording here.*

This passage uses strong action words to indicate haste. The people were to pack and leave during this same night. The angel of death passed at midnight. The people were gone before the sun came up.

Yeast is the substance put into bread dough that causes the dough to rise. Without this leavening agent, the bread will be flat and hard. Use the same word for yeast that you have used in previous passages.

The Israelites are to remember and celebrate this night from generation to generation. This means that each father is to teach his son about what happened on this night so that it can be remembered and celebrated. This is to go on forever.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 12:29–42

Audio Content

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Exodus 12:43–51

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 12:43–51 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The plagues have ended with the death of the first-born sons of the Egyptians. Pharaoh has told Moses to take the Israelites and get out of Egypt immediately. Moses and the Israelites leave Egypt on that same night or the same night that all the Egyptian first-born died. As they are leaving, Yahweh gives Moses once again the specific instructions for celebrating the feast of Passover. This is the celebration feast that the Israelites must eat every year to remember what Yahweh did for them as they left Egypt. This is a narrative telling of the repeated instructions for the feast of Passover.

Yahweh has already given the instructions for how to select the lamb to eat, how to prepare the lamb and how to eat the lamb. Yahweh has already said that the Israelites must celebrate the Feast of the Passover on the fifteenth day of the first month every year. Now Yahweh adds to these instructions. Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron who may eat the special celebration meal or festival meal. These instructions apply to both this first Passover meal and to the annual celebration in the future.

Stop here and discuss the following question. Talk about your festival meals. Why do you celebrate these festivals? Who prepares the feast? Who is allowed to eat the feast? Pause the recording here.

First, Yahweh says who may eat this meal. The Passover Feast is a religious celebration. Yahweh gives such precise instructions that no one can question who may or may not eat the meal. The Israelites are the only people who may eat this special meal. No foreigner can join in the meal. A foreigner is any male who has not been circumcised. An uncircumcised male cannot be a member of the special covenant community that Yahweh had with the Israelites. A covenant is a binding and solemn agreement between two people or groups, and circumcision was a sign of the covenant between Yahweh and his people. Each side makes promises that must be kept. Therefore, any uncircumcised male is a foreigner and cannot take part in the religious feast. Yahweh had Abraham circumcise himself and all the males in his household. From that time, every boy born into an Israelite family was circumcised just after his birth. This circumcision is an outward sign of the covenant or special relationship between Yahweh and the Israelites. Circumcision means to cut off the loose skin at the end of the man's penis. Circumcision can be done at any age. However, the Israelites usually circumcised their male babies soon after birth.

Yahweh says that a slave who has been purchased by the Israelites can eat the Passover meal if this slave has been circumcised. Israelites could become slaves. However, the men would have been circumcised at birth. These Israelite slaves would be allowed to eat the Passover feast. In this passage, Yahweh is talking about slaves purchased from other communities. These slaves would not be Israelites and most likely would not have been circumcised. A slave would be a permanent member of the community. The owner has paid money for the slave. This slave who is a foreigner can choose to be circumcised and then join in the religious feasts. Other workers would be hired for a job and therefore would be in the country for a short time or temporarily. These temporary workers who are not Israelites receive a salary for their work. These temporary workers would not normally have been circumcised and would not be allowed to eat the special Passover meal. The instructions about who can eat the meal only apply to circumcision or becoming a part of the religious community. Everyone who was circumcised from the richest person to the newest slave could take part in the Feast so long as that man was circumcised.

Stop here and discuss the following question. How do you decide who is a member of your religious group? How does a newcomer join your group? Who is allowed to take part in your special rituals? Pause the recording here.

Yahweh does not include women in these instructions. Women were part of the Israelite community through their family connections because the Israelites did not practice female circumcision. If a woman's husband or a widow's husband was circumcised, or if a woman was single but believed in Yahweh, that woman could participate in the Passover meal. Generally, any woman who believed in Yahweh could participate in the Feast of Passover. Those who did not believe in Yahweh were not allowed to participate in the feast.

Then Yahweh begins to tell Moses again where the lamb may be eaten. Yahweh has already given these instructions but now repeats them. The lamb they killed for the Passover meal must be eaten in one house. The Israelites cannot cook the lamb in one house and then take parts of the lamb to other houses. Yahweh says that those who are going to eat the lamb must be in one house and all eat it at the same time. Yahweh has already told the people to make sure that there are enough people to eat all the lamb so that there is nothing left over at the end of the meal. Yahweh also tells Moses that the bones of the lamb must remain whole. No one is to break any of the bones. Because the whole lamb had to be eaten at one meal with nothing left and the bones not broken, the people had to invite others to share in the feast. This helped them build community together. The entire community must celebrate this special feast.

Then Yahweh gives more instructions about the foreigners living among the Israelites. A foreigner who wants to take part in the Passover Feast must first be circumcised. Once these men have been circumcised, nothing can prevent their joining in with the special feast. These circumcised foreigners will be the same as the Israelites. Yahweh says again that only circumcised males can eat the Passover Feast. Any uncircumcised male may not eat the Passover Feast. Yahweh says that even uncircumcised Israelites could not eat the feast. Fathers were responsible for making sure that their sons were circumcised soon after birth. This instruction sounds like some fathers didn't follow through with their responsibility. However, if an Israelite had not been circumcised, the man could undergo this procedure and then take part in the Passover feast.

Yahweh reminds Moses and Aaron again that only circumcised males can take part in the Passover Feast. The instruction applies to everyone in the community. This means that the instruction applies to the Israelites and to the foreigners living in the community.

Stop here and discuss the following question. How do your leaders help people to learn important instructions? What types of instructions are repeated and when? Pause the recording here.

This passage finished with the summary that all the Israelites obeyed the instructions that Yahweh gave to Moses and Aaron. On that very day or on that same day or on that exact day, Yahweh brought the Israelites out of Egypt. The people left Egypt like an army. This is a word picture to describe the manner of going out. The leader divides the army into groups or divisions. Each division marches together. You could say that the people left in an orderly way like an army, with one group or family following after the group going in front and continuing in this orderly manner until all the people had left.

Stop here and discuss the following question. Tell a story about a large group of people leaving some place. In one story, describe the group running and walking around with no order at all. Then tell another story in which the people line up in rows and walk in an orderly way. How does the storyteller describe these two groups? Pause this audio here.

At sundown of the end of the fourteenth day, the Israelites killed the lamb or kid and cooked it. They put the blood on the doorposts and lintel of the house. During the night of the fifteenth day which started at sundown, Yahweh and the death angel passed at midnight. Pharaoh immediately sent a message to Moses and Aaron telling them to take the Israelites and get out of Egypt. The Israelites were ready. They departed Egypt during the night of the fifteenth day. This means that they departed sometime after midnight and before sunrise.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 12:43–51 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh gives further instructions on how to celebrate the Feast of Passover to Moses and Aaron.

In the second scene: The people obey all Yahweh's commands and depart Egypt in an orderly manner like an army marches.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- The Israelites
- Foreigners
- Slaves

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Scene one is the start of a section with additional instructions for the Passover feast. In scene one, Yahweh continues to give Moses and Aaron instructions for how the Israelites are to prepare and eat the Feast of the Passover. The only people the Israelites should allow to share in the Passover Feast must be members of the covenant community. This means that the men must be circumcised because circumcision was the sign that a man belonged to the covenant community. Any foreigner who undergoes circumcision prior to the feast may join. Yahweh says that no one uncircumcised may join the feast.

The Israelites had to roast the lamb and eat it in the house. The Israelites could not take part of the lamb outside the house or carry part of the lamb to another house. The Israelites had to eat the entire lamb during that one night. The Israelites must not break the bones of the lamb as they eat the lamb. Every Israelite must participate in the Passover Feast.

This passage only talks about the lamb. Previous instructions said that the Israelites could eat a lamb or a kid (young goat). The instructions said that the animal must be one year old and perfect. Yahweh hasn't changed the instructions.

Stop and discuss the following question. How do you make sure the people understand that these instructions don't change the previous instructions? Yahweh doesn't talk about the women who can eat the meal, but Yahweh is not leaving out the women. Women participate in the Passover Meal. Yahweh hasn't changed the instructions regarding the animal to be killed and eaten. Pause the recording here.

Yahweh repeats and gives more details about males needing to be circumcised in order to participate in the meal. This repetition shows how important this command was for the people. Any foreigner who wanted to join the covenant community by being circumcised had the responsibility to make sure that all the males in his family were also circumcised.

In scene two, the Israelites obey Yahweh's instructions. Then they organize themselves into orderly groups like divisions of an army and march out of Egypt.

Stop here and act out this scene. Collect a large group of people from your community or village. Organize them into groups of 50 people. Have them line up, one group after the other and march in an orderly manner going away from the meeting place. Now discuss as a group, the best way to explain this action. The passage uses the word army to give a word picture of how the people went out in an orderly fashion. Pause the recording here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 12:43–51 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- The Israelites
- Foreigners
- Slaves

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

In scene one, Yahweh gives Moses and Aaron additional instructions regarding the Passover Meal. The only people allowed to eat this meal are those who have been circumcised. Any foreigner, even a slave, who undergoes circumcision may eat the Passover Meal. Yahweh forbids the uncircumcised men from eating the Passover meal. Temporary workers or hired servants would probably not be circumcised and therefore not allowed to eat the Passover meal.

Pause the drama.

- I am willing to be circumcised. I have learned that Yahweh is the true God.
- I am worshiping Yahweh. I want to be circumcised so that I have the same relationship with Yahweh as the Israelites.

Ask the Israelites, "How do you feel about having this foreign slave become one of you?" You may hear:

- This is good. I'm glad they want to worship Yahweh.
- Yahweh is the one, true God. It's good for everyone to know how awesome and powerful Yahweh is.
- I'm glad they want to worship Yahweh. [!end] Continue the drama.

Yahweh tells Moses, the lamb must be eaten in one house. This means that all the people who will eat that lamb must be in the same house. Yahweh says they cannot take any of the lamb out of the house to another house. They also must not break any of the bones of the lamb as they eat the lamb. Yahweh says that the entire community of the Israelites must eat the Passover meal. This means that circumcised men, women, and children will all participate in eating the Passover meal.

Pause the drama.

- Of course we are included. We worship Yahweh. I teach my children to worship Yahweh.
- Yahweh is our God. Yahweh has saved us from the Egyptians. All of us are saved.
- We must all worship Yahweh and remember what Yahweh has done for us.

Ask Aaron, "How are you feeling about these instructions now?" You may hear:

- Yahweh has told us exactly what to do. I love it that Yahweh is so clear with the instructions.
- There can be no misunderstanding of what to do. It will be easy to obey these instructions.
- It will be easy to remember these instructions. Yahweh is an awesome God. [!end] Continue the drama.

Then Yahweh talks again about the foreigners. Yahweh tells Moses that any foreigner who wants to eat the Passover meal must be circumcised along with the males in his household. Foreigners who undergo circumcision will be welcome to participate in the meal. Yahweh repeats that all uncircumcised men must be excluded from eating the Passover meal.

Pause the drama.

- I don't even know what this festival is about.
- Seems strange to me. They have to eat bitter herbs with that meat. The meat has to be roasted like that. Doesn't even sound good.
- Plus circumcision is painful. I wouldn't undergo circumcision just to eat this meal.
- It's not worth the pain and bother. No, let them celebrate their festival. I'll do business with them later. [!end] Continue the drama.

In scene two, the Israelites follow all of Yahweh's commandments. That same day, they organized themselves into orderly groups like an army and marched away from Egypt. That is the day that Yahweh took the Israelites out of Egypt.

Pause the drama.

- We need to move quickly before Pharaoh changes his mind.
- I want to make sure I know where everyone in my family is so that we don't leave anyone behind.
- It's easier to keep things under control when we go in an orderly manner like this.
- I don't know who thought of it but this is great. We aren't wasting time just running around not knowing what to do. I'm glad we are going like this.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 12:43–51 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Yahweh gave instructions to Moses and Aaron. Use the same name for Yahweh that you have used in previous passages. Yahweh is discussed in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh said, "These are the **instructions or statutes**" for the Passover meal. Other words that could be used instead of instructions would be rules or regulations or laws. These are usually instructions related to performing specific rituals for worship or a special feast like Passover. Yahweh was saying that these rules or instructions must be followed.

Stop here and discuss how you will translate statutes. Statutes is in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

The **Passover** meal is a special meal eaten every year by the Israelites to remember what Yahweh did for them as the death angel passed over Egypt. Use the same word that you have already selected for the term Passover.

Remember, this should not be a borrowed word or a word from another language. Passover is discussed in the Master Glossary.

Slaves are people who have been conquered or purchased for a price. They are not free to move about as they wish. The owner says what the slave must do. Slaves are discussed in the Master Glossary.

Only males who have been circumcised may eat the festival Passover meal. **Circumcision** is the outward sign of the special covenant relationship between Yahweh and the Israelites. Circumcision is discussed in the Master Glossary. Use the same word for circumcision that you have used in previous passages. A covenant is a binding and solemn agreement between two people or groups.

Israel is the name of the country. Israel is also the name that Yahweh gave to Jacob who is the grandson of Abraham. **Israelites** is the name used by the descendants of Jacob. Israel and Israelites are discussed in the Master Glossary.

The people left Egypt like an **army**. An army would be divided into groups of soldiers who would march together in an orderly fashion. To say that the people left like an army means that the people were organized into groups and departed in an orderly manner.

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 12:43–51

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3222203 KB)

- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
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Exodus 13:1-16

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 13:1-16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The Israelites have started on their journey leaving Egypt. Yahweh continues to give Moses instructions for the future. Yahweh gives the instructions at this point to help the people pay attention and remember all that has happened. This is a narrative account of the Israelites beginning their journey:

First Yahweh tells Moses that the Israelites must dedicate every first-born to Yahweh. Dedicate means to set apart as holy or as belonging to Yahweh. Yahweh continues by including the first-born animals. Yahweh says that the first-born of all the Israelites and the first-born of their animals all belong to Yahweh.

Many people think that the first-born refers to males only. Others think that first-born means first born whether female or male. The original language uses masculine words. However, these words can mean both men and women or only men. The text does not specify further. However, some believe that the way this passage is worded seems to indicate that Yahweh included both boys and girls in the command.

After receiving the instructions about the first-born from Yahweh, Moses then tells the Israelites what they must do in the future to remember this day. Moses says that this day is a day to remember forever. This day, which started at sundown, is the fifteenth day of the first month, the day that Yahweh and the death angel went through Egypt to kill the first-born child but passed over the houses of the Israelites. Then Pharaoh told Moses and the Israelites to leave Egypt immediately. The Israelites got up and started their journey that same night. Moses repeats instructions that have been given before. These instructions may have been inserted here in the story that Moses later told to help the people remember.

Moses tells the Israelites that this day is the day they left Egypt, the land of their slavery. When Moses calls Egypt the land of their slavery, Moses is speaking in a negative way about Egypt. To be in bondage or to be a slave means that you are not free. You cannot do as you want. You must do what your owner tells you to do. The Israelites are leaving this bondage behind them in Egypt.

Moses says that Yahweh has used the power of His mighty hand. This is a word picture to describe the awesome power that Yahweh has.

Moses reminds the Israelites that during the festival they are to eat bread made without yeast. There should be no yeast in the house or in the bread. Yeast is what makes the bread rise as it bakes. Moses gave this instruction before the fifteenth day and here Moses is reminding the people about this instruction. The instruction about bread with no yeast applies to this special week.

Moses says that the people have been set free in the month of Abib. Abib is the ancient name for this month. Later, the Israelites will change the name of this month to another word. This month occurs in the spring between March and April and depends on the moon. Moses tells the Israelites that they are to celebrate this event of leaving Egypt every year at this time.

Stop and discuss the following question. Talk about your yearly feasts and festivals. Which ones occur at the same time every year? How do people know when the festival should start? Pause the recording here.

Moses says that when the Israelites get to the land that Yahweh promised to Abraham and his descendants, they are to celebrate this Feast of Unleavened Bread. Moses lists the people groups who live in the land that Yahweh has promised them at this time. These people groups are the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Hivites, and Jebusites. These are the names of tribes of people who live in the land. These five names represent all of

the tribes who lived in the land at that time. Moses tells the people that this land is flowing with milk and honey. A land flowing with milk and honey is a word picture that describes a very rich and fertile land. Cows, sheep, and goats all produce milk that the people can drink and use for cheese, yogurt, and other foods. These animals need grass and water in order to live in the land. Moses is saying that the land has enough grass and water to provide for the needs of these animals so that they can produce milk in abundance.

Bees produce honey from flowers. The land has fruit trees and other trees and bushes that produce the nectar collected by the bees who use this nectar to produce honey. These trees need adequate water to grow. By using this word picture of a land flowing with milk and honey, Moses says that the land will supply in abundance all that the Israelites need. Yahweh has sworn or promised by oath to their ancestors that this land will be for the descendants of Abraham. The ancestors are those who came before such as parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents. In this case, ancestors means Abraham, Abraham's son Isaac, and Isaac's son Jacob.

Stop here and show a map that includes Egypt and the Promised Land. The territories of these people groups should be marked on the map: Jebusites, Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Hivites. Pause the recording here.

Then Moses returns to the subject of the Feast of Unleavened Bread and reminds them of the rules for the feast. Moses gave them very specific instructions about this feast in a previous passage. Here Moses repeats some of the instructions. They are to remove all yeast from the house for seven days and eat bread made without yeast during these seven days. Then on the seventh day, they will celebrate a feast for Yahweh.

Moses tells the people that they must explain this festival to their children. The festival will be a visible sign or like something you can see. A sign means that it will be a reminder or will remind the people of what happened. It will be like a mark or brand that would be on your head or hand. In some ancient cultures slaves were branded. Many cultures even today have a mark or brand that they put on animals so that everyone knows the owner of the animal. Just as the brand tells the owner, this festival should declare to everyone that the Israelites belong to Yahweh. Moses reminds the Israelites again of the power of Yahweh by using a word picture. Moses talks about the strong hand of Yahweh. Yahweh used this strong hand to take the Israelites out of their bondage in Egypt. The strong hand is a word picture to indicate awesome power.

Stop here and show a picture of an animal that has a brand.

Stop here and discuss the following question: How do you mark your animals so that each person knows which animal belongs to him? What do you call this mark? Pause the recording here.

After explaining the festival, Moses then explains what to do about the first-born sons and first-born male animals. Earlier in the passage the first-born could have meant boys or girls, but here the passage talks about the males. Moses says that all the first-born sons and the first-born male animals belong to Yahweh. Here, Moses is talking about the domestic animals, not about the wild animals. Moses actually talks about what the people will do in the future when they arrive in the land that Yahweh has promised them. At that time, they must give to Yahweh the first-born males. This means that the first-born will be offered as a sacrifice to Yahweh.

Then Moses says that the people must buy back the sons by offering a lamb or a young goat in place of the son. Another word for buy back is redeem. To redeem something is to pay a price for it so that it is set free. They have the option of buying back or redeeming the first-born donkey by offering a lamb or a young goat in its place. The donkey was an essential work animal used in many different ways on the farm. If they don't want to buy the donkey back, then they must kill the animal by breaking its neck. There is no option for the sons-every son must be bought back or redeemed by offering a lamb or young goat in its place. The sons belong to Yahweh, but the parents must buy back the son by offering a lamb or young goat as a sacrifice in the place of the son. Yahweh will not allow the Israelites to sacrifice their sons.

Stop here and show a picture of a donkey. Pause the recording here.

Moses explains that all this is to remind the people of what Yahweh did for them in Egypt. When the children ask for an explanation, the parents are to tell the children how Yahweh used the power of His hand to bring the people out of slavery. Moses gives a summary of what happened. Pharaoh refused to let the Israelites leave Egypt. Then Yahweh killed the first-born sons and animals of the Egyptians. To remember this, the Israelites are to offer as a sacrifice the first-born of their animals. They will not sacrifice their first-born sons. The sons belong to Yahweh. But the Israelites will buy back the son by offering a lamb or young goat as a sacrifice instead. This ceremony will be a sign to remind them of the power of Yahweh. Moses repeats that the ceremony will be

like a brand or a mark on their hands or foreheads-when they see the sign they will remember what Yahweh did for them.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 13:1-16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh gives instructions to Moses about the dedication of the first-born.

In the second scene: Moses gives the Israelites specific instructions about how they are to remember the events of this night. They are to celebrate a special feast to remember. They are to explain what happened to their children. In addition, Moses tells the Israelites that the first-born sons and first-born male animals belong to Yahweh. The people must redeem their sons by offering a lamb or young goat as a sacrifice instead. This is to remind them of how Yahweh saved their lives in Egypt.

In the third scene: Yahweh tells the Israelites what to say in the future when their children ask their parents to explain what the festival means.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Yahweh
- The Israelites
- Pharaoh is mentioned

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In this passage, we see that the commandments about firstborn dedications and about Passover seem to go together. This may be because Passover is the season when domesticated animals have their babies north of the Equator. Therefore, during Passover Israelites are surrounded by newborn animals! Also, the Passover highlights the firstborn, as it was the firstborn of the Egyptian humans and animals that died that night. Keep this in mind as you work through Yahweh's instructions.

In scene one, Yahweh tells Moses that the first-born or the first baby to open the womb of the mother belongs to Yahweh.

Pause here and discuss the word womb. What polite word or words can you use for womb, in any setting, that are not considered rude? The womb is the place in the woman's body where the unborn child lives until the time to be born. Tell a story about a pregnant woman. The story should include the word for womb. Pause the recording here.

The passage uses a word picture to describe the first-born. The passage says to dedicate the first to open the womb. The womb is the place in the woman's body where the unborn child grows until the time to be born. The womb would be closed until a child is born. The image here is that the child opens the womb to come out into the world.

Stop here and tell a story. Tell a story about someone who has a baby. This baby is the first-born child of the family. Listen for any word pictures that might describe this event. You are trying to decide on a word picture that your people will understand that describes this process. Pause the recording here.

In scene two, Moses gives the Israelites some specific instructions for how they are to remember the events of this night when they get to the land that Yahweh has promised them. These instructions were inserted into the story at this point to help the people remember them. This is the fifteenth day of the first month.

Then Moses gives them some information about the land that Yahweh has promised them. Moses assures them that Yahweh has given them the land. Moses tells them who lives in the land, and Moses describes that the land is fertile.

Stop here and discuss the following as a group: What kind of information is important in your culture to share about a land you are going to move to? Pause this audio here.

Moses tells the people that they are to remember this day forever. The Israelites are to celebrate a special feast every year. Moses repeats some of the instructions that have already been given about this feast. This is the Feast of Unleavened Bread or bread made with no yeast. This feast will be a visible sign that will remind the people of all the Yahweh did for them as they left Egypt. They must celebrate the feast at the appointed time which means the first month of the year. The Israelites must explain the reason for the feast to their children. The children must learn that Yahweh used His strong hand to deliver the Israelites from the Egyptians.

Stop and discuss the following question. Tell a story about a very powerful ruler. This ruler uses his power in mighty ways. Listen to the storyteller to see if the storyteller uses any word pictures to describe the power that this ruler has. Pause the recording here.

Moses continues giving instructions. Moses explains again that the first-born male of the animals and the first-born son of each family belong to Yahweh. These must be dedicated to Yahweh. The animals will be offered as a sacrifice. The Israelites are to buy back the son by offering a lamb or a young goat as a sacrifice instead. The first-born sons will belong to Yahweh but must not be sacrificed. In addition, the Israelites may buy back animals such as the donkey who is needed for help with farming. They can buy back these animals by offering a lamb or a young goat instead. If they don't buy back the animal, they must kill the animal.

Then in the third scene Moses tells the Israelites what they are to tell their children when the children ask what all this means. The Israelites will tell their children the story of how Yahweh killed the first-born sons and animals of the Egyptians because Pharaoh was stubborn and refused to allow the Israelites to leave Egypt. Yahweh used the power of His mighty hand to bring the Israelites out of Egypt. This ceremony of buying back the first-born son and offering the first-born animals as a sacrifice will be a sign to remind the Israelites that Yahweh's mighty hand brought them out of Egypt.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 13:1-16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Yahweh
- The Israelites
- Pharaoh is mentioned

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

In scene one, Moses tells the people to dedicate the first-born children and first-born of the animals to Yahweh.

In scene two, Moses continues giving the people instructions on how they are to remember what happened as they left Egypt. They are to celebrate a special feast every year in the month of Abib or the first month of the year. This is the Feast of Unleavened Bread. They must get rid of all yeast before celebrating this feast. They must eat bread made without yeast for seven days and then they will celebrate the feast.

Pause the drama.

- Yahweh has told me to repeat these instructions. This is important.
- The people must remember this. Yahweh has set us free.
- We must make sure our children and grandchildren know how this happened. [!end]
Continue the drama.

Moses tells the people that Yahweh has used the power of his mighty hand to get them out of Egypt.

Pause the drama.

- I think it means that Yahweh is strong.
- Yahweh is a powerful God.
- Yahweh is stronger than all the other gods.
- We follow a powerful God.
- Yahweh has delivered us from this slavery. [!end] Continue the drama.

Moses tells the people that they must celebrate this feast when they get to the land that Yahweh promised to their ancestors. The promised land currently has the tribes of Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Hivites, and Jebusites living on it. Yahweh promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that this land would be for their descendants. Moses told the Israelites that this land is flowing with milk and honey.

Pause the drama.

- I think this means that the land is rich. It will have water and good soil so that the crops will grow.
- The animals will have all the grass and water they need so that they can produce lots of milk.
- There will be plenty of flowering trees that produce good fruit so that the bees can make plenty of honey.
- I think this means that we will all have plenty to eat. I know we will have to work hard but it seems like we will be able to produce all we need. [!end] Continue the drama.

Moses tells the Israelites that the feast will be like a visible sign branded on their foreheads or hands. The sign will remind them of all that Yahweh did for them. Yahweh rescued the Israelites from Egypt.

Pause the drama.

- When you see a brand, you know immediately that this animal belongs to a specific person and you know who that person is. There is no doubt.
- This feast is to remind the people that they belong to Yahweh. Anyone who sees them observe this feast will know without a doubt that they belong to Yahweh.
- When the Israelites celebrate this feast, they will remember that they belong to Yahweh.
[!end] Continue the drama.

Moses tells the Israelites that the first-born male animals and first-born sons belong to Yahweh. The animals will be sacrificed to Yahweh. The first-born sons will belong to Yahweh but must be redeemed or bought back

by offering a lamb or a young goat as a sacrifice instead. If the Israelites want to do so, they can also redeem their special work animals like the donkey by offering a lamb or young goat in its place. However, if they don't redeem the donkey, they must kill the first-born donkey.

Pause the action.

Moses reminds them that Yahweh took the first-born of all the Egyptians because Pharaoh was stubborn and refused to allow the Israelites to leave Egypt. Moses explains that the required sacrifice of the first-born is because of how Yahweh freed them from the Egyptians. This sacrifice of the first-born will also be like a sign or a reminder of how Yahweh used his mighty hand and brought them out of Egypt. Moses reminds the Israelites again that they must redeem the first-born sons.

Pause the drama.

- Oh, now I understand that this is a sign to help me remember what Yahweh did for me.
- I also understand that I am not to sacrifice my son but I'm to offer a lamb or young goat in his place.
- I can offer a lamb even in the place of my donkey.
- This seems right to me.
- It seems good to have reminders of what Yahweh did for us.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 13:1-16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Yahweh talks to Moses to give additional instructions. Use the same word for Yahweh that you have been using. Yahweh is discussed in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses to dedicate or **consecrate** as **holy** the first-born of each family including the first-born of the animals. These first-born now belong to Yahweh. To make something holy or to consecrate it means to set something or someone apart for service to Yahweh. Holy and consecrate are discussed in the Master Glossary. Use the same word for holy or consecrate that you have used in previous passages.

The **womb** is the place in the mother's body where the unborn child grows until time to be born. Use the word for womb that you have decided to use.

Abib is the name of the first month or the month that occurs in the spring. Most translations simply pronounce the word Abib in the local language rather than translate its meaning. The word means ears of grain.

"The power of His mighty hand" is a word picture to describe the power and might of Yahweh. Use the same description of this picture that you have used in previous passages.

The Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Hivites, and Jebusites live in the land where the Israelites are going. Use the same words for these people groups that you have used in previous passages.

The Feast of Unleavened Bread is a **sign** to the people. A sign in this case means reminder. Signs are discussed in the Master Glossary. Use the same word for sign that you have used in previous passages.

Yahweh swore or gave an **oath** that the people would have this land. Oath is discussed in the Master Glossary. Use the same word you have used in previous passages. Yahweh swore this oath to the ancestors of the Israelites. These ancestors are Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

The Israelites were to **redeem** or buy back the first-born sons who belonged to God. Redeem means to set it free or deliver it from something by paying a ransom or price. Redeem is discussed in the Master Glossary.

At the end of the passage, Yahweh tells the Israelites what to say to their children when the children ask what everything means. The parents explain why they sacrifice the first-born male animals and buy back the first-born sons. The **sacrifice** is a gift to God. An animal sacrifice means that the animal is killed and the body is burned as an offering to God. Sometimes, part of the animal was burned and other parts were eaten. Sacrifice is discussed in the Master Glossary. Use the same word for sacrifice that you have used in previous passages.

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 13:1-16

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (4421246 KB)

- [FIA Step 2](#)
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- [FIA Step 4](#)
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Exodus 13:17-22

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 13:17-22 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

After Moses finished giving the Israelites their instructions, the Israelites started on their journey. This is a narrative account of the beginning of this journey.

Pharaoh finally allowed the Israelites to depart Egypt. God led the people out of Egypt. However, God did not take the Israelites on the normal road which would have been the shortest route back to Canaan or the Land that God had promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This main road went along the coast or beside the

Mediterranean Sea and through Philistine territory. The Philistines were a people group who came to Canaan from Greece and settled in the towns and villages next to the Mediterranean Sea. The Philistines were descendants of Noah's son Ham. The Philistines had welcomed Abraham and Isaac. However, the Israelites' departing Egypt is happening hundreds of years later and the Philistines have become a strong fighting force. The Philistines have even attacked Egypt.

Stop the recording here and show a map. The map should have Egypt and Canaan marked. Notice the usual trade route going from Egypt through the Philistine territory to Canaan. Pause the recording here.

God did not want the Israelites to take the shortest route which was the road through the Philistine territory. God says that there might be a battle. God says that if the Israelites have to fight the Philistines now, they may get discouraged and change their minds and return to Egypt. The Israelites were not fully equipped yet or trained to fight battles, and the Philistines were strong. Eventually the Israelites will need to fight the Philistines, but doing so now would have caused too much discouragement. As the Israelites depart Egypt, they have not yet become an army equipped for battle.

Instead of taking the direct route, God led the Israelites on a roundabout way.

Pause the recording again and look at the map. Trace the actual route that the Israelites took as they left Egypt. Pause the recording here.

The route that God directed the Israelites to use took the Israelites to a wilderness area in the direction of the Red Sea. A wilderness area in this location would be a dry area without many trees. It was probably a rugged, desert type area. The Red Sea is the body of water that separates the Sinai Peninsula from Egypt. However, there is also a section of land that formed a land bridge and had some lakes in this land. One of these lakes had a lot of reeds which is a tall grassy type plant that grows in or near water. The area is called the Reed Sea. No one knows exactly which body of water the Israelites crossed. Most translations say Red Sea although some say Reed Sea.

The Israelites left Egypt like an army ready for battle. The Israelites were possibly organized into groups of 50. They marched like an army but they did not have arms such as swords. But they were organized and equipped as they were able, in case they needed to fight. However, they were not trained to fight. They were not prepared in any way at this time for a battle. But by being organized in groups, they were prepared to do the best they could in case they did need to fight.

Moses took the bones of Joseph. This may have been Joseph's embalmed body or Joseph's body as it had been preserved by the Egyptians when Joseph died. Joseph died about 400 years before this event. Joseph had asked the Israelites to swear an oath that when God came to help the Israelites leave Egypt, they would take Joseph's bones with them. Joseph wanted to go with his people to the land God had promised them because he followed the same God that they did. Joseph believed that one day he would rise together with all the dead people, and he wanted to rise together with his fellow Israelites in the land God had promised them. The Israelites had sworn this oath to Joseph. Now Moses is keeping the promise.

When the Israelites left Egypt, they first went to a place called Succoth. Then they left that place and went to another place named Etham which is at the edge of the wilderness or desert area.

Yahweh guided the Israelites. During the day, Yahweh used a column or pillar of cloud. The passage says that Yahweh was in the cloud or Yahweh went before the Israelites as a pillar of cloud. A pillar or a column is a tall straight object. The cloud would have been a dark cloud so that it was easy to see in the daytime. This cloud was in front of the Israelites showing the Israelites the way to go. The cloud would be easy for everyone to see. At night this cloud turned into a pillar of fire. Again, a pillar or a column would be a tall straight object. At night the fire would light up the sky and show the Israelites the direction in which they were to go. The column of cloud and the column of fire was the presence of Yahweh with the Israelites and Yahweh showed them the way to go. The passage says that this column of cloud during the day and column of fire at night was always present. Yahweh did not remove his presence from the Israelites during this journey.

Stop here and show a picture of a column. Let the team see how tall and straight this column is. Then talk about the best way to describe this so that the people understand that the pillar of fire and the pillar of cloud went before the Israelites to show them the way.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 13:17–22 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 1 scene.

In the first scene: God led the Israelites as they left Egypt. God took them to one city and then to another at the edge of the wilderness or desert. Moses took the body of Joseph with them as they left Egypt. Yahweh was with the Israelites as they left Egypt.

The characters in this passage are:

- Pharaoh is mentioned
- Moses
- Joseph is mentioned
- The Israelites
- God, whose personal name is Yahweh

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

God led the Israelites in a roundabout way as they departed Egypt. Do the following exercise to see what a roundabout way means. After doing the exercise, decide how to describe a roundabout way.

Stop the recording here and act out the following. Have the team stand on one side of the room or an open space. Pick a place on the opposite side. The team is to go to this place. But the team will not go directly. Rather the team will go from one side of the room to the other having to walk around objects that have been placed in the way so that they cannot go in a straight or direct way. This is going a roundabout way. Pause the recording here.

God led the Israelites as they left Egypt. God did not take them on the shortest, most direct route. This route might have resulted in the Israelites having to fight a battle with the Philistines who lived along this route. God said, "If they have to fight a battle, the Israelites might change their minds and return to Egypt." God led the Israelites in a roundabout way to a wilderness area near the Red Sea.

The people probably went in groups of 50 which means that they went in battle formation. You may say that they were in battle formation in the translation.

Moses took the body or bones of Joseph with them. Joseph had asked the Israelites to swear an oath that they would take Joseph's body back to Canaan, or the Promised Land, when the Israelites left Egypt. Moses is keeping this agreement.

The Israelites were walking. Women, children, and elderly people were with them. This means that it probably took them several days to cover the distance from Succoth to Etham.

Moses uses the personal name Yahweh to describe how God was with the Israelites as they went. Yahweh went with the Israelites. Yahweh guided the Israelites as a pillar or column of cloud during the day and as a pillar or column of fire during the night. This is a continuous action, meaning that Yahweh continued to guide the Israelites in this way. These pillars were actually one pillar that showed as fire during the night and a cloud during the day. The pillar, whether cloud or fire, represented the presence of Yahweh with the Israelites. Yahweh did not leave the Israelites during this journey. By guiding the Israelites in this way, they could travel during the day or at night. They knew the direction in which to go. Yahweh did not remove the pillar of cloud or pillar of fire from in front of the people.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 13:17–22 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 1 scene.

The characters in this passage are:

- Pharaoh is mentioned
- Moses
- Joseph is mentioned
- The Israelites
- God, whose personal name is Yahweh

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Pharaoh finally allowed the Israelites to leave. God led the Israelites as they departed Egypt. God did not lead the Israelites on the main, most direct road. This road led through Philistine country and the Israelites might have to fight a battle with the Philistines if they went this way. God said, "If they have to fight a battle, they may want to return to Egypt." The Israelites were in groups of 50 or in battle formation like an army as they left Egypt.

Pause the drama.

- These Israelites have lived as slaves for a long time in Egypt. They have not been trained as soldiers. They have never fought in a battle. They don't have any arms. I don't want them to become frightened and decide to return to Egypt.
- They need time in the desert to learn to trust me. I feel compassion for them. I don't want them to become discouraged.

Ask the Israelites, "How are you feeling right now as you are leaving Egypt?" You may hear, "I am so excited. We are finally getting away. We will be free. We won't be working as slaves for the Egyptians again," or "I'm a bit frightened. I don't know where we are going or what is going to happen when we get there. We are organized like an army, but I've never fought in a battle. I hope we don't have to fight someone to be able to leave. I don't know how to use a sword and I don't have a sword." [!end] Continue the drama.

Moses took the bones or body of Joseph with the Israelites as they left Egypt.

Pause the drama.

- I feel humble. Joseph was such a great man. Joseph saved the lives of the Israelites.
- I hope we can be faithful to his memory and serve Yahweh as Joseph did.
- We have to do this. My ancestors swore an oath to Joseph that we would take his body as we leave. [!end] Continue the drama.

Yahweh guided the Israelites. Yahweh was present with the Israelites. During the day, they saw a column or pillar of cloud in the front, guiding them in the direction to go. At night they saw a column or pillar of fire at the

front, guiding them in the direction to go. In this way, they could travel day and night. Yahweh did not remove his presence from the Israelites.

Pause the drama.

- I want to make sure they go the right way.
- I will protect them as they go.
- My presence with them will give them courage.

Ask the Israelites, "How are you feeling about having the presence of Yahweh with you like this?" You may hear:

- This is incredible. I'm so glad Yahweh is with us.
- How would we know where to go without that pillar of cloud or fire?
- I feel like Yahweh is taking care of us.
- I am not afraid to go now that I see that Yahweh is going ahead of us like this to show the way.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 13:17–22 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Pharaoh allowed the Israelites to leave Egypt. Use the same word for **Pharaoh** or the king of Egypt that you have been using. Pharaoh is discussed in the Master Glossary.

This passage uses the name God and the name Yahweh. God and Yahweh are two names for God. Use the same word for **God** that you have used in previous passages. Use the same word for **Yahweh** you have used in previous passages. God and Yahweh are discussed in the Master Glossary.

The Philistines were a people group who lived in the coastal towns and villages of Canaan. Most translations say the Philistines in their language.

Promised Land is one of the terms used for Canaan or Israel. The term Promised Land is discussed in the Master Glossary. This is the land that God promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Not all translations use this term in this passage. The Israelites were on route or were leaving Egypt and some translations state the name Promised Land as the place where they were going to make sure that it is clear where the Israelites were going.

A sworn oath is a solemn promise. Oath is discussed in the Master Glossary. Use the same term for swear an oath or solemn promise that you have used in previous translations.

The pillar of cloud or pillar of fire represented the presence of Yahweh in the camp with the Israelites. Yahweh kept the pillar at the front of the people so that they knew which way to go.

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 13:17–22

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (2820680 KB)

- [FIA Step 2](#)
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- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

[mp3 zip](#) (4918607 KB)

- [FIA Step 2](#)
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Exodus 14:1–14

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 14:1–14 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 14:1–14 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 14:1–14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Yahweh used a series of miraculous events to show the Egyptians that he was all-powerful. These events damaged Egypt and its people. Then Pharaoh finally released the Israelites from slavery

because of what Yahweh had done. The people of Israel left Egypt with all their belongings and have travelled south-east from Egypt. They travelled in this direction so they could avoid a dangerous people called the Philistines. The Philistines would have attacked them. The people of Israel know that Yahweh made it possible for them to leave Egypt and that they are Yahweh's special people. The people of Israel are guided by Yahweh and have arrived in Etham. This story uses the personal name for God, Yahweh, throughout most of the story. This is a narrative of the people of Israel's journey from Egypt on the way to the land that is promised to them by Yahweh.

At the beginning of this passage, Yahweh tells Moses to change the direction that the people of Israel, the Israelites, are travelling in and go back towards Egypt. Yahweh tells them to move to a place that is near Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea. The Israelites camp in their tents on the shore with the water to one side-with Baal-zephon across it-and the wilderness on another side. This is a place where the Israelites feel trapped-they cannot get across the wilderness or the water. Yahweh does this on purpose so that he can show his power. We do not know the exact location of these towns and we do not know which sea this is. It might be the Sea of Reeds which is now known as the Gulf of Suez, the Red Sea, or another body of water in the area.

Stop here and look at a map of Eastern Egypt showing the Gulf of Suez and other water bodies close to it as a group. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses that he wants Pharaoh to think that the people of Israel are confused and trapped in the wilderness. Yahweh hardens Pharaoh's heart, or makes him stubborn, against the Israelites. Pharaoh changes his decision about letting the Israelites go from Egypt. Yahweh knows he will receive honour when he defeats Pharaoh and show His power to the people of Egypt. Yahweh is setting a trap for the Egyptians by making the people of Israel look like they don't know where they are going and being caught between water and wilderness that they cannot safely cross.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Share examples of animals tricking other animals into coming closer by looking vulnerable or weak. Why do they do this? Pause the audio here.

The people of Egypt obeyed Yahweh's instructions through Moses. Pharaoh and his officials hear that the people of Israel have left and regret letting the Israelite slaves go from Egypt. Pharaoh called his fighting people together. Pharaoh led his fighting people from his own chariot and called 600 charioteers to go with him. Pharaoh called more charioteers to join his army and he organised them into units. Pharaoh's charioteers led each unit. A war chariot is a two-wheeled cart which is pulled along by two horses. It is used in battle to move at speed to the enemy and soldiers fight their enemy while standing in the chariot. A charioteer is someone who drives or rides on a chariot. A horse has four legs and is used for riding on and pulling carts or other wheeled vehicles along.

Stop here and look at a picture of people in a war chariot as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of a horse. Pause this audio here.

The Egyptian army of chariots chased after the people of Israel and found them at their new camp. When the Egyptian army arrives, the people of Israel are frightened to see the army. The people of Israel "lift up their eyes," meaning that they look up and out and see the army of chariots. The people of Israel shout out to Yahweh for help and then turn to talk to Moses. The people of Israel complain to Moses and ask him why he brought the people here to a place where they are no better off than in Egypt. The Israelites ask questions to which there are no answers to show their frustration and say that they would be better to have been left as slaves than be where they are now.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a time when people you know have become angry or frustrated with their leader and questioned why they are doing something. How do people in your culture question a leader directly? What are particular phrases or actions to use to show displeasure in a leader? Pause this audio here.

Moses tells the people of Israel to not be afraid and to not do anything but watch Yahweh save them from the Egyptian army. Moses also says that the people of Israel will never see the Egyptians again and that Yahweh will fight their enemies for them. The people of Israel do not have to do anything. Yahweh defeats the enemies of the Israelites using supernatural power. This shows a part of Yahweh's special relationship with the people of Israel.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 14:1-14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

In the first scene: The Israelites are camped at Etham. Yahweh tells Moses to turn back the way they had come and make a new camp between the sea and the wilderness.

In the second scene: The Israelites move their camp to near Pi-hahiroth, between the sea and the wilderness.

In the third scene: In Egypt, Pharaoh and his officials find out that the Israelites have turned back and decide to get his slaves back. Pharaoh gathers an army of charioteers and other troops.

In the fourth scene: The Israelites see Pharaoh's army coming near them. The people of Israel, the Israelites, call out to Yahweh for help and are angry at Moses. The Israelites question why Moses led them out of Egypt only for them to die in the wilderness. Moses tells them to not be afraid, that Yahweh will fight for them and they will never see the Egyptians again.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Yahweh
- Pharaoh
- Pharaoh's officials
- Pharaoh's charioteers
- People of Israel

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

The story starts with a phrase that tells us that these events happen after they have made camp at Etham. We are not told how much time has passed since arriving at Etham.

In scene one, the people of Israel are camped at the town of Etham. They are in tents and have all their belongings with them. They have just travelled out of Egypt, avoiding the land of the Philistines who would have attacked them. The story tells us of a conversation between Yahweh and Moses. We don't know what time of day the conversation happens. The people of Israel can see Yahweh is with them as a pillar of cloud during the day and a pillar of fire during the night. We don't know how close Moses is to the pillar but he hears Yahweh and has a conversation with Him. Yahweh tells Moses to get the Israelites to turn around and go back the way they have just come and camp on the shore next to the sea by a town called Pi-hahiroth. The new site has the wilderness on one side and the sea on the other. Yahweh wants the Egyptians to think that the people of Israel will be trapped if he sends his army to capture them. But Yahweh has a plan to reveal his power to the Egyptians.

In scene two, the people of Israel move and settle at the new camp area with the sea on one side and the wilderness on the other. The Israelites cannot move easily through the wilderness or cross the water.

In scene three, Pharaoh is in Egypt. Pharaoh hears that the people of Israel have left Egypt and wants them back to be his slaves again. Pharaoh asks the question, "What have we done?" Pharaoh doesn't expect an answer from his officials but uses the question to express his regret and frustration that he let the Israelites leave. We don't know when Pharaoh hears about the Israelites leaving. This suggests that they left without being noticed by Pharaoh or his officials. We learn that Yahweh affects how Pharaoh feels about the Israelites to make him chase them and want to get them back to be his slave labour force. Pharaoh harnesses his horses to his chariot to get ready for war and calls his troops. He calls up 600 chariots and charioteers and gathers other charioteers to be led by each of his charioteers. Pharaoh needed some time to gather his army. We do not know how much time passes between Pharaoh deciding to go after the people of Israel and moving to go after them.

Stop here if it would be helpful to look again at the pictures of a war chariot and charioteers as a group. Pause this audio here.

In scene four, the Egyptian army finds the people of Israel at their camp near Pi-hahiroth. The people of Israel look up and out from their camp and see the Egyptian army of chariots approaching. There are 600 chariots and the Israelites would see them approaching from a distance with dust and noise. Then the people of Israel were afraid and cried out to Yahweh. Moses and the rest of the people of Israel are together at this time. The people of Israel turn to Moses and complain to Moses. The question, "Is it because there are no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness?" is sarcastic and does not expect a response. The people of Israel do not know that there were plenty of graves in Egypt but are worried that they will all die in this place.

Notice that it is Moses who talks to the people of Israel. We don't know if Yahweh talks to Moses before he replies to the people of Israel. Moses is confident that Yahweh will defeat the Pharaoh and his army. Moses tells the people of Israel, "Don't be afraid and don't run away. See Yahweh save you today. You see the Egyptians today but you will not see them again after today. Yahweh will fight for you and you don't need to say or do anything."

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 14:1-14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Yahweh
- Pharaoh
- Pharaoh's officials
- Pharaoh's charioteers
- People of Israel

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The people of Israel are camping at a town called Etham with all their belongings. Yahweh is present with them and talks to Moses to give instructions on what to do next. He tells Moses to move the people of Israel back towards where they have come from to a place that is next to the wilderness and a large area of water.

Pause the drama.

The people of Israel move to a new place between the wilderness and a large area of water.

Pause the drama.

Pharaoh hears that the people of Israel have left and wants them back to be his slave labour. He gathers an army.

Pause the drama.

The people of Israel see the Egyptian army and are frightened. They call out to Yahweh for help and complain to Moses about being in a place that is no better than where they came from.

Pause the drama.

Moses speaks to the people of Israel to tell them that they should not be afraid, they will never see them again, and that Yahweh will save them so they don't need to do anything.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 14:1-14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Yahweh gives instructions to Moses. **Yahweh** is the personal name for God. In this passage, God is called Yahweh. Be sure to translate Yahweh in the same way as you have in previous passages, and remember that Yahweh is in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh gives plans to Moses to move the Israelites. Use the same word or phrase for Israelites, the people of Israel, as you used in previous passages.

Yahweh tells Moses to move the camp of the Israelites to a new place which is back towards Egypt. The sea is on one side of the camp. The **sea** could be salt water or be a large body of fresh water.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for sea. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh knows that **Pharaoh** will see that they are trapped between the sea and wilderness. Yahweh knows that Pharaoh will come after the Israelites. Use the same word or phrase for Pharaoh as you used in previous passages. For more information on Pharaoh, refer to the Master Glossary.

The wilderness is to one side of the new camp site. The **wilderness** is a deserted place where no-one lives and no-one cultivates the land. Use the same word or phrase for wilderness as you used in previous passages. For more information on wilderness, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh wants to harden Pharaoh's heart. Yahweh makes Pharaoh stubborn and be against the Israelites. Use the same word or phrase for "harden Pharaoh's heart" as you used in previous passages.

Yahweh wants to show his glory to the Egyptians. **Glory** is a way of describing Yahweh's power and splendour. Use the same word or phrase for glory as you used in previous passages. For more information on glory, refer to the Master Glossary.

Pharaoh and his officials want their Israelite slaves back. **Officials** are people who help to organise and do the daily work to govern a country or group of people. Use the same word or phrase for officials as you used in previous passages.

Slaves are owned by someone else and have no rights of their own. Use the same word or phrase for slaves as you used in previous passages. For more information on slaves, refer to the Master Glossary.

Pharaoh **harnessed his chariot**. This means that Pharaoh made his chariot ready to use by bringing the horses and chariot together so that the horses could pull the chariot.

Stop here and look at a picture of a chariot as a group.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for chariot. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

Pharaoh assembles an army of charioteers. **Charioteers** are the people who drive or ride on chariots.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for charioteers. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

Horses are used to pull chariots.

Stop here and look at a picture of a horse as a group. Pause this audio here.

Use the same word or phrase for horse as you used in previous passages.

The Egyptian army of charioteers chases after the Israelites and gets near to the Israelite camp. The Israelites look up and out and see the Egyptians. Then the Israelites are afraid. They cry out to Yahweh. The Israelites complain to Moses. They ask if there aren't enough graves in Egypt for them and that is why they have come to the wilderness. The word **grave** means a burial chamber. This is a place where a human body is placed after death. It might be a cave or somewhere constructed from stone or earth. It might be used for one body or many bodies.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for graves. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. For more information on graves, refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

Moses replies to the Israelites. He tells them to not be afraid and to see Yahweh help and save them. Yahweh will fight for them. The Israelites don't need to do or say anything.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 14:1-14

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (4317450 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (7605716 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Exodus 14:15–31

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 14:15–31 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 14:15–31 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 14:15–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This story is a narrative about Moses and the Israelites leaving Egypt. Before this story, Yahweh brought the plagues to Egypt. Pharaoh told the Israelites to leave. Yahweh hardened Pharaoh's heart which means Yahweh made Pharaoh stubborn. Pharaoh then ordered the Egyptian army to capture the Israelites. The Israelites camped near the Red Sea. We don't know how much time was between Moses telling Israelites to "be silent or still" and the beginning of this story. The Israelites asked to be rescued. God responded in this story, just like other stories in Exodus.

When this story begins, all the Israelites cried out, to call for help, to Yahweh. Crying is not sad tears—they are calling for help. In the beginning of this story, Yahweh answered only Moses. Moses must have called for help for the people even though the story does not say that. Probably, Moses speaks for the first time for all Israelites to Yahweh here. Moses continues to speak for all the Israelites to Yahweh. Yahweh responds to Moses only and

not all the Israelites. Notice a pattern of Israelites crying out to Yahweh and Yahweh responds. The Israelites call to Yahweh to be rescued. Then Yahweh responds and helps the Israelites. Yahweh is not angry. Yahweh gives a military order for the Israelites to "break camp" and "move forward." Break camp means to pack things to leave a place.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How does your language share military commands like "be still or be silent" and "break camp" and "move forward?" How do people share information with large groups of people with children and adults to move as one group? How is this different than being in a real army? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh commands Moses to lift the staff with Moses's hand, hold it over the Red Sea, and separate the water. Yahweh shared Yahweh's plan to rescue the Israelites. The water will divide and the Israelites will walk on dry ground in between the water to safety.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Earlier, Yahweh ordered Moses to stretch out Moses's hand with the staff over the Nile River and the Nile turned to blood. Now, Yahweh ordered the same command and motion over the Red Sea. Yahweh used the staff to show Yahweh's power. Do the motion the same way over the Red Sea as you did over the Nile. The power does not come from the staff or from Moses. The power comes directly from God. Discuss the different objects in your culture that people think have power. Where does the object's power come from? Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a map of the Red Sea as a group. Notice the Red Sea is a large natural border for most of Egypt that stretches almost to the very top. See the three lakes at the top. We do not know if the three lakes were part of the Red Sea a long time ago and now the land is dry. We do not know the exact place where the Israelites crossed the Red Sea. Talk about large bodies of water in your area. How do people use those bodies of water for protection against enemies? If you do not have large bodies of water or a lake near you, think about how a big lake would help you? Are there any problems with a large body of water as a border? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses "behold," or pay attention to my next words. Yahweh gets glory, or praise, because of what Yahweh does to Pharaoh, Pharaoh's army, horses, chariots, and horsemen. Yahweh fights Pharaoh's men. You may remember from the previous passage that Pharaoh's army, horses, chariots, and horsemen probably refer to the charioteers, or men who drove the chariots. Just like Yahweh says earlier in this story, Yahweh gets the same glory from defeating the Egyptians. Yahweh says, "I am" the same way Yahweh told Moses who he was at the burning bush.

Stop here and look at a picture of a horse and war chariot as a group. Pause this audio here.

Before this story started, Pillar of Cloud, or the cloud that made a large pillar in the sky, led in front of the Israelites. The Angel of God appears in this story for the first time. The Angel of God travels with the Israelites. The Angel of God represents Yahweh in the Old Testament. Although this Angel of God is called the Angel of Yahweh in other stories, these are probably the same angels. The Angel of God moved from in front of the Israelites to behind the Israelite camp. Now the Angel of God protects Israel by being between the Israelites and the approaching Egyptian army. The Pillar of Cloud moved from the front of the Israelites to behind the Israelites the same way. The Pillar of Cloud protects Israel by being between the Israelites and the approaching Egyptian army. Egyptians and Israelites stayed away from each other all night. The Pillar of Cloud was dark and light all night. We know the Pillar of Cloud was dark and light at the same time all night. Most people believe the Pillar of Cloud was dark on the Egyptian side and light on the Israelite side. However, the story is unclear.

Stop the recording here and discuss how this might look. How will you explain a dark and light cloud between people groups? Pause this audio here.

Moses stretched out Moses's hand with the staff over the sea. Yahweh pushed the waters to separate all night with a strong wind that came from the East. Most wind in Egypt blows from the West. In an earlier passage, the plague of locusts blew from the East. The water pushed apart, or separated or divided, and the bottom of the sea appeared. The bottom of the sea between the water was dry ground. Israelites walked between walls of liquid water on dry ground to safety. We know all 2 million Israelites, including men, women, and children, walked across with their possessions and animals that night. We do not know what time the Israelites crossed the Red Sea on dry land during the night. Sometime during the "last watch" Yahweh glanced at the Egyptians. The last watch of night is the time of night from 2 a.m. to 6 a.m.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How does your language share or explain time passing or measure time? Do you have phrases for time before dawn? Pause this audio here.

The Egyptians can see the Israelites around the Pillar of Cloud. The Egyptians watched the Israelites escaping between the water on dry land around the Cloud during the night. Pharaoh's army, horses, chariots, and horsemen chased or hunted after the Israelites into the Red Sea at some unknown time between 2 and 6 a.m. before dawn.

Stop here and discuss this question. Notice the thin wheels of the chariots. The wheels are only as wide as a man's hand across a man's knuckles. Soldiers drive a war chariot well on hard flat ground. Discuss driving a war chariot on soft sand or wet sand or mud.

Stop and look at a picture of a horse. Discuss as a group a horse's size and strength. Discuss the benefits of horses for battle. Pause this audio here.

Remember, Yahweh glanced, or looked, down from the Pillar of Cloud on the Egyptian army camp. "Look down" means two things. "Look down" means you stay higher and can see over a person or the top of a person. "Look down" also means a person is superior, or better than someone and the look or glance is hostile or unfriendly. Yahweh's powerful glance confused the army and the Egyptians panicked and got scared. Yahweh made the chariot wheels swerve wrong, go the wrong way, or fall off. The chariots became heavier and hard to steer. When the Israelites crossed the sea, the sea had a dry bottom. The Bible tells us the sea bottom was dry when the Israelites crossed. The Egyptians saw them cross on the dry bottom but Yahweh had made them confused. They rushed into the sea. The walls of water were still there. Sea bottoms in this area are often soft sand, silt, or rocky. We do not know exactly what the bottom felt or looked like but the Bible says the Egyptians could not drive the chariots on the sea bottom. The Egyptians said to run away because Yahweh was fighting for Israel. The Egyptians believe Yahweh fights for Israel. It is true. Israel watches the battle without fighting. Yahweh fights the battle.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Imagine how Moses tells the Israelites to cross the dry ground to the other side. Now imagine how Egyptian officers tell their soldiers to cross over. How are the orders different from each other? How do people in your language give and follow orders quickly? How does that change when an army officer tells his soldiers to do something quickly? Pause this audio here.

Moses and all the Israelites stand on the other side of the Red Sea. Yahweh tells Moses to stretch out Moses's hand over the Red Sea. The Egyptian army still stands in the bottom between the walls of water. Yahweh says the walls of water will cover the Egyptian chariots, horsemen, and horses. Moses obeys Yahweh and stretches out Moses's hand with the staff. We can assume Moses held the staff even though the story does not make it clear. Now dawn breaks. The water returns to normal depth. Yahweh throws any Egyptians trying to escape back into the sea. The water covers all the Egyptian chariots, horsemen, and horses that went into the sea. All Egyptians and horses died.

Hebrew writers like to summarize main points. So that is what Moses did here when he was telling this story. Moses tells us that earlier that day, all the Israelites walked on dry ground between walls of water on the right and left through the sea. That same day, Yahweh saved the Israelites from the powerful Egyptians' hands or control. Now, the Israelites saw dead Egyptians on the seashore. The Israelites saw the greater power of Yahweh defeat the Egyptians. The Israelites feared and believed Yahweh and Yahweh's servant Moses.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 14:15–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has four scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh responds to the Israelites calling to Yahweh for help. Yahweh orders the Israelites to break camp. Yahweh tells Moses to divide the Red Sea. Yahweh will make hard the Egyptian hearts and receive glory.

In the second scene: The Angel of the Lord and Pillar of Cloud continue traveling with the Israelites from the earlier story. In this story, both the Angel of the Lord and Pillar of Cloud move from in front of the Israelites to stay behind the Israelites all night.

In the third scene: Moses with the staff, stretches out Moses's hand over the Red Sea. Yahweh sends an East wind all night blowing the water apart. The water separates into high walls and the bottom of the sea becomes dry ground. Before dawn, all the Israelites walk on the bottom of the sea. The Israelites walk on dry ground to the other side to be safe.

In the fourth scene: Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and horsemen chase the Israelites. Yahweh looks down on the Egyptians. Yahweh makes the Egyptians confused and chariots' wheels twist and get stuck so that the wheels do not roll. Yahweh commands Moses who stands on the other side. Moses stretches out Moses's hand with the staff over the Red Sea. Yahweh makes the water levels rise to normal over the Egyptians and all the Egyptians die.

The characters in this passage are:

- Israelites
- Moses
- Yahweh
- Egyptian horses with chariots
- Egyptian horseman, army, officers
- Angel of God
- Pillar of Cloud, physically moves with Israelites, made of cloud and fire

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In scene one, characters stand in a line from east to west. The Red Sea is on the east. Closest to the Red Sea further east stand the Angel of God and the Pillar of Cloud. To the west of the Angel of God and Pillar of Cloud stand the Israelites (middle). Pharaoh's army came from the west near the river. The big river is the Nile on the map. The Angel of God and the Pillar of Cloud stay from the last story but do not say or do anything in scene one.

Stop here and look at a map of the Red Sea as a group. Find the Nile River and the city Ramses. Pharaoh lives there. Pharaoh's army marches from the Nile River area to catch the Israelites. Notice the Red Sea. Notice how the army moves west to east. Notice the Egyptian army and chariots to the west side trapped the Israelites against the Red Sea on the east. How will your group explain the character places? Pause the recording here.

Yahweh speaks first to Moses. Yahweh asks why the Israelites keep begging or calling out for help to Yahweh. This story tells us that the Israelites kept begging or calling for help again and again. Yahweh asks a question but does not want an answer. Instead, Yahweh is calling the Israelites to action. Yahweh orders the Israelites to break camp. Break camp means to pull tents stakes from the ground, gather your clothing and food, and prepare to walk. The Israelites take apart the tents to move to a new place. All the Israelites pack to move. The Israelites move forward to the Red Sea.

Yahweh told only Moses the plan. Moses listens to Yahweh's plan for Moses, the Israelites, and the Egyptians. Yahweh wants Moses to raise Moses's hand with the staff over the Sea. Moses does not raise Moses's hand in this scene. Yahweh tells Moses the water will divide and the Israelites will walk on dry ground but not in this scene. Yahweh tells Moses Yahweh will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, not just Pharaoh. Yahweh says the Egyptians will pursue, or chase, the Israelites into the Red Sea. The Egyptians do not chase in this scene. The Egyptians will know Yahweh as the one true God, Yahweh, and Yahweh will receive glory. Yahweh tells Moses to pay attention to his words: Yahweh will get glory because he will have victory over the Egyptians. Yahweh repeats how Yahweh gets glory. This repetition shows that it is an important detail. Yahweh tells what will happen next.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Earlier, God ordered Moses to stretch out Moses's hand and staff over the Nile River. Now, God gave the same order over the Red Sea. God used the staff to show God's power. Do the motion the same way. How does Yahweh use the staff to show Yahweh's power? How do you show separate power from the staff and Moses?

How does someone explain what happens in the future? Tell about what will happen tomorrow. Notice how you talk about the future. Notice how it is the same and different to how Yahweh talks about the future. Pause this audio here.

Scene two starts with the Angel of God and the Pillar of Cloud. The Pillar of Cloud led in front of the Israelites. The Angel of God moves separately from the Pillar of Cloud. The Angel could be Yahweh or directed by Yahweh, but always represents Yahweh. The Angel of God has been traveling with the Israelites all this time. Moses makes it clear when he tells this story that the angel has been traveling in front of the Israelites, and the Pillar of Cloud has also been leading in front.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What kinds of things represent God's presence in your culture? In an earlier story, there was the Angel of Yahweh in the bush. The Angel of Yahweh in the bush does not move but the Angel of God in the current story moves. Discuss how the Angel of God moves independently of the Pillar of Cloud. The Pillar of Cloud is the same in earlier stories. The Angel of God and the Pillar of Cloud both represent God's presence. Discuss how both represent Yahweh in different ways. Pause this audio here.

First, the Angel of God stands in front of the Israelites and moves behind the Israelites. Second, the Pillar of Cloud stands in front of the Israelites and moves behind the Israelites. The Angel of God and the Pillar of Cloud now stand between the Israelites and the Egyptian army with 600 chariots. The cloud is dark on one side and light on the other side all night long. The Israelites and the Egyptians stayed separate.

In the Third scene, Moses stretches out Moses's hand with the staff. The staff shows Yahweh's power. The motion is the same when Moses was at the Nile River. With a very strong wind coming from the East, Yahweh separates the water. The wind blows all night. The bottom of the sea is dry ground. The water was like walls. The word used for walls means high walls to protect a city. The walls were liquid. The bottom was wide enough for 2 million Israelites to cross the Red Sea in four hours, probably between 2 to 6 a.m.

Stop here and do an activity. Pour a little water in a shallow bowl with a low lip. Everyone takes turns blowing the water and watching the water move. Can you blow water hard enough to clear water off the bottom of the bowl? What does the water look like when you push water back with your breath? Discuss how you will describe a wall of water. Pause this audio here.

In the fourth scene, the Egyptians first watch the Israelites escape through the Red Sea on the dry ground. Next, all horses, 600 chariots, and horsemen chase after the Israelites into the Red Sea. Before dawn, Yahweh was above the Egyptians in or from the Pillar of Fire and Cloud. Yahweh "looked down" to the Egyptians. "Looked down" means two things: to be physically higher and can see over the head of someone, and be superior or better than someone, an insult. Yahweh looked down at the Egyptians. The Egyptians became confused and panicked. Yahweh made chariot wheels not work, swerve, or fall off. The wheels got stuck and hardly moved on the soft ground. Yahweh made chariots heavy and hard to drive. The Egyptians wanted to disobey orders and leave because they recognized Yahweh was helping the Israelites. Yahweh commands Moses to stretch out Moses' hand with the staff over the Red Sea. Yahweh plans to move the water back to normal depth over the Egyptians, chariots, and horses. Moses obeys. At daybreak, dawn, the Red Sea returns to normal. Yahweh threw any Egyptians trying to escape back into the Red Sea to drown. The water was deep enough to completely cover all the Egyptians, chariots, and horses. All died.

Stop here and discuss this idea as a group. Scene four is very fast. The Egyptians watch the Israelites escape and then all the Egyptians chase or hunt the Israelites into the Sea. Yahweh looks at the Egyptians before dawn and the scene ends at dawn with all the Egyptians and horses dead. A few minutes pass from Yahweh's look until water covers dead bodies. Discuss how you will share the fast pace with all the action in a few moments. Pause this recording here.

Yahweh often inspires Bible writers to summarize important stories. Moses summarized this story to help the listeners not forget it. Moses reminds us that the Israelites walked on dry ground between walls of liquid water as high as city protection walls on the right and left. The same day, Yahweh saved the Israelites from the

powerful Egyptians. The Israelites saw defeated, dead Egyptians on the seashore. That same day Israel saw Yahweh's greater power against the Egyptians. Israel feared, or were in awe of, and believed in Yahweh and Yahweh's servant Moses.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of 14:15–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has four scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Israelites
- Moses
- Yahweh
- Egyptian horses with chariots
- Egyptian horseman, army, officers
- Angel of God (does not speak)
- Pillar of Cloud, physically moves with Israelites, made of cloud and fire (does not speak)

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

As scene one begins, the Israelites call out to Yahweh for help. Yahweh asks Moses why and then tells the Israelites to break camp and move. Yahweh tells Moses Yahweh's plan. Yahweh tells Moses what Moses will do and what Yahweh will do. Yahweh tells the plan to save the Israelites. Yahweh tells the plan for the Egyptians but Yahweh does not tell what will happen to the Egyptians.

Pause the drama.

Ask the Israelites, "What are you feeling right now?" You may hear answers like, "I am scared I may die," or "I am scared the Egyptians will make me a slave again," or "I am angry Yahweh brought me to die here," or "I am scared and confused. I do not know what will happen to me."

Ask Moses about the feelings in the moment. Moses may answer, "I am overwhelmed. I see so much disorder and no calmness. People screaming. Horses running," or "I am in awe. Yahweh is talking to me. Yahweh has an impossible plan but I have seen Yahweh do impossible before," or "I don't know how I feel. Everything is happening so fast. I can hardly think. I can only do."

Ask the Egyptians the Egyptian feelings. The actor may say, "Angry. The Israelites made our children die," or "I feel confident. I can easily catch run-away slaves." [!end] Continue the drama.

In scene two, the Angel of God moves from in front of the Israelites to behind the Israelites. The Pillar of Cloud moves from in front of the Israelites to behind the Israelites. The Angel of God and Pillar of Cloud now stand between the Israelites and the Egyptians all night. The Pillar of Cloud stays both dark and light. The Angel of God and Pillar of Cloud represent Yahweh or are part of Yahweh.

Pause the drama.

Ask the Angel, "Are you prepared to fight for Israel?" You may hear answers like, "I will defend Israel but I will not attack."

Ask the Israelite actor, "How do you feel with the Angel of God and the Pillar of Cloud shielding you from the Egyptians?" You may hear answers like, "I am still afraid," or "I do not understand what happened," or "I am in shock and I want to escape."

Ask the Egyptian actor, "What are you feeling when you see the giant Pillar of Cloud and you cannot get to the Israelites?" You may hear answers like, "I am afraid," or "I do not understand the cloud and why I cannot get past," or "I am frustrated I cannot obey my Pharaoh and capture the Israelites," or "I am angry. I cannot do what I want." [!end] Continue the drama.

In scene three, Moses stretches Moses's hand with the staff over the Red Sea. Yahweh separates the water with wind. The wind blows all night. Yahweh makes a high wall of water on the left and right and makes the bottom dry. The Israelites walk on dry ground with walls of water on right and left sides.

Pause the drama.

Ask the actor playing the Israelites, "What do you see as you stand on the ground?" You may hear answers like, "I see wind push water higher and higher in the air. The water never falls," or "I see scared people running." How did the ground feel? "The ground is smooth and firm," or "I can feel solid ground."

Ask the Israelite actor, "How are you feeling when you walk before dawn between walls of water?" You may hear answers like, "I am overwhelmed. I have never seen anything so amazing," or "I am scared the water will fall on me," or "I am still afraid of the Egyptians and now I am afraid I will drown," or "I am worried everyone might not make it across," or "I am afraid the wind will push me into the wall of water." [!end] Continue the drama.

In scene four, the Egyptian horses, chariots, and horseman chase after the Israelites into the Red Sea. Yahweh confuses the Egyptian thinking. Yahweh makes chariots not work and they cannot drive chariots on the bottom of the sea. The Egyptians want to leave. Yahweh tells Moses to raise Moses's staff over the water. Yahweh puts the water back where the water belongs and covers all the Egyptians, horses, and chariots. All the Egyptians in the water die. All the horses die.

The author summarizes, or retells, the most important parts to show the power of Yahweh. The Israelites called out to be rescued. Yahweh responded which continues a main idea in Exodus. The Israelites saw the mighty Egyptians dead because of the powerful Yahweh. Yahweh saved the Israelites and was more powerful with Yahweh's impossible plan. The Israelites feared and trusted Yahweh and Yahweh's servant Moses.

Pause the drama.

Ask the Egyptian actor, "How did you feel when you drove between the water walls and the chariots did not work?" You may hear answers like, "I felt confused. I did not understand what was wrong," or "What is wrong with the ground?" or "Oh no! my wheels came off!"

Ask the Israelites actor how it felt to watch Egyptians chase them and die. You may hear answers like, "I felt scared the Egyptians would get me. Then the water collapsed and all the Egyptians died. I heard the screaming," or "I felt glad the Egyptians died," or "I felt glad and scared the Egyptians died. Yahweh killed all those people. Will Yahweh kill me?" or "I was scared when the water crashed down. I could have died in the water. My Yahweh remains the most powerful God. How do I show Yahweh respect?"

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 14:15–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Yahweh asks Moses, "Why are you crying out to me?" Yahweh's name is used for God in this story. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary, and translate Yahweh in the same way you have in previous passages. The term **crying out** means to "keep calling." The Israelites called to Yahweh again and again.

Yahweh tells Moses what Moses will do. Yahweh tells Moses what Yahweh will do. Yahweh plans for the Israelites and plans for the Egyptians. Yahweh will **harden Egyptian hearts**. "Heart" refers to the spiritual heart, will, or person's core or center. For more information on heart, refer to the Master Glossary. "Harden" means that Yahweh will make the Egyptians a stubborn people. In earlier stories, Pharaoh had a hard heart. A "hard heart" means a stubborn person. Use the same word or phrase for a hard heart as you used in previous passages.

Pharaoh sent the **army** and **600 chariots** earlier, before this passage. "Army" in this passage is unclear. Pharaoh maybe sent foot soldiers with the chariots or maybe Pharaoh did not. War chariots carried two men. One man drove the chariot and horses and one man shot arrows. An officer rode and shot arrows. Both men work with horses and are called **horsemen**. Horses pull carts, chariots, and do work for men like oxen but are smaller, faster, and smarter. Pharaoh controlled the strongest army at the time. Pharaoh sent enough army to capture all the Israelites.

Yahweh said the Egyptians will know **I am** Yahweh. "I am" was the term Yahweh used with Moses at the burning bush. For more information on I am, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for "I am" that you used in previous passages. Yahweh gets glory because of what Yahweh does to Pharaoh, Pharaoh's army, the chariots, and horsemen.

The **Angel of God** moved from in front of the Israelites to behind the Israelites. Although this angel is called the Angel of God rather than the Angel of Yahweh here, it is probably referring to the same thing. For more information on Angel of God, or **Angel of Yahweh**, refer to the Master Glossary. An Angel of Yahweh talked to Moses from the burning bush. The Angel of God is one of three representatives of Yahweh and Yahweh's power in this passage. Use the same word or phrase for Angel of God that you used in previous passages.

The **Pillar of Cloud** moved from in front of the Israelites to behind the Israelites. The Pillar of Cloud is one of three representatives of Yahweh's power in this passage.

Stop here and look at a picture of two clouds as a group. One cloud appeared in the day. One cloud appeared as a storm at night. How do you describe clouds in your language? The pillar, or tall column, of cloud represents Yahweh's power. We know that the pillar of cloud led the Israelites by day and that it moves to between the Israelites and Egyptians at the Red Sea. It is possible that the pillar, or column, of fire at night is the same pillar that looks like a cloud in the daytime.

Stop and discuss how you will talk about the pillar of cloud in this passage. Pause the recording here.

Yahweh moves the Angel of God and the Pillar of Cloud to a military position to defend, or shield or protect, the Israelites. The Angel of God never attacks but defends. The Pillar of Cloud never attacks but defends or leads.

Moses stretches his hand over the Red Sea. It does not say that Moses used the staff. Earlier it says that Moses raises the staff with his hand. Most likely, Moses still holds the staff in his hand over the Red Sea. Moses's staff is one of the three representatives of Yahweh's power in this passage. **Moses's staff** is a walking stick. Use the same word or phrase for Moses's staff as you have used in previous passages. **Drove the sea back** means to push back hard or sweep hard the sea. Moses did not move the water. Yahweh moved the water. Yahweh blew the **wind from the East**. In this passage, the East Wind blows all night. Yahweh separates the water to the bottom of the sea. Yahweh dries the bottom and makes the water push back like high city **walls**. The word for "wall" used in this verse meant for high walls to protect cities. The water wall is still liquid. Yahweh pushed water out of the way. Yahweh makes a wide space between the water walls big enough for two million Israelites to move in four hours. Two million Israelites walked through the sea on dry ground right before or at the beginning of the **last watch of the night**. The last watch of the night happened between 2 and 6 a.m. The Israelites walked with high water walls on the left and right.

All of Pharaoh's chariots, horses, and horsemen **pursue** the Israelites into the sea. Pursue means to follow, chase, or hunt someone. Before dawn, Yahweh **looked down** on Pharaoh's army. "Looked down" has two meanings. "Looked down" means to be higher than another person and see over or on top of the other person. "Looked down" also means to be superior, or better than; a higher quality person. Yahweh was in or on the Pillar of Cloud when Yahweh "looked down" on the Egyptian army. Yahweh was higher than the army and superior to them. Yahweh caused the army confusion. Yahweh made the chariots swerve, wheels to not work, and chariots would not drive.

Yahweh told Moses to stretch out his hand, with his staff, over the sea. Yahweh made the water go back to normal and cover the horses, chariots, and horsemen. Yahweh made all the horsemen and horses who drove into the sea die. All the Egyptians died.

The Israelites walked on dry ground with high water walls on the right and left. Yahweh saved Israel from the Egyptians' **hand**, or power. The Israelites saw dead Egyptians. The Israelites saw the great "hand," or power, of Yahweh defeat the Egyptians. The Israelites feared and believed in Yahweh and Yahweh's servant, Moses.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 14:15–31

Audio Content

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Exodus 15:19–27

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 15:19–27 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 15:19–27 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 15:19–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Yahweh has just freed his chosen people, Israel, from the Egyptians. Even though the Egyptians followed Moses and the Israelites through the Red Sea, Yahweh brought the water crashing down on the Egyptians, killing them all. Moses and the Israelites sang a song of praise about who Yahweh is. Now, Miriam and the women join his song, praising Yahweh for his salvation from the Egyptians. Moses and Israel begin their journey into the desert, and Yahweh tests and then provides for his chosen people.

Moses pauses his narrative after his song to give his audience a summary. Pharaoh, or the Egyptian king, and his chariots chased the Israelites across the Red Sea, but while the Israelites made it safely across on dry land, Yahweh brought the waters crashing over the Egyptians. This ended the Israelites' captivity—they were finally free! Moses reminds his audience that Yahweh is worthy to be praised for his triumphant rescue of his people from Pharaoh and the Egyptians.

Stop here and look at a picture of the Red Sea. Pause this audio here.

Moses then introduces his sister Miriam for the first time, calling her a prophetess and the sister of Aaron. Most likely, Moses is following cultural norms by identifying Miriam with the oldest male of the family rather than with himself as his own sister. Aaron was three years older than Moses. A prophetess is a woman who is a prophet—they speak Yahweh's message to people. In this case, Miriam sang about Yahweh's victory over the Egyptians. Putting Yahweh's victory in a song was a cultural way to preserve the Israelites' history so that their descendants would not forget who Yahweh is or what Yahweh did for them.

Miriam leads the women in singing. Miriam's song is the same as Moses' song, the only difference is that Miriam says, "Sing to the Lord" instead of "I will sing to the Lord." Miriam most likely leads the women in singing Moses' song in response to the men. Only this time, the women danced in a circle or in a whirling movement with

timbrels. A timbrel is a musical instrument in the form of a circle covered with tightened animal skin like a drum. Women beat timbrels with their fingers to create music. Although some translations say tambourine, a timbrel is different because it does not include the same metal disks around the rim that cause the instrument to rattle.

Stop here and look at a picture of a timbrel as a group. Sing a victory song from your culture. What are the different roles for men and women when they sing cultural songs together? Pause this audio here.

Now that Yahweh has fulfilled his promise and delivered his chosen people, Moses' narrative begins to shift. As you remember, Yahweh promised Moses at the burning bush that he would free his people from Egypt and bring them to the land Yahweh promised. Now that Yahweh has freed his people, Moses begins to lead them on a journey toward Mount Sinai and ultimately, the promised land. Moses leads the people from the Red Sea into the desert of Shur. This was a very dry wilderness where few people lived in northern Sinai.

Stop here and look at a map and a picture of the desert of Shur as a group. Pause this audio here.

The Israelites traveled three days into the desert without finding water. When they reach Marah, a place that had some plants and water, they are unable to drink the water because it was bitter and unpleasant to taste. Even though the water was clear and looked like it could be drunk, the taste was so horrible that the Israelites were unable to drink it. Moses is sure to remind his audience that the word Marah means bitter. The Israelites quickly forget the wondrous works of Yahweh in Egypt and begin to grumble or complain to Moses. Since Moses was Yahweh's chosen representative to his people, the people are really complaining against Yahweh when they ask Moses what they will drink. Moses cries out or prays earnestly to the Lord, Yahweh. Yahweh once again demonstrates care for his people by giving Moses a solution. Yahweh causes Moses to see a tree, or piece of wood. Moses listens to Yahweh and throws the wood into the water. The water becomes sweet. In this case, sweet means pleasant or drinkable. We are not sure why this particular tree made the water sweet but it is clear that it was a miracle, or something that only Yahweh can do.

Stop and discuss as a group: In your culture, when there are community disputes, who do the people complain to? How do people complain? Pause this audio here.

The Lord, or Yahweh, then gives his people a statute or law. Statute, or ruling, and instruction express the same concept although they are slightly different words. Both statute and instruction refer to the same action—Yahweh is giving his chosen people a fixed rule to live by after he had proved or tested them. Yahweh tested the Israelites by allowing them to travel for three days without water then arrive at a place where the water was not drinkable. Yahweh tells his people that if they do three things then he will give them divine protection. Yahweh wants his people to listen carefully to him to know his will. He wants them to do what is right in his eyes which means do what Yahweh considers to be right. Yahweh also wants the people to obey his rules. Yahweh says that if they listen carefully to Yahweh their God, the Lord their God, then he will not give them the same diseases as the Egyptians. Yahweh is not only using his personal name, Yahweh, but also saying that he is indeed the God of the Israelites. When Yahweh tells them they will not suffer from the same diseases as the Egyptians, Yahweh is not saying that the Israelites will never get sick. Rather, Yahweh is promising that his people will not have to worry about being punished like the Egyptians with plagues if they obey him. Instead, they can turn to Yahweh as their doctor or healer.

The Israelites then journey from Marah to Elim to find a place to camp. Although it is difficult to know where exactly Elim is located, since the Israelites were journeying toward Sinai, we know it was somewhere between the Red Sea and Mount Sinai. Elim was a riverbed so it had plenty of water from natural springs or watering holes. There were also 70 date palms which produce fruit, so it is possible there was fruit for the people to eat. Yahweh miraculously cares for his people by providing water and shade in the middle of the desert.

Stop here and look at a map of Marah and Elim and a picture of a date palm tree as a group. Pause this audio here.

This will be the first of several tests Yahweh gives his people while they travel in the desert toward the Promised Land.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 15:19–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has four scenes.

In the first scene: The Egyptians chase the Israelites across the Red Sea. The Israelites walk across on dry land and are safe but Yahweh closes the water on Pharaoh and the Egyptians, killing them all.

In the second scene: Later, Moses leads the Israelites to praise Yahweh with a song. Miriam then leads the women to sing. The women repeat Moses' song back to the men and dance with timbrels.

In the third scene: Moses leads the Israelites into the desert. They travel for three days without water until they reach Marah. They can't drink the water because it's too bitter. They complain to Moses.

In the fourth scene: Moses prays to Yahweh for help. Yahweh causes Moses to throw a branch into the water that makes the water drinkable. Yahweh tells his people that if they listen to his voice, do what he thinks is right, and follow his commands, then he will not cause them to suffer like the Egyptians. Yahweh says he will be their healer.

In the fifth scene: The Israelites travel to Elim. They rest under palm trees and drink fresh water from springs.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Aaron (Moses' brother)
- Yahweh
- Pharaoh
- The Egyptian chariots
- The Israelites
- Miriam
- Women who sing and dance

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It's important to remember that Yahweh has just saved his people from slavery by causing the Red Sea to crash down on the Egyptian king and his army.

Moses starts this passage with a summary of how Yahweh made the waters come back over the Egyptians while the Israelites crossed on dry ground. Moses probably gives this summary to explain the cause of Miriam singing the song of praise to Yahweh.

Miriam is not only a prophet and Aaron's sister but also Moses' sister. Moses most likely says she is Aaron's sister because Aaron was the oldest male in the family.

Miriam is not singing a separate song from Moses, but the same song of praise to Yahweh. Miriam leads the women to sing and dance, playing timbrels, or hand drums. The women are repeating Moses' song back to the men. Even though only the first verse is written, the women most likely sang the whole song back to the men. This song was a cultural way to pass on the story of Yahweh's victory over Pharaoh for future descendants of the Israelites.

It is important to remember that Moses orders or leads the Israelites to leave the Red Sea area.

It's important to remember that the Israelites were a group of 600,000 men plus women and children traveling with all of their possessions and animals. They were a very large group traveling through the desert. They most likely brought water for the journey in water skins. Their animals would have also needed water to survive. After three days, it's likely their water supply was low, which would have caused them to panic.

Stop and discuss as a group: How is it different to walk by yourself, than to walk with many people with their family and animals? Pause this audio here.

The Israelites arrive at the oasis of Marah. An oasis is a place in the desert that has plants and water. It's important to remember that the water in Marah and Elim were sources of groundwater. These were natural watering holes where people and animals could drink fresh water. However, the people could not drink the water at Marah because it was bitter.

It is important to notice that the author mentions Marah before the explanation of the name. Marah, which means bitter, was named after the Israelites found that the water was bitter.

Moses prays and Yahweh shows him what piece of wood to throw in the water to make it sweet or drinkable. Then Yahweh gives his people a statute-or a law to live by.

Moses says the Lord, or Yahweh, gave a statute and an instruction for his people to follow. Statute and instruction have slightly different meanings. Statue means a law, or obligation, whereas instruction refers to a legal ruling. It is normal in Hebrew to use two words with similar meanings to refer to the same action.

Yahweh tells his people to listen to his voice, do what is right in his eyes, and obey his commands. If the Israelites obey Yahweh, then they will not get any of the diseases that the Egyptians got. When Yahweh says he wants his people to do what is right in his eyes, this phrase means that he wants them to do what he considers to be right. He wants his people to obey his voice.

Yahweh then reminds his people of who he is. He says, "I am Yahweh, who heals you."

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 15:19–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has five scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Aaron (Moses' brother)
- Yahweh
- Pharaoh
- The Egyptian chariots
- The Israelites
- Miriam
- Women who sing and dance

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Act out the summary given by Moses. The Egyptians chase the Israelites across the Red Sea. The Israelites walk across on dry land and are safe but Yahweh closes the water on Pharaoh and the Egyptians chariots. Pharaoh and the Egyptians die in the water. Moses sings a song of praise and victory about who Yahweh is. Miriam leads the women to sing Moses' song back to the men and they dance with timbrels.

Pause the drama.

Act out Moses leading the Israelites, a group of thousands of people and animals, into the Shur desert. They travel for three days and cannot find fresh water. Finally they reach Marah where there is water and plants.

Pause the drama.

Act out the Israelites trying the water but it is too bitter to drink. They complain to Moses, asking, "What will we drink?"

Pause the drama.

Act out Moses praying to Yahweh for help. Yahweh shows Moses a branch to throw into the water that makes the water drinkable. Yahweh tells his people that if they listen to his voice, do what he thinks is right, and follow his commands, then he will not cause them to suffer like the Egyptians. Yahweh says he will be their healer.

Pause the drama.

Act out the Israelites traveling to Elim where they rest under palm trees and drink fresh groundwater.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 15:19–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Moses gives a summary of what God did at the Red Sea. God closed the waters on **Pharaoh**, or the Egyptian king, and the Egyptian chariots, setting his chosen people free. Use the same word or phrase for Pharaoh as you have in previous passages. For more information on Pharaoh, refer to the Master Glossary.

God brings **Israel** safely across the Red Sea. Israel refers to the descendants of Jacob. Jacob's sons were called the sons of Israel. Use the same word or phrase for Israel as you have in previous passages. For more information on Israel, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses says that Miriam is a prophetess, or a female **prophet**. A prophet is someone who receives a call from God, takes God's message to people, and knows that it's the most important job to take God's message to people. Use the same word or phrase for prophet as you have in previous passages. For more information on prophet, refer to the Master Glossary.

In Miriam's chorus of Moses' song, she calls God **Yahweh**. Yahweh is the personal name for God, and it is used throughout this passage. Use the same name for Yahweh that you have used in previous passages. Look up Yahweh in the Master Glossary for more information.

Miriam and the women dance with **timbrels** when they sing. A timbrel is a type of hand drum with animal skin stretched over a circle. It is similar to a tambourine except tambourines have metal disks around the rim that cause the instrument to rattle.

Stop here and look at a picture of a timbrel as a group. Discuss as a group how you will translate this word. Pause this audio here.

Moses says that Yahweh tested Israel. This is all that the passage says, but some translations add that Yahweh tested Israel in order for Israel to prove their faithfulness, or obedience to him. You may add that explanation if needed. If so, you can find more information on faith in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh says that if his people listen to his commandments and obey his **statutes** then he will not cause the same sicknesses in them as the Egyptians. Statute means a law, or obligation. In this case, statute refers to Yahweh giving his chosen people a fixed rule to live by. Use the same word or phrase for statute as you have in previous passages. For more information on statute, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 15:19–27

Audio Content

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Exodus 16:1-12

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 16:1-12 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 16:1-12 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 16:1-12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last story, the Israelites celebrated Yahweh's victory over Pharaoh and the Egyptians with a song of praise. Yahweh is the name used for God throughout this passage. Moses then began their journey away from Egypt and into the desert heading toward the land Yahweh promised to his chosen people. Later, when the people complained about a lack of water, Yahweh miraculously provided water for them. Now, the Israelites will face another problem and bring their complaints once again to Moses.

Moses is traveling with all the congregation of the people of Israel, or the descendants of Jacob, which means they are a group of 600,000 men plus women, children, and all of their animals and possessions. They have been traveling in the desert of Shur, which is a very dry place with little water, plants, or people. Moses tells us that they traveled from Elim, the oasis with 70 palm trees and freshwater, to the Wilderness, or desert, of Sin. This means the Israelites were most likely traveling south. The Wilderness of Sin can also be translated as the wilderness named Sin since the word sin was only a name. This name had no connection to the English word sin. Most of the places Moses identified on the exodus journey people cannot easily identify today. But we do know the general area that the Israelites were traveling in.

Stop here and look at a map of the Sinai Peninsula highlighting the Red Sea, the desert area, and Mount Sinai as a group. Pause this audio here.

By telling us that it is the fifteenth day of the second month, Moses is saying that a little more than a month has passed since Israel departed from Egypt. We know this because the Israelites celebrated the Passover, or the Jewish day of independence from slavery in Egypt, on the tenth day of the first month. All of the Israelites begin to grumble, or complain, to Moses and Aaron because they have little food left and they are hungry. They tell Moses and Aaron that they think it would have been better for Yahweh to kill them, or to die by the hand of the Lord, along with the Egyptians in Egypt. The Israelites reason that at least in Egypt they had pots full of meat and bread every day. This was most likely an exaggeration since they were still slaves while in Egypt. Remember that Jewish people considered bread to be the most common food, so bread can refer to food in general. The Israelites accuse Moses and Aaron of bringing them out of Egypt to kill them with hunger, or starvation, in the desert.

Yahweh hears his people's complaints. When Yahweh speaks to Moses, he uses a word like "behold" or "now" because he wants Moses to pay attention. Yahweh tells Moses he will send a new kind of bread, or food, from heaven, or the sky, that would fall like rain. Yahweh makes it clear that the people should go out every day from their camp and gather only as much food as they need for that day. This would be difficult for the Israelites who were an agricultural people. They were not used to collecting produce every day but rather collecting all that they could in one day to store until their field or animal produced more food again.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people gather food where you live? Discuss how people would react in your culture if someone asked them to only get as much food as they need for one day every day. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh does this to care for the Israelites, who would be traveling in the desert for a long time. Yahweh is also proving, or testing, his chosen people. Yahweh wants to see if his people will obey his food gathering law, or instruction, as a way to show if they would follow the law He was going to give them when they reached Mount Sinai. Yahweh is testing the Israelites as his covenant, or chosen, people, to see if they will obey Him with all of their hearts or beings.

Yahweh then does something special. He not only cares for their physical health but also their spiritual health. Yahweh tells Moses that on the sixth day of the week, the people should gather twice as much food in preparation for the seventh day. This rule reflects Yahweh's own actions during Creation when he rested on the seventh day. The Israelites will find out why they should do this later when Yahweh speaks to Moses. This rule would allow Israel to experience Yahweh's faithful provision every week.

As prophets, or people who Yahweh chooses to speak on his behalf, Moses and Aaron share Yahweh's message with the people. Moses and Aaron tell the Israelites that it was Yahweh, not Moses and Aaron, who brought them out of Egypt. They say Yahweh will prove this by providing meat in the evening and bread in the mornings that will satisfy them. They also say the people will see Yahweh's glory, or his brilliant presence, in the morning. Yahweh will do this because he heard their complaints against Moses and Aaron. Yahweh considered their complaints to be against himself. When Moses asks, "What are we that you grumble against us?" he does not really think the people do not know his identity. Rather, Moses is showing humility and calling attention to the fact that it was the one, true God-Yahweh-who freed them from Egypt, not man.

Moses then tells Aaron what to say to the Israelites. Aaron tells the people to come and gather where the presence of Yahweh is. As Aaron is speaking, the people look away from Aaron to look to the desert and suddenly see the glory, or brilliant presence, of Yahweh shining from a cloud. Yahweh tells Moses that he has heard the Israelites' complaints. Yahweh tells Moses what to say to the Israelites. Yahweh confirms that he will provide meat in the evening and bread every morning to prove to his people that he is Yahweh, the God of the Israelites. Yahweh reassures his chosen people that he alone brought them out of Egypt and that he alone is their provider.

In the next story, we will see Yahweh fulfill his promise and send quails in the evening and bread from the sky every morning for the Israelites to eat.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 16:1-12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has five scenes.

In the first scene: The Israelites leave Elim and travel farther into the wilderness. A month and a half has passed since they left Egypt. Now, they arrive in the wilderness of Sin.

In the second scene: The Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron saying that they brought the people to the desert to kill them with hunger. They say it would have been better for Yahweh to kill them in Egypt when they had plenty of food.

In the third scene: Yahweh hears the complaints. Yahweh explains to Moses how He will provide food. Yahweh wants to test the people to see if they will follow what He says about collecting double the amount of food on the sixth day.

In the fourth scene: Moses and Aaron explain to the Israelites that Yahweh will send bread in the mornings and meat in the evening because he has heard their complaints against Him. They say the Israelites will see Yahweh's glory.

In the fifth scene: Moses instructs Aaron to gather the people. Aaron gathers the people and they see the presence of Yahweh in a cloud. Yahweh speaks saying that the Israelites will have meat in the evening and bread from the sky in the mornings. In that way, they will know that Yahweh is their God.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Aaron
- The Israelites
- Yahweh

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

The people of Israel leave Elim and come to a desert area. It's important to remember that the Israelites are traveling as a group of 600,000 men with all of their family and animals. They have been traveling in the desert for more than a month since they left Egypt.

The people of Israel arrive at the Wilderness named Sin and complain strongly to Moses and Aaron.

Stop here and look at a map of the Sinai Peninsula highlighting the Red Sea, the desert area, and Mount Sinai as a group. Pause this audio here.

The people of Israel say that they would have been better dying by the hand of the Lord in Egypt. "By the hand of Yahweh" does not refer to a physical hand, but rather to Yahweh causing an action. In this case, the people thought it would have been better for Yahweh to have killed them along with the Egyptians instead of starving to death in the desert.

Then Yahweh speaks with Moses. Yahweh uses a word like "behold" to get Moses' attention. Yahweh tells Moses that He will rain bread down from heaven. Yahweh is saying that He will cause a substance like bread to come down as rain does. Yahweh will do this because he has heard his people's complaints against him.

It's important to notice that even though the people complained against Moses and Aaron, Yahweh considered the people to be complaining against himself because Moses and Aaron were Yahweh's representatives to the Israelites.

Yahweh gives them a law, or a rule to follow. The people of Israel have to collect double the amount of food on the sixth day because on the seventh day the people will rest. The Israelites will find out later why they should do this when Yahweh speaks to Moses.

Yahweh gives this rule to see if the people of Israel will walk in his law. Here, Yahweh doesn't mean a physical walk, but that He wants them to obey him as their one and only God.

Then Moses and Aaron tell the people that they will know that it was Yahweh who brought them out of Egypt. Because Israel was such a large group, it is likely that Moses and Aaron divided the people into smaller groups and spoke to them separately. Moses and Aaron tell the people that they will know it was Yahweh who brought them out of Egypt by seeing His glory. Glory refers to Yahweh's power and brilliant presence.

Then Moses says that Yahweh will give them meat in the evening and bread in the morning. Moses also says, "What are we? You have complained against Yahweh, not against us." The question "What are we?" is a question that doesn't require an answer. Moses uses this question to make the people think and reflect on the fact that they are complaining against Yahweh.

Then Moses tells Aaron to call the people to come near to the presence of Yahweh because He has heard their complaints. As soon as Aaron finishes talking, something causes the people to look into the desert and they see the glory of Yahweh appear in a cloud.

Stop and discuss this question with your group: Though we don't know what Yahweh's glory looked like, glory refers to Yahweh's power and brilliant presence. Discuss how you will translate glory in your language. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses that He has heard the people's complaints. Yahweh instructs Moses to tell the people that they will eat meat in the evening, and bread in the morning. Although the passage does not make it clear, most people believe that they will eat meat each evening, and bread each morning, so you may translate it in that way.

Although the Hebrew makes it clear that the people will be satisfied when they eat the bread, most people believe that they will also be satisfied when they eat the meat. You can make that clear in your translation. In this way, the Israelites will know that Yahweh is their God.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 16:1-12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has five scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Aaron
- The Israelites
- Yahweh

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Act out the Israelites leaving Elim and traveling farther into the desert. A month and a half has passed while they are traveling away from Egypt. The large group of Israelites arrive in the wilderness of Sin.

Pause the drama.

Act out all of the Israelites complaining against Moses and Aaron, saying that they brought the people to the desert to kill them with hunger. They say it would have been better for Yahweh to kill them in Egypt when they had plenty of food.

Pause the drama.

Act out Yahweh hearing the complaints. Yahweh explains to Moses how He will provide food from the sky. Yahweh tells Moses he wants to test the people to see if they will follow what He says about collecting double the amount of food on the sixth day.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I know that my people quickly forget my power," or "They need to understand that with me nothing is impossible," or "I only want them to learn to obey for their own good in the future." [!end] Continue the drama.

Act out Moses and Aaron explaining to the Israelites that Yahweh will send bread in the mornings and meat in the evening because he has heard their complaints against Him. They say the Israelites will see Yahweh's glory.

Pause the drama.

Act out Moses instructing Aaron to gather the people. Aaron gathers the people and they see the presence of Yahweh in a cloud. Yahweh speaks through Moses saying the Israelites will have meat in the evenings and bread from the sky in the mornings. In that way, they will know that Yahweh is their God.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 16:1-12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The congregation of **Israel** continues their journey from Elim. The congregation of Israel refers to all of Jacob's descendants as a people group. This was the group of thousands of people who Yahweh freed from Egypt. Use the same word or phrase for Israel as you used in previous passages. For more information on Israel, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Israelites travel for more than a month when they arrive in the **Wilderness** of Sin. Wilderness can be translated as desert, it simply means a dry area with little water, vegetation, or people. Use the same word or phrase for wilderness as you used in previous passages. For more information on wilderness, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses says **Yahweh** spoke to him. Yahweh is the personal name for God, and it is used throughout this passage. Use the same name for Yahweh that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

The people complain because they do not have food. Yahweh hears their complaints and tells Moses that he will provide food from **heaven**. In this case, heaven refers to the sky.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **heaven**, meaning sky. Look up heaven in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

Yahweh said he would rain down a new type of food or bread from the sky to provide for his chosen people. Later on, we will see that this type of food is thin, flaky, and sweet.

Stop and discuss with your team how you will translate this type of food if you do not have bread in your culture. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh instructed Moses that the people should gather twice as much food on the sixth day so that they did not have to gather food on the seventh day, or the day of rest. Yahweh does this to test his people to see if they will follow his law. The **law** refers to rules or instructions from Yahweh that Moses shared with the Jewish people to tell them how to live. In this case, Yahweh's law was to gather twice as much food on the sixth day. Use the same word or phrase for law as you used in previous passages. For more information on law, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses tells the people they will see the **glory** of Yahweh. Glory refers to the dazzling light or brightness of the presence of Yahweh. It is the way Yahweh shows his power and presence. The Israelites will see Yahweh's glory later when he appears in a cloud.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **glory**. Look up glory in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 16:1-12

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3485603 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Exodus 16:13-21

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 16:13-21 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 16:13–21 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 16:13–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last passage, Yahweh heard the Israelites complaining about not having enough food while traveling in the desert. Yahweh is the personal name for God used throughout this passage. Yahweh told Moses and the Israelites that he would provide bread from heaven in the mornings and meat in the evening. As you remember, bread was a way to refer to food in general for the Jewish people since it was such an important part of their diet. Yahweh also gave the people specific instructions for gathering the bread. Now, Yahweh fulfills his promise and tests the Israelites to see if they will follow his instructions.

As you remember, the Israelites are still traveling in the desert after Yahweh freed them from Egypt. They have already been traveling in the desert for over a month. After the Israelites see Yahweh's presence in a cloud, Yahweh fulfills his promise that evening and provides quails for the Israelites. A quail is a small plump bird that is light brown with black and pale streaks. The quails flew in and covered or landed all over the camp. Remember, this was a camp of around 600,000 men with their families and possessions, so there had to be a very large number of quail to feed everyone. It was normal for these birds to rest on the ground after making long flights.

Stop here and look at a picture of a quail as a group. If you do not have a name for this type of bird, you may want to include the description that this is a medium-sized wild bird that people can eat. Pause this audio here.

The quails would have satisfied the Israelites' hunger for the day, but Moses puts more emphasis on the bread Yahweh provides the next morning. We see that Moses uses repetition in his description of the bread because it is important. The bread will be a daily miracle, or an act that only Yahweh can do, that shows Yahweh's provision for the Israelites for more than 40 years. It will also be the way Yahweh continually tests his people to see if they trust him enough to follow his instructions about gathering the food and resting on the seventh day.

Moses describes how the bread from the sky arrived. First there was dew, or water droplets that collected on the ground. When the dew dried up, Moses uses a word like "behold" to express the surprise the Israelites felt when they saw the water leave something thin and flaky on the ground. When Moses says fine as frost, he is describing frozen moisture that is white and delicate—it may be another way of saying the bread was fine or powdery. The Israelites had never seen anything like it, so they asked each other what it was.

Moses tells them it is the bread Yahweh gave them from heaven, or the sky. Moses gives them Yahweh's command or law for gathering the bread. The people could only gather as much bread as each person needed; this would have been one omer per member of the family. An omer is 2 quarts or 1.8 liters. Yahweh tells the Israelites to gather an omer for each person in their tent. The Israelites did not live in houses but in tents since they traveled long distances every day.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people measure things in your culture? Discuss the best way to present this measurement in your culture. One example is two coconuts full of manna. Pause this audio here.

The Israelites obey Yahweh and collect the bread. Since they had to guess how much they would need for their families, some gathered more than they needed while other people gathered less than they needed. But when

they measured it out in omers, they discovered that the families who had collected a large amount did not have too much, and the families who had collected a small amount did not have too little.

Moses orders the Israelites not to store or keep any of the bread for the next day. However, some of the Israelites do not listen to Moses' instruction. Instead, they tried to save the bread for the next day and maggots or small worms grew in the bread and caused it to stink and become rotten. This made Moses angry.

Moses gives us another summary to emphasize Yahweh's daily provision and testing of Israel. He tells us that the Israelites woke every day when the sun rose and gathered the bread from the ground as Yahweh commanded. And when the sun was high in the sky, the bread they left on the ground melted away.

Yahweh will continue to provide bread for his chosen people as they travel. Next, we will see Yahweh teach his people more about the Sabbath, or day of rest.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 16:13–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has four scenes.

In the first scene: After appearing to the Israelites in a cloud, Yahweh sends quails in the evening to cover the Israelite camp. The Israelites eat happily.

In the second scene: In the morning, when the sun rises, Moses and the Israelites see water droplets on the ground. When it evaporates, the Israelites are surprised to see something thin and flaky left behind. They ask Moses what it is, and Moses says it's the bread from Yahweh.

In the third scene: Moses tells the people to only gather an omer's worth of bread for each person in their tent. Some people gather a little, some people gather a lot, but everyone has the right amount when they measure it.

In the fourth scene: Moses tells the people not to store the bread for the next day. Some people obey but other people do not. The stored bread grows maggots and stinks. They cannot eat it the next day. Moses becomes angry. Yahweh continues to provide bread every morning and the Israelites gather it to have food in the desert.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- The Israelites who obeyed
- The Israelites who did not obey
- Yahweh
- Quails

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It is important to remember that in the last passage Yahweh promises food for the Israelites; this was a group of thousands of people with their families and animals.

That same evening quail flew in and landed all over the Israelite camp. The quails were the evening meat Yahweh promised. It's important to remember that the Israelites lived in tents because they had to pack up and travel every day to continue their journey to the promised land. Since there was no way to store the meat, the people had to eat the quail that night.

The next morning, dew was on the ground around the camp. Then the dew evaporated and left something flaky behind on the ground.

Moses uses a word like "behold" to show the surprise of the Israelites. They had never seen anything like the bread. The people of Israel saw it and wondered about it, asking each other, "What is it?" Because they didn't know what the substance was.

It is important to remember that the quail and the bread only appeared around the place where the Israelites camped.

Moses explains that it is the bread Yahweh provided. Then he tells the people that Yahweh commanded them to take as much as each person in their tent could eat.

Then Moses tells them not to leave any bread until the next morning. Some people didn't listen to Moses and kept some until the next morning. The bread stank and had worms. Moses got angry with the people who didn't listen.

Moses uses repetition to emphasize Yahweh's daily provision and testing of Israel. He says that morning after morning the Israelites gathered the bread. When the day became hot, it melted away. It is important to notice that the expression "the sun grew hot" or "sun became hot" does not mean that the sun would be hotter, but that the day would get hotter because the sun would be higher in the sky. Because they were in a desert, it would have been very hot when the sun was high in the sky.

It is important to notice that when it says "it melted," it means that the substance that was left on the ground would melt, not the substance that they gathered.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 16:13–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has four scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- The Israelites who obeyed
- The Israelites who did not obey
- Yahweh
- Quails

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Act out the Israelites waiting expectantly for Yahweh to provide the meat he promised for the evening. Suddenly, Yahweh sends quails to cover the entire Israelite camp. The Israelites capture and eat the birds happily.

Pause the drama.

In the morning, when the sun rises, Moses and the Israelites see dew on the ground. When it evaporates, the Israelites are surprised to see something thin and flaky left behind. They ask Moses what it is, and Moses says it's the bread from Yahweh.

Pause the drama.

Act out Moses telling the people to only gather an omer's worth of bread for each person in their tent. Some people gather a little, some people gather a lot, but everyone has the right amount when they measure it.

Pause the drama.

Act out Moses telling the people not to store the bread for the next day. Some people obey but other people do not. Their stored bread grows maggots and stinks. They cannot eat it the next day. Moses becomes angry.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing a disobedient Israelite, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I thought that we may not have another opportunity to have food," or "I should have listened to Moses. It's hard to adapt to this new lifestyle," or "Frustrated. It is difficult to see all of that food melting away." [!end] Continue the drama.

Act out Yahweh continuing to provide bread every morning and the Israelites gathering it to have food in the desert.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 16:13–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

God sends quails for the Israelites to eat in the evening. The next day dew appeared on the ground. The dew leaves something thin and flaky on the ground when the water evaporates. The **Israelites** are surprised and ask what it is. The Israelites refer to the people group who were the sons, or descendants, of Jacob. Use the same word or phrase for Israel as you used in previous passages. For more information on Israel, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses tells the Israelites it is the bread **Yahweh** provided for his people. Be sure to use the same word for bread as you have in previous passages. Yahweh is the personal name for God, and it is used throughout this passage. Use the same name for Yahweh that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

God gives the people instructions for gathering the food. Moses becomes angry when some people do not follow his instructions about storing the bread. God continues to provide bread every day for his people as they travel.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 16:13–21

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (2616095 KB)

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Exodus 16:22–36

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 16:22–36 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 16:22–36 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 16:22–36 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Yahweh fulfilled his promise. He provided quail in the evening and bread from the sky every morning for the Israelites to eat while they are traveling to the Promised Land. Yahweh gave his people specific instructions for gathering the bread from the sky to see if his people would obey him. Now, Yahweh teaches his chosen people about the Sabbath, or the day of rest.

As you remember, the Israelites, or the descendants of Jacob, are traveling in the desert of Sin somewhere between the Red Sea and Mount Sinai.

Stop here and look at a map of the Sinai Peninsula highlighting the Red Sea, the desert area, and Mount Sinai as a group. Pause this audio here.

The Israelites are traveling as a group of 600,000 men with all of their families and possessions. Yahweh has just performed a miracle, or an act that only he can do, by providing daily bread for the Israelites from the sky. Yahweh then gave the Israelites commands or rules for gathering the manna.

One of the rules Yahweh gave was to collect twice as much manna on the sixth day so that they could rest on the seventh day. This would mean collecting two omers worth of manna for each person. As you remember, an omer is 2 quarts, or 1.8 liters. The Israelites obey Yahweh and collect twice as much manna on the sixth day after the manna appeared. The Israelite leaders, or the tribal leaders, are pleasantly surprised when there is enough manna for every person to collect twice as much as usual. The leaders go to Moses and tell him what has happened.

Moses speaks to the people on Yahweh's behalf and gives them Yahweh's instructions about the Sabbath. Later on, this will be one of the ten commandments Yahweh gives to Moses. Moses tells the people that tomorrow, or the seventh day, will be the Sabbath, or a solemn day of rest. The word sabbath means to stop. In this case, the people would stop working. Gathering food was the most basic kind of work and something everyone in ancient times had to do.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, what activities do people consider to be work? How do people rest from work where you live? Pause this audio here.

So Yahweh provides manna ahead of time so the people will not have to gather it on the seventh day. Instead, Moses instructs the people to cook the manna by baking it or boiling it so that they would not have to prepare it on the Sabbath. In this way, Yahweh wants his people to not only rest from working but also refocus and honor Yahweh as their holy God. Holy means that Yahweh is set apart from his creation and that he is morally perfect. Moses also calls the Sabbath holy, meaning it is set apart for the special purpose of resting and worshiping Yahweh.

Unlike the first five days, Moses tells the people to save or store what is left over from the double portion of cooked manna for the Sabbath. As you remember, up until now, Yahweh has not allowed the people to store manna overnight. Most of the Israelites obey Yahweh and wake up on the Sabbath to find that their cooked manna is still good to eat. It did not stink nor have worms. Moses tells them to eat the manna since Yahweh would not provide any more on the ground that day.

Moses uses repetition to emphasize that the Sabbath will be something the Israelites continue to practice as the chosen people of Yahweh. Every five days they will gather only enough manna as each person needs, and they will not store it. Every sixth day Yahweh would provide a double portion of manna for them to gather, but on the seventh day, the people would rest. In this way, Yahweh taught the Israelites about the Sabbath and their need for a day of rest and honoring him.

However, some of the Israelites did not obey Yahweh. They did not store their cooked manna overnight and tried to gather manna on the Sabbath, but they did not find any. Yahweh speaks to the Israelites through Moses. When Yahweh asks, "How long will you refuse to keep my commands and my laws or instructions?" Yahweh does not expect an answer. Instead he is rebuking the Israelites who did not obey him. Yahweh wants all of his people to trust him enough to follow his commands.

Moses uses a word like "see" to get the Israelites' attention. He wants them to understand that Yahweh gave them the Sabbath as a gift. That is why Yahweh provided a double portion of manna on the sixth day so that the people would not have to go out and gather food on the Sabbath. Moses tells the people to remain in their tents, or dwelling places. This does not mean they could not leave their tents at all, but was most likely meant to stop people from trying to go out and gather food. So the Israelites learned to rest on the seventh day and to set aside time for honoring and worshiping Yahweh.

Moses then describes the bread from the sky, or the food from Yahweh that the house, or family, of Israel called "manna." They called it manna because the word "manna" in Hebrew sounds like the Israelites' question, "What is it?" when they first saw the bread. The manna was white like the color of a coriander seed. He describes the taste of manna as being like wafers or thin cookies covered in honey. Honey is a thick, sweet substance made by bees that people find in the wild. This was another way of saying it was incredibly delicious.

Stop here and look at pictures of a coriander seed, a wafer, and bees on a honeycomb as a group. Discuss with your group: How would you describe the most delicious sweet food where you live? Pause this audio here.

Moses speaks on Yahweh's behalf and tells the people to save an omer's worth of the manna for future generations to see. A generation refers to people who live at the same time as each other, so Moses is talking about the descendants of the Israelites. They will not know what it is like to have Yahweh provide manna every day. Moses tells his brother Aaron to place the jar of manna in the presence of Yahweh. Later on, the presence of Yahweh will be represented in a different way. We know that "the Testimony" is the tablets of the law that God will eventually give to Moses. The Israelites often referred to these tablets as the Testimony. Yahweh will give the 10 commandments to Moses on Mount Sinai. Yahweh will instruct Moses to place the 10 commandments, which are also called the Testimony, with the jar of manna in the ark, or a special box that represents the very presence of Yahweh. Yahweh will cause the manna to stay fresh and not rot so that it will be a testimony to future generations of how he provided for his chosen people in the desert.

Now Moses summarizes the Israelites' journey. Moses tells us that the Israelites will continue to eat manna for 40 years in the desert until they reach habitable land, or land the Israelites can settle in. In this case, it refers to the land of Canaan, the land Yahweh promised to his people. For reference, Moses mentions that an omer, or two quarts, is one tenth of an ephah, or twenty quarts.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 16:22–36 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has five scenes.

In the first scene: The Israelites go out on the sixth day after Yahweh provided manna from the sky. Most people gather a double portion like Yahweh told them to, but some people do not.

In the second scene: The leaders report to Moses that there was enough manna for everyone to gather a double portion. Moses speaks on Yahweh's behalf saying: "Tomorrow is the Sabbath, a day of solemn rest." Moses tells them to cook the manna so it will be ready to eat for tomorrow.

In the third scene: Some of the Israelites obey Yahweh and cook the double portion of manna, but some people do not. They wake up to find the manna still good to eat. Moses tells the people to eat the cooked manna since Yahweh will not provide manna on the Sabbath. Moses tells them they will gather manna for six days but on the seventh day, they will rest.

In the fourth scene: The Israelites who did not store the double portion of manna go out on the Sabbath and search for manna but they cannot find any. Yahweh rebukes these Israelites through Moses saying, "How long will you disobey me?" Moses tells the people the Sabbath is Yahweh's gift to them and tells them not to leave their tents. The people rest on the Sabbath.

In the fifth scene: Moses tells Aaron to put manna in a jar and keep it continually in the presence of Yahweh so that future descendants will know how Yahweh provided for his people. Aaron obeys.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Aaron (Moses' brother)
- The Israelite leaders
- The Israelites who obey
- The Israelites who do not obey
- Yahweh

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It's important to remember that the Israelites are traveling in the desert as a group of more than 600,000 men with their families and possessions.

In the last passage, Yahweh told Moses that the Israelites should gather twice as much manna and cook it on the sixth day. So the Israelites are obeying Yahweh when they gather two omers, or twice as much manna.

When Moses speaks on Yahweh's behalf, he says "tomorrow" will be a day of rest. Here, tomorrow refers to the seventh day since the manna appeared.

It's important to remember that in the last passage, when some Israelites disobeyed Yahweh and kept the manna overnight, it spoiled and there were worms in it. The opposite happens now. The Israelites who obey Yahweh and keep the cooked manna overnight find that it stays fresh the next morning on the Sabbath.

It's important to remember that a day has passed when Moses says, "Eat it today..." It is the seventh day, the day after the Israelites gathered and cooked the double portion of manna.

When Yahweh asks, "How long will you refuse to keep my commands and my laws or instructions?" Yahweh is not speaking directly to Moses. Instead, the you is plural, and Yahweh is speaking through Moses to the Israelites who did not obey him. Yahweh does not expect an answer, but uses the question as a way to show his disappointment that they did not obey him.

It's important to remember that Moses uses a word like "see" to get the Israelites' attention. Moses wants them to realize that the Sabbath is Yahweh's gift to his people so that they can have a day to rest and worship him.

When Moses describes the manna as honey wafers, he is most likely saying it was crispy, sweet, and delicious.

Moses tells Aaron to save a jar of manna and keep it continually in the presence of Yahweh so that the descendants of the Israelites will remember what Yahweh did for Israel in the desert.

It's important to note that when Moses says the Testimony, he is referring to the tablets of stone on which Yahweh writes the 10 commandments on Mount Sinai. This event has not happened yet. Some translations use the word eventually to make sure people know this is a future event. In the future, when Moses does receive the 10 commandments, Aaron will place the jar of manna next to the 10 commandments in a special box called the ark. The ark will represent the presence of Yahweh.

It's important to remember that Moses uses a word like "now" to give a summary of when the Israelites traveled for 40 years until they reached the Promised Land, or the land of Canaan.

Moses then explains the measuring system, saying that an omer is a tenth of an ephah. An ephah is 20 quarts, so an omer was 2 quarts, or around 2.2 liters. This comment is extra information for Moses' audience.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 16:22–36 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has five scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Aaron (Moses' brother)
- The Israelite leaders
- The Israelites who obey
- The Israelites who do not obey
- Yahweh

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Act out the Israelites going out on the sixth day after Yahweh provided bread from the sky. Most people gather a double portion like Yahweh told them to, but some people do not.

Pause the drama.

Act out the leaders reporting to Moses that there was enough manna for everyone to gather a double portion. Yahweh speaks through Moses saying: "Tomorrow is the Sabbath, a day of solemn rest." Moses tells the people to bake or boil the manna so it will be ready to eat for tomorrow. Some of the Israelites obey Yahweh and cook the double portion of manna, but some people do not.

Pause the drama.

Act out the Israelites waking up to find the manna still good to eat. Moses tells the people to eat the cooked manna since Yahweh will not provide manna on the Sabbath. Moses tells them they will gather manna for six days but on the seventh day, they will rest.

Act out the Israelites who did not store the double portion of manna going out on the Sabbath and searching for manna but they cannot find any. Yahweh rebukes these Israelites through Moses saying, "How long will you disobey me?" Moses tells the people the Sabbath is Yahweh's gift to them and tells them not to leave their tents. The people rest on the Sabbath.

Pause the drama.

Act out the Israelites seeing the manna and asking, "What is it?" They have never seen anything like the bread from Yahweh. They decide to call it manna because it sounds like their question.

Act out Moses telling Aaron to put manna in a jar and to keep it continually in the presence of Yahweh so that future descendants will know how Yahweh provided for his people. Aaron obeys.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 16:22–36 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The Israelites go out and gather twice as much manna on the sixth day just as Yahweh commanded. **Yahweh** is the personal name for God, and it is used throughout this passage. Use the same name for Yahweh that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh speaks through Moses and teaches his people about the **Sabbath**. The word Sabbath means to stop-in this case, to stop working. Yahweh tells his people the seventh day will be set aside as a day of rest and worship of Yahweh. Yahweh will later give the Sabbath law as one of the ten commandments on Mount Sinai.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for Sabbath. Look up Sabbath in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh says the Sabbath is **holy**, or set apart for a special purpose. The Sabbath is holy because it is a day set apart to focus on Yahweh, who is separate from his creation and morally perfect. Use the same word for holy that you have used in previous passages. For more information on holy, refer to the Master Glossary.

After people go out and try to collect manna on the Sabbath, Yahweh asks Moses, "How long do you refuse to keep my **commandments** and my instructions?" Commandments refer to the rules God gave his people. Instructions or **law** refers to the instructions God gave to the Israelites through Moses. Use the same word or phrase for commandment and law as you used in previous passages. For more information on commandment and law, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses gives a summary of the sons, or descendants, of **Israel** and how they ate manna for 40 years. The sons of Israel refer to the people of Israel who are the descendants of Jacob. This was the group of more than 600,000 people who Yahweh freed from Egypt. Use the same word or phrase for Israel as you used in previous passages. For more information on Israel, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses tells Aaron to save an omer of manna in a jar to be kept in Yahweh's presence for future generations. Here, **generation** refers to a group of people who live at the same time as each other. Moses is referring to the descendants of the Israelites who will not know what it was like having Yahweh provide food from the sky every day. Use the same word or phrase for generation as you used in previous passages. For more information on generation, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses says the Israelites journeyed in the **wilderness** for 40 years before reaching the land of Canaan. A wilderness is a deserted place where no one lives and no one has cultivated the land. In Exodus, wilderness refers to the area around the mountain known as Sinai, or Horeb. There are no rivers in this area of wilderness. This wilderness was very dry and rocky. Use the same word or phrase for wilderness as you used in previous passages. For more information on wilderness, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 16:22–36

Audio Content

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Exodus 17:1–7

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 17:1–7 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 17:1–7 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.

6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 17:1-7 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

As you heard earlier in the story of Exodus, after Yahweh defeated the Egyptian army at the Red Sea, the Israelites entered a wilderness area where there was very little food and water. Twice the Israelites complained to Moses about not having food or water, and twice Yahweh did miracles to provide what the people needed.

This passage is part of the larger story of Israel's journey outside of Egypt to a mountain called Sinai and a land Yahweh promised to give them as their home. Yahweh was leading them to the mountain because there he would make a special agreement with them. But before Yahweh does that, he tested their obedience and trust in him.

This story is about the people of Israel again complaining to Moses because they have no water. They continued to not trust Yahweh for what they needed. But Yahweh graciously and mercifully provided water from a rock for them to drink. This story is an important and climactic event in Israel's history. It is so important that it is talked about many times throughout the Bible. This event is a symbolic picture of the Israelites' sin and rebellion against Yahweh. But it is also a picture of Yahweh's faithfulness and goodness to his people, in spite of their sin.

The story begins with Israel traveling to a place called Rephidim. The Israelites had been traveling from one place to another as Yahweh told them where to go. They traveled through the Wilderness of Sin until they came to a place called Rephidim. There, they stopped and set up their tents to stay for a period of time. But there was no water for the people to drink. Yahweh told the people to stop in Rephidim to test the people to see if they will trust him to provide the water they need.

But Rephidim is not like Marah, the place the people of Israel were before that had bitter water. At Rephidim, there is most likely no source of water or no way to access water that might be there.

Stop here and look at a map of the area called Wilderness of Sin and Rephidim as a group. Also look at the picture of the area of Rephidim. Pause this audio here.

Because there was no water, the people became angry with Moses and the people quarreled, or argued, with Moses. They demanded that Moses give them water to drink. Because Moses was the one who led them out of Egypt, the people might have thought Moses was responsible for their lives. The people were angry and hostile to Moses. They demanded he fix their situation immediately.

But Moses asks them, "Why are you arguing against me and why are you testing Yahweh?" Moses said this because the Israelites arguing showed that they did not trust Yahweh. They were trying to get what they wanted by questioning if Yahweh was really with them.

Earlier in the story of Exodus, when Yahweh had given the people of Israel food, he had tested them by giving them rules for collecting and eating it. Yahweh did this to see if the people would trust and obey him as their God. Here, the people test Yahweh in a bad way because Yahweh had already shown that he would care for them.

The people of Israel were thirsty for water in that place and they murmured, or grumbled, against Moses about not having any water. The people again accuse Moses of trying to kill them. They asked Moses, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt? Did you bring us out of Egypt to kill us and our children and our animals with thirst?" The two questions are a strong and hostile way the people accused Moses of not caring about them and even of having evil motives for rescuing them. Once again, slavery in Egypt sounds better than being free and trusting their lives to Yahweh.

If translating the questions directly into questions in your language will make it sound like the people are just curious, you can translate the questions into statements. Be careful to make sure the tone of the statements is angry and sounds like an accusation. Remember that the people of Israel left Egypt with flocks of goats and sheep and herds of cattle that would all need water as well.

Stop here and look at a picture of Israel's livestock as a group. Pause this audio here.

Faced with a grumbling group of people, Moses cried out to Yahweh and asked Yahweh what he should do. Moses told Yahweh the people were about to stone him. Stoning was when people threw rocks at someone until the person died. At that time, stoning was a way people in a community punished someone, especially for committing a sin or crime. The previous times the people complained to Moses, Moses was not afraid but asked Yahweh to give the people what they needed. This time, Moses seems to be afraid the people will kill him if they do not get water.

Yahweh tells Moses to take some of the elders of Israel and walk in front of the people, holding in his hand the staff that he struck the Nile with. Remember that the elders of Israel were usually those who were the leaders within their families and community. Yahweh tells Moses to take the elders with him so that they will be official witnesses for the community of what Yahweh would do that day.

The staff, or rod, that Moses was to hold was the same staff that Moses used in Egypt when Yahweh performed signs to convince Pharaoh to let the people of Israel leave. One of those signs was when Yahweh told Moses to strike the water of the Nile River with his staff and Yahweh turned the Nile water into blood. When Moses struck the Nile River, Yahweh took away drinking water. Here in Rephidim, Yahweh also told Moses to strike something, but this time Yahweh would give drinking water.

Moses' staff was an important symbol of Yahweh's power throughout the story of Israel's rescue from Egypt. But the staff by itself was not magical or powerful. It was only the symbol of Yahweh's power like the pillar of smoke was the symbol of Yahweh's presence. It is important you do not translate this passage in a way that communicates the staff itself has magical powers.

Stop here and review the picture of a staff or rod as a group. You may also want to review your translation of Exodus 7. Pause this audio here.

When Yahweh told Moses to walk in front of the people, Yahweh was confirming Moses was his chosen servant and representative to the Israelites. When Moses lead the elders to the place where Yahweh was waiting, Moses was acting like the pillar of smoke when the pillar led the way for the people. This is important because it means that when the people grumbled against Moses, they grumbled against Yahweh.

Yahweh assures Moses he will be with Moses and provide the people with what they need. Yahweh says very strongly that he will be standing there on the rock at Horeb, also called Mount Sinai. Yahweh tells Moses to strike the rock and that, after he strikes it, water will pour out of it and the Israelites will drink the water. Moses did everything Yahweh told him to do and the elders watched it all. It is important to note that Moses did only what Yahweh told him to do. Moses is acting on behalf of Yahweh so it is clearly Yahweh who makes the water flow out of the rock, not Moses. The rock is most likely a large boulder that is part of the bottom of the mountain.

Stop here and look at a picture of what is likely Mount Horeb and the kind of rocks on it as a group. Pause this audio here.

Throughout the Bible, mountains are significant. Horeb is most likely another name for Mount Sinai, the place where other important events in the history of Israel happened. Horeb is also called the mountain of Yahweh in other stories. It is the same place where Yahweh told Moses to go to Egypt and promised to be with him. Yahweh is often described as living on a mountain and significant meetings with Yahweh happen on mountains.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What kinds of places are significant for your community? Where do important and significant events often occur in your community? Pause this audio here.

Water is also a significant theme in the whole Bible. Water represents life and flourishing. Especially in later Bible books, water, especially flowing water, represents eternal life with Yahweh. So, it is an important and symbolic event that Yahweh provided his people with flowing water from the mountain of Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What resources are significant or symbolic in your community's history? Pause this audio here.

After this event, Moses called the name of that place Massah and Meribah, because the people of Israel quarreled and tested Yahweh by asking, "Is Yahweh with us or not?" This question means the people were assuming the answer to the question was no. The actions of the people of Israel clearly showed they doubted Yahweh was really with them, even though Yahweh's presence had been clear throughout their journey. The

question is an insult to Yahweh and reveals the people's unfaithfulness to Yahweh even though he had faithfully provided for them.

The names Moses chose would remind Israel of their rebellion against God. Massah means "proving" and is a name taken from the Hebrew word that means "test." Meribah means strife and is taken from the Hebrew word that means "quarrel," or "argue." It is common in the Bible for places to be named based on events that happened there.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your community name people and places?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 17:1-7 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: In the first scene, the people of Israel travel to a place called Rephidim that has no water. The people argue and complain against Moses and demand that he give them water.

In the second scene: Moses cries out to Yahweh for help because the people are murmuring against him. Yahweh tells Moses to go in front of the people with his staff and strike the rock that Yahweh will be standing on.

In the third scene: Moses names the place Masah-Meribah so that the people would always remember what they did and what Yahweh did for them.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- People of Israel
- Some of the elders of Israel
- Yahweh

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

- The people set up camp in Rephidim
- Rephidim had no water
- They were within walking-distance of a mountain called Horeb that is often another name for Sinai
- The mountain had at least one large rock on it

In the first scene, all the Israelite people set out from the Wilderness of Sin as part of their travels from place to place, as Yahweh instructed them to do. They set up their tents in Rephidim but there was no water for the people to drink. The statement that there was no water for the people to drink is important and is in contrast to the rest of the setting. This story continues the larger story of the people's travels throughout the wilderness area outside of Egypt. This first part moves the story along to set the scene for the next event. It is important to notice that Yahweh instructed the people at each step of their journey.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you talk about God giving instructions or commandments to his people? Pause this audio here.

Because there was no water, the people became angry with Moses and the people quarreled, or argued, with Moses. They demanded that Moses give them water to drink. It is important to note that the people of Israel demand, or command, Moses give them water for the purpose of drinking.

Now the story becomes a conversation between Moses and the Israelites. The story is told in a way that brings the listeners into the story as if they were there hearing what Moses and the people were saying. Moses asks the people, "Why are you arguing against me and why are you testing Yahweh?"

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people tell stories in your community? Have one team member share or retell an example of a story about a conversation between two or more people. Have the other team members listen to how they tell a story about people having a conversation. Pause this audio here.

The Israelites were thirsty in that place and they murmured, or grumbled, against Moses. They asked him, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt? Did you bring us out of Egypt to kill us and our children and our animals with thirst?" The order of the story is that first the people realized there was no drinking water and brought their argument to Moses. Now, the people have become thirsty and the situation has become more intense.

In the second scene, Moses cries out to Yahweh in desperation, "What should I do for these people? They are ready to stone me." This part of the story is the most important part of the story. Moses talks about his death by stoning like it is certainly going to happen.

Yahweh assures Moses he will be with Moses and provide the people with what they need. Yahweh says very strongly that he will be standing there on the rock at Horeb. Yahweh used a word usually translated into English as "behold" at the beginning of his reply to Moses to emphasize what he says next and mark it as very important.

Yahweh then tells Moses to strike the rock that Yahweh would be standing on. Yahweh then tells Moses that Yahweh would make water pour out of the rock and the Israelites would drink the water. Now the conversation between Moses and Yahweh is done. And Moses did everything Yahweh told him to do while the elders were watching.

The Bible uses the word "standing" as a way to describe Yahweh's presence in language humans can understand. It is likely that Yahweh did not actually appear as a human being standing on the rock. So far, Yahweh has only appeared as a pillar of cloud or a pillar of fire. It is possible Yahweh appeared as the pillar of cloud on the rock he wanted Moses to strike. But the text does not say explicitly how Yahweh appeared, so you should avoid translating it explicitly. If it is unnatural to use the word "standing" to describe God, translate it in a way that makes it clear Yahweh was present on the rock.

Stop here and act out what Yahweh told Moses to do. Make sure you include that some of the elders of Israel were watching. Pause this audio here.

In the third scene, Moses called the name of that place Massah and Meribah, because the people of Israel quarreled and tested Yahweh by saying, "Is Yahweh with us or not?" The story ends with a naming of the place and a summary of the important point of this event. The last part of this scene is a question: "Is Yahweh with us or not?" Remember to translate the question in a way that clearly communicates the people's question is an insult to Yahweh.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 17:1-7 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- The people of Israel
- The elders of Israel
- Yahweh

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

In the first scene, all the Israelite people set out from the wilderness of Sin as part of their travels from place to place, following what Yahweh told them to do. They set up their tents in Rephidim. But there was no water for the people to drink. The people argued with Moses and demanded that Moses give them water to drink.

Pause the drama.

Moses asks the people, "Why are you quarreling against me and why are you testing Yahweh?"

Pause the drama.

The people were thirsty for water in that place and they murmured, or grumbled, against Moses. They asked Moses why he had brought them out and said to him, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt? Did you bring us out of Egypt to kill us and our children and our animals with thirst?"

Pause the drama.

- I am angry at Moses for bringing us to a place with no water.
- I wish I was back in Egypt where there was plenty of water.
- We are worried that we and our families will not survive. [!end] Continue the drama.

In the second scene, Moses cried out to Yahweh saying, "What should I do for these people? They are ready to stone me."

Pause the drama.

Yahweh answers Moses by telling him to go out in front of the people with some of the elders of Israel. Yahweh also told Moses to take in his hand the staff that he used to strike the Nile River and to start walking to Mount Horeb, or Sinai. Yahweh says to Moses very strongly that Yahweh would be standing there on a rock at Horeb, and that Moses should strike the rock and Yahweh would make water pour out of the rock so that the people can drink it. And Moses did all that Yahweh told him to do while the elders were watching.

Pause the drama.

In the third scene, Moses called the name of that place Massah and Meribah, because the people of Israel quarreled and tested Yahweh by saying, "Is Yahweh with us or not?"

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 17:1-7 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

All the **Israelite** people set out from the Wilderness of Sin as part of their travels from place to place, as Yahweh instructed them to do. They set up their tents in Rephidim. But there was no water for the people to drink. The Israelites were descendants of Israel, or Jacob, whom God chose to be his people. Use the same word or phrase for Israelites, or people of Israel, as you used in previous passages. For more information on Israelites, refer to the Master Glossary.

In Israel, the **wilderness** was a place where wild animals lived and that had very few sources of food or water. A wilderness, or desert, is a barren place without water and almost no trees or bushes. People do not usually live in the wilderness. Use the same word or phrase for wilderness as you used in previous passages. For more information on wilderness refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh is the personal and proper name of God. Use the same word for Yahweh as you used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

Because of the lack of water, the people **argued** with Moses saying, "Give to us water to drink." Moses replies to the people saying, "Why are you arguing against me and why are you **testing** Yahweh?" The word translated "argued" means to struggle forcefully against someone and to be forcefully opposed to someone or something. In this passage, it refers to the people's attitude and how they talked to Moses. It does not mean physical fighting.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for argued. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Make sure to use the same word or phrase for argued throughout this story. Pause this audio here.

Testing means to put someone to the test to make them prove something. Use the same word or phrase for testing as you used in previous passages.

The people of Israel were thirsty for water in that place and they **murmured**, or grumbled, against Moses. The people accused Moses of trying to kill them by asking him, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt? Did you bring us out of Egypt to kill us and our children and our animals with thirst?" Murmured means to grumble or complain. Use the same word or phrase for murmured as you did in previous passages.

Moses cried out to Yahweh saying, "What should I do for these people? They are ready to stone me." Yahweh replies to Moses saying, "Go out in front of the people together with some of the **elders** of Israel. An elder is a person with authority in the community. In the Old Testament, an elder was usually the head of a family or a group of families. A group of elders would meet together to make decisions about the affairs in the community. Use the same word or phrase for elder as you used in previous passages. For more information on elder, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh also told Moses to hold his staff in his hand, the same staff that Moses used to hit the Nile River. Yahweh then told Moses to walk in front of the people to a rock on a mountain called Horeb. And Yahweh told Moses very strongly that he would be standing there on the rock at Horeb and Moses should strike the rock with his staff and Yahweh would make water pour out of the rock and the people would drink the water. Use the same word for **staff** as you did in previous passages.

When Moses had done what Yahweh commanded, and the people had drunk the water, Moses called the name of that place Massah and Meribah, because the people of Israel argued and tested Yahweh by saying, "Is Yahweh with us or not?"

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 17:1-7

Audio Content

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Exodus 17:8-16

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 17:8-16 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 17:8-16 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.

6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 17:8–16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This passage records an event that happened during the Israelites' journey from Egypt to the land Yahweh promised to give them called Canaan. Yahweh has continued to lead and provide for the Israelites after rescuing them from slavery in Egypt. He provided water and food despite the grumbling and complaining of the Israelites. The events in this passage happened right after Yahweh miraculously provided water for the Israelites from a rock in Rephidim. Rephidim was the last place Yahweh led Israel before directing them to a place called Mount Sinai where he would make a special agreement with them to prepare them for entering the land he promised to give them.

This story records a battle between Amalek and the Israelites when Yahweh gave Israel victory over Amalek. Amalek came to fight against Israel while they were staying at Rephidim.

Stop here and look at a map of Rephidim as a group. Pause this audio here.

Amalek is the name of one man, but Amalek here refers to the tribe that descended from Amalek. It was common for people to refer to a people group or tribe by the name of their ancestor.

Amalek was a descendant of Esau. Esau was the brother of Jacob, whom God later re-named Israel. Esau and Jacob were rivals and therefore their descendants also were rivals. Amalek's children became a roaming people group who traveled throughout the region. It is likely they would attack other tribes to take their possessions as a way of surviving in the wilderness area.

Another story in the Bible mentions this attack at Rephidim and records that the Israelites were tired from their travel. The weary and weak Israelites were easy for Amalek, or Amalekites, to attack. The Amalekites may also have thought of the Israelites as their enemies.

When the Amalekites attacked, Moses told a man named Joshua to choose men and go out and fight against the Amalekites. Moses tells Joshua that tomorrow he would be standing on top of the hill holding the staff of God. Moses' instructions show that Moses trusts that God is present with his people. The staff of God, the staff that Moses takes with him, symbolizes God's presence and power. Often when God performed a miracle to save his people, he instructed Moses to use the staff. The staff, or rod, of God was the same staff Moses used to strike the Nile River and to recently strike the rock.

Moses gives his instructions to a man named Joshua. The passage here does not say who Joshua was, but later in the story of Israel the author describes Joshua as Moses' assistant. After Moses' death, Joshua led the people of Israel into the land God promised to give them.

Here, Moses told Joshua to choose men for the people of Israel. Some translations say, "Choose some of our men." The people of Israel did not have an army so Moses is most likely telling Joshua to gather together as many men as he can find who are healthy and fit enough to fight.

Joshua obeys Moses' instructions, and by the next day the men are ready to fight. It is possible that the Amalekites made a brief attack first before gathering for a large battle later. This would have given the Israelites time to prepare before a large battle the next day. The important thing to note here is that the Amalekites made it clear they were going to fight the Israelites and the Israelites only had one day to get ready for the fight.

Joshua and the chosen men of Israel started to fight the Amalekites just like Moses instructed. Meanwhile, Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of a nearby hill that overlooked where the battle was taking place. Aaron is Moses' brother who went with him to Egypt. The author does not tell us who Hur was, but later, together with Aaron, he acts as a judge over Israel when Moses is absent.

Stop here and look at a picture of the hills in Rephidim as a group. Pause this audio here.

While Moses was standing on the hill, he would raise his hands. And whenever he raised his hands, the Israelites were winning the battle. But whenever he rested his hands, the Amalekites were winning the battle. When Moses' hands were heavy, or tired, Aaron and Hur took a stone large enough to sit on and put it under him, so

he sat on it. And Aaron and Hur held up his hands, one on one side and one on the other side. And his hands remained steady until the sun set.

Earlier, Moses had also raised, or stretched out, his hand, according to Yahweh's instruction when Yahweh brought the plagues on Egypt. In this story, Moses was most likely not praying to Yahweh but acknowledging Yahweh's power and divine control over the world, including the outcome of this battle. The raised staff symbolized Yahweh overseeing the battle and fighting for his people against the Amalekites. So when Moses kept his hands raised, the Israelites were winning because Yahweh's power was with them. But when Moses lowered his hands when he got tired, the Amalekites started to win.

However, Moses is a normal human being who gets tired. Remember that Moses is holding the staff of God in his hand. Moses himself is not divine and he does not have any special power of his own. So Aaron and Hur held up Moses' hands so that his hands remained raised the whole day of the battle.

Joshua overcame the Amalekite army with the sword. The battle is over and God has given the Israelites victory. Saying "with the sword" is a normal expression of that time period because swords were the primary weapons that people used in battle. The Israelites and the Amalekites both used swords to fight.

Stop here and look at a picture of swords from that time period as a group. Pause this audio here.

It was common during that time to record a victory under the name of the leader of the army. Therefore, the story says Joshua overcame the Amalekites, but the Israelites only won the victory by God's power. Joshua himself cannot say the victory was because of his good leadership or because the Israelite army was so strong. This is because when Moses lowered his hands and the staff of God, the Amalekites started to overcome the Israelites. The staff was the symbol of God's power. When the staff was raised, it symbolized Yahweh fighting for his people and the people's dependence and trust in Yahweh for their strength. The Israelites were only able to overcome their enemy because God gave them the victory.

Now, Yahweh gives Moses special instructions. He tells Moses most likely to record both the story of the fight with Amalek and a promise that Yahweh would completely destroy the memory of Amalek on the earth. Yahweh wants everyone to remember how Yahweh gave Israel victory over their enemies. Yahweh also wants to "put the memory in the ears of Joshua," or make sure that Joshua hears and remembers this story.

Joshua will one day lead Israel into the land God promised to give them. Joshua will be the nation's general and leader who will have the responsibility to protect the nation against its enemies. Joshua needs to remember that Yahweh has declared war against the Amalekites.

Stop here and look at a picture of a scroll as a group. Pause this audio here.

[action] Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How does your community make sure important events are remembered? Pause this audio here.

Ultimately it is Yahweh who declares that he will "erase the memory of Amalek from under heaven." This means Yahweh promises to destroy the Amalekites from the earth, so that no one will remember them. Attacking Yahweh's people is like attacking Yahweh himself. Yahweh's declaration was also the fulfillment of a promise. Yahweh promised Abraham, the ancestor of the people of Israel, that he would curse any nation that curses Abraham's descendants.

Then Moses built an altar and called it "Yahweh is my Banner." Building an altar was the way Moses and the people of Israel thanked and praised Yahweh for what he did. Moses named the altar based on what happened in the battle against Amalek. A banner was something that people lifted up so that everyone could see it. Usually, a banner was a pole that fighting men would gather around in a military battle to receive instructions or get encouragement. Perhaps the staff of God is like Israel's pole that represented Yahweh's power and presence among his people as they fight. The banner Moses refers to here represents victory. Yahweh is the victory.

Stop here and look at a picture of an altar as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of a signal pole as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people commemorate, or remember, important events? Pause this audio here.

What Moses said next is difficult to understand, but it is most likely that Moses named the altar "Yahweh is my Banner" because he says that "hands were on the throne of Yahweh." We do not know exactly what this means, but we know that Moses' hand held the staff of God. The staff of God symbolized Yahweh's presence in the same way that Yahweh's throne symbolized his presence and authority over the world. The name of the altar demonstrated that Moses and the Israelites recognized that they trusted Yahweh and Yahweh gave them their victory. Yahweh would be at war with the Amalekites from generation to generation, or forever. This is most likely a summary of what happens because the Amalekites did not recognize Yahweh's authority and power.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 17:8–16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: The Amalekites attack the people of Israel at Rephidim. Moses gives instructions to Joshua and tells him he will stand on the hill with the staff of God.

In the second scene: Joshua obeys Moses and fights against the Amalekites. Moses holds his hands up. When his arms get tired, Aaron and Hur hold up Moses' hands.

In the third scene: Yahweh tells Moses to record the events of the battle and says he will one day destroy the Amalekites. Moses builds an altar out of gratitude and praise to Yahweh and names it.

The characters in this passage are:

- Amalekites
- Moses
- Joshua
- Israelites
- Fighting men of Israel
- Yahweh
- Aaron
- Hur

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: The people of Israel are still in Rephidim. There are hills in the area.

Stop here and look again at the map of the Rephidim area and the photo of the hills in the area as a group. Pause this audio here.

The Amalekites came and fought against them at Rephidim. Remember, this event happens while the Israelites are still at Rephidim.

Moses said to Joshua, "Choose for us men and go out and fight against the Amalekites. Tomorrow I will be standing on top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand." The passage starts by saying the Amalekites fought the Israelites. But here it sounds like the people had time to prepare for battle. Most likely, the Amalekites made a first attack before fighting the larger group. The Israelites had time to plan their counter-attack for the next day.

This is the first time in the story of the Israelites that the man Joshua is mentioned. Joshua will become an important leader for the people of Israel, but in this story we do not know much about him yet.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you introduce new characters in stories in your language? Pause this audio here.

Moses, Aaron, and Hur go up to the top of a nearby hill while Joshua and his chosen men start to fight the Amalekites. Notice that this happens the next day and Joshua leads the fighting men of Israel to fight the Amalekites. Moses, Aaron, and Hur are standing on top of a hill. Most likely the hill overlooks where the battle is taking place but is high enough and far enough away that Moses, Aaron, and Hur are safe from attack.

While Moses was standing on the hill, he would raise his hands. And as long as he raised his hand, the Israelites were winning the fight. But as long as he rested his hand, the Amalekites were winning the fight. Remember that although the story does not say this here, Moses would have been holding the staff of God in his hand the whole time he was on the hill.

When Moses' hands were heavy, or became tired, most likely Aaron and Hur took a stone and put it under him and he sat on it. If you have a special way of talking about parts of your body becoming tired, you could use it here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you talk about physical tiredness in your language? Pause this audio here.

While Moses was sitting down, Aaron and Hur held up Moses' hands, one on one side and one on the other side. And Moses' hands remained steady until the sun set. Notice, in the timeline of the story, the battle was finished when the day was done and it was night.

So Joshua overcame the Amalekite army with the sword. This part of the story tells the result, or what happened next, that was because of what Moses did. Joshua defeated the Amalekites in battle where they used swords. Even though the story says that Joshua overpowered the Amalekite army, it was Yahweh who gave victory to Joshua and all of Israel.

After the battle is done, the story continues to what happens next. Yahweh instructs Moses to write most likely an account of the battle and Yahweh's promise to completely erase the memory of the Amalekites from the earth. Yahweh told Moses to write this down so that the Israelites would always remember it and told Moses to make sure Joshua especially heard it and remembered it. Moses then built an altar and called it "Yahweh is my Banner." Moses most likely names the altar this because of what he did during the battle, because he said hands were lifted up to the throne of Yahweh.

The last part of this story is most likely a summary statement of Yahweh's response to what the Amalekites did. Yahweh promises to forever be at war with the Amalekites.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 17:8–16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Aaron
- Hur
- Joshua
- People of Israel
- Fighting men of Israel
- Amalekites
- Yahweh

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

The Amalekites came and fought with the Israelites at Rephidim.

Pause the drama.

Then Moses said to Joshua, "Choose for us men and go out and fight against the Amalekites. Tomorrow I will be standing on top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand."

Pause the drama.

Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the hill overlooking the battle. Joshua and the chosen men of Israel fought against the Amalekites just like Moses instructed him. While Moses was standing on the hill, he would raise his hands. And as long as he raised his hands, the Israelites were winning the battle. But as long as he rested his hand, the Amalekites were winning the battle. When Moses' hands became tired, Aaron and Hur took a stone and put it under him and he sat on it. And Aaron and Hur held his hands, one on one side and one on the other side. And his hands remained steady until the sun set. So, Joshua destroyed the Amalekites with the sword.

Pause the drama.

Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Write this in a book as a memory and repeat it in the hearing of Joshua, for I will surely wipe out the memory of Amalek from under heaven." And then Moses built an altar and called its name "Yahweh is my banner." Moses most likely named the altar this because he said hands were lifted up to the throne of Yahweh. The story finishes with a summary of Yahweh's response to what the Amalekites did by restating the promise Yahweh told Moses to write down, that Yahweh would be at war against Amalek forever.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 17:8-16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The Amalekites came and fought with the people of Israel at Rephidim. If your translation says Amalek, translate this in a way that makes it clear Amalek refers to a whole people group and not one person.

Moses said to Joshua, "Choose for us men and go out and fight against the Amalekites. Tomorrow I will be standing on top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand." The **staff**, or rod, of God was the same staff Moses used to strike the Nile River in Egypt and to recently strike the rock on the mountain. Use the same word or phrase for staff as you used in previous passages.

God is the general term for God, not the personal name Yahweh. Use the same term for God that you have used in previous passages. For more information on God, refer to the Master Glossary.

Joshua fought against the Amalekites just like Moses instructed him and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. While Moses was standing on the hill, he would raise his hands. And as long as he raised his hands, the **Israelites** were winning the battle. Israelites refers to the people who are descendants of Abraham. Use the same word or phrase for Israelites as you used in previous passages. For more information on Israelites, refer to the Master Glossary.

Then **Yahweh** said to Moses, "Write this on a **scroll** as something to be remembered and make sure that Joshua hears it, because I will completely wipe out the memory of Amalek from under heaven." Yahweh is the personal and proper name of God. Use the same word for Yahweh as you used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

Heaven here could refer to either the place God lives or the sky. The phrase "under heaven" means everywhere on earth.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for "under heaven." Look up heaven in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

A **scroll** was a piece of material like paper, usually made out of plant fibers. A person would usually write on one side and then roll up the piece from one end to the other. This was a common way people wrote letters, announcements, or recorded important events. Some translations might say book instead of scroll.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for scroll, or book. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

Moses built an **altar** and called it "Yahweh is my banner." He said, "For hands were lifted up to the throne of Yahweh. Yahweh will be at war against the Amalekites **from generation to generation**." Altars were used for worshiping Yahweh which included making sacrifices to Yahweh or commemorating important events. Worship always included thanksgiving and praise for what Yahweh has done. Use the same word or phrase for altar as you used in previous passages. For more information on altar refer to the Master Glossary.

*Stop here and look at the picture of a banner, or signal pole, as a group. Discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **banner**. A banner is something that can be raised up high so that people can see it or see something on it. Here it might refer to a pole that could be used in a battle for soldiers to gather around for instructions or encouragement. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

A **generation** refers to all the people who are born around the same time until they start having children themselves. It also refers to the time period of those people or the length of time of one lifetime. In this passage, the phrase "from generation to generation" means there will never be a generation when Yahweh will not be an enemy of the Amalekites.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for "from generation to generation." Look up generation in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 17:8-16

Audio Content

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Exodus 18:1-12

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 18:1-12 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 18:1-12 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 18:1-12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This story is a narrative about Moses and the Israelites after they left Egypt. Before this story, Yahweh saved the Israelites from Egyptian slavery and made plans to help them. Yahweh miraculously provided food and water in the desert. Yahweh also helped the Israelites win their first battle against an enemy, the Amalekites. We know that this story happened after the war with the Amalekites, but we do not know how long after. This story may have happened right after the Israelites won the war against the Amalekites, or it may have happened a couple of weeks later after the Israelites arrived at Mount Sinai. In any case, this story happened around the time that the Israelites were at Mount Sinai or on their way to Mount Sinai after the battle with the Amalekites. The story reunites Moses with his wife, children, and father-in-law, Jethro.

This story reintroduces Jethro. Jethro is the father-in-law of Moses, or the father of Moses's wife, Zipporah. Jethro was a Midianite. Midianites were the children and descendants of Abraham and his concubine, Keturah. The concubine is the second wife who is not fully free or equal in status to the first wife, therefore the Midianites were not born free like Isaac and his son, Jacob, also called Israel. The Midianite children of a concubine are legitimate but are lower than the children of the first wife. The Midianites were not the chosen, promised people like Isaac and his son, and they did not inherit the Promised Land. Long ago, Abraham probably would have raised his son Midian to know about Yahweh. Because Midian was the son of the concubine Keturah, Midian would probably not have followed Yahweh in the same way as Isaac did. In this story, Jethro worshiped a god and was a priest, meaning a religious leader for the Midianites, the descendants of Midian. It is unclear if Jethro fully knew Yahweh or if Jethro knew only a little about Yahweh. In this passage, Jethro heard what the God of Creation had done for Moses and the Israelites. Jethro also heard how the same one true God, whose name was Yahweh, had freed the Israelites from Egypt. Jethro's response in this passage is very different than the Amalekites response to the Israelites in the previous story.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In this passage the story writer uses both the general word for the God of Creation and Yahweh the One True God for the same Holy Yahweh.

- What does it mean to use different names with different meanings in different stories for the same person?
- Talk about times when you would use two different names or titles for the same person in the same story. When would you do this?
- Why would you choose one name instead of the other one?
- How will you share with people the two different names of Yahweh and they mean the same God? Pause the audio here.

Stop here and look at a map: Look at the map of the Sinai Peninsula and Midian territory. Jethro lived in Midian. Moses left Egypt in the west. Moses was in Rephidim just before this. Moses was now at or near Mount Sinai in the south part of the Sinai Peninsula.

- How did Jethro hear that Moses had come?
- Who was telling him?

Discuss as a group how information was shared in the Bible.

- How do people in your culture share information across a long distance?
- What do they do if they cannot use their usual ways of communicating?

Pause the audio here.

Before this passage, Moses had sent his wife, Zipporah, and his two sons to her father Jethro, a priest of the Midian people. Jethro took Zipporah and the two sons to live with Jethro away from Egypt. Earlier, Moses gave each son a name with extra meaning about the life of Moses. The first son of Moses was Gershom which means a visitor, traveler, or stranger living in a place for a while. Moses named his second son Eliezer which means the God of Moses helped and delivered Moses from the sword of Pharaoh. "Delivered from the sword of Pharaoh" means God saved Moses from Pharaoh trying to kill him when Moses was a young man. Jethro now hears that Moses and the Israelites were free from Egypt and were near Midian. Jethro takes Zipporah and the two sons to meet Moses in the wilderness, or desert area, at or near Mount Sinai.

Stop here and show a photo of the wilderness around Mount Sinai. Pause this audio here.

Jethro sends a message to Moses letting him know Jethro, Zipporah, and the sons will arrive soon. We do not know how the message was sent or how much time passed before Moses stepped out of his tent to greet them. Moses stepping outside the tent to greet Jethro shows Moses thought Jethro was an honored man like a visiting dignitary from another country. Moses was also showing respect to the father of his wife. Moses did not stay inside and wait for Jethro to come to him. Moses bowed his head low to be lower than the head of Jethro to show respect. Moses may have bowed his head to the ground. Moses probably kissed the cheek or air beside the cheek of Jethro to show respect. Jethro asked Moses about his welfare, or health. Moses asked Jethro about his welfare, or health.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Every family shares information differently. How does your family send messages to each other? What kinds of special places do your family meet at? Moses and Jethro both knew Mount Sinai and how to find it. Pause this audio here.

Every people group has ways of showing respect. Jethro was an important Midianite religious leader. Jethro was also the father of Moses's wife.

Discuss how you show important people respect.

- How is that different from how you are polite to common or unimportant people?
- How do people show their family respect?
- How do people show their family love?

Pause the audio here.

Jethro and Moses asked about each others' welfare, or health. They were asking each other if they were at peace, which refers to them having a full and complete life. People often used this word for peace as a blessing to wish on them fullness of life, which includes unity in their family and community, and good health.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Discuss as a group how people in your language ask how people are doing when they greet someone. Have team members act out greeting a family member they have not seen in a long time. Listen to the words and phrases they use.

- What kinds of questions do they ask?
- How long do the greetings take between family members who have not seen each other in a long time?
- How do the family members give news about their lives to each other?

Pause the audio here.

After Moses and Jethro finished greeting, the two men went into the tent of Moses. We know that Zipporah and the sons arrived but they may not have gone into his tent. In that culture, men and women had separate tents and the children stayed with the women. The focus of this story is Jethro and Moses. Jethro and Moses entered the tent alone even though Jethro is a foreign visitor. The other Israelite leaders will not socialize or visit with him. In the tent, Moses recounts, or explains, to Jethro all Yahweh did. Moses explains that Yahweh defeated Pharaoh and the Egyptians for the Israelites. Moses tells about both the victories and the hard times. Moses is truthful and honest with Jethro.

Jethro heard about Yahweh. For the first time, Jethro praised Yahweh, the one true God. Jethro accepted the God of creation as the same God, Yahweh, the one true God for the first time. Yahweh rescued the Israelites and defeated the powerful Egyptians. Jethro makes a personal connection with Yahweh. Jethro says "now I know," which means I did not understand before but now I understand or now I recognize and connect with Yahweh. Yahweh is the one true God and he is higher than all other gods Jethro has heard about. Jethro is convinced Yahweh is the highest because Moses shared with Jethro the truth about how God saved the Israelites from the Egyptians.

Next, Jethro decides to honor God of Creation with Moses, who is part of his family. Jethro brought an animal to burn whole. In ancient times, people commonly brought sacrifices to gods to show that they are turning to the god and want to be loyal to him. Although the Israelites did not know everything about Yahweh's sacrificial system yet, people understood that something must die so people can live. We know from earlier passages that Jethro owned sheep and goats so it is possible that the animal he brought was a sheep or goat. Jethro also brought other gifts to God to sacrifice. The gifts are unclear but they could be grain or bread. Moses's brother, Aaron, and other Israelite elders joined the thanksgiving to God at the altar of God. Aaron, the Israelite elders, Moses, and Jethro worshiped and ate a sacred meal together before God. The meal was unified worship before Yahweh between two people groups. The meal was significant to show different people groups can worship God together. The meal also showed that Israelite leaders accepted Jethro into fellowship, or community, with Israel.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Until now only Moses spoke to Jethro. Now Aaron meets with Jethro. Aaron will become the first high priest for the freed Israelites. Perhaps Aaron oversaw the sacrifices to God for Jethro.

- In your culture, who presents the gifts from people to God?
- How did Aaron and the elders recognize the change in Jethro?
- In your culture, what do you do when you sacrifice something?
- How does your culture understand and give sacrifices to divine beings?

Pause the audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: The men ate a special meal before God to worship God together.

- How do you worship God together as a group of people?
- What kinds of things do you do?
- Discuss how people worship together who are different from you.
- Discuss how strangers can join worship with you.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 18:1–12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Before this passage, Moses sent his wife and two sons to live with Jethro, the father of his wife. In this passage, Jethro heard about everything God did for Moses and the Israelites to be free of the Egyptians. Jethro heard that Yahweh brought Israel out of Egypt. Jethro sends a message to Moses. Jethro tells Moses he is coming and bringing Zipporah and the two sons. Moses leaves his tent to greet Jethro. Moses and Jethro both ask how each other is doing, or if they have peace or good health. Moses and Jethro go into the tent of Moses.

In the second scene: Inside the tent, Moses shares stories about Yahweh with Jethro. Moses tells Jethro all the ways Yahweh saved the Israelites. Yahweh punished Pharaoh and the Egyptians. Yahweh freed the Israelites from the Egyptians. Jethro rejoices because Yahweh did many good things to save Israel from Pharaoh and Egypt. Jethro blesses Yahweh. Jethro understands that Yahweh is the greatest of all the gods he knows about.

In the third scene: Next, Jethro wants to honor Yahweh with a sacrifice. Jethro brings animals and other items to sacrifice, perhaps grain, bread, or wine. Although Aaron is probably not yet officially the high priest of Israel, he joins the sacrifice. Elders and respected men of Israel also join Moses, Jethro, and Aaron for the sacrifice. The sacrifice takes place in the special place where Israelites sacrifice to Yahweh. The men eat together as part of the worship experience.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Jethro
- Zipporah with the two sons (travel with Jethro but do not speak in this passage)
- Aaron (does not speak in this passage)
- Elders of Israel (do not speak)

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In scene one, the characters are spread apart. In the far southeast, the land of Midian, is Jethro, Zipporah, and the two sons. Moses sent his wife Zipporah and her two sons to live with Jethro a long time before this passage. In the beginning of this passage, Jethro hears news about Moses and the Israelites in Egypt.

Moses, Aaron, and the elders of Israel are in the far west, near the Nile River, above or near the Red Sea. Moses and the Israelites travel southeast towards Mount Sinai. The Israelites battle the Amalekites just before this passage as the Israelites travel southeast to Mount Sinai. Mount Sinai is between Egypt and Midian. Notice the Israelites do not go to Midian. It is unclear exactly how Jethro heard what happened to Moses and the Israelites.

Stop here and look at a map: Look at the map of the Sinai Peninsula and Midian territory. Notice both Israelites and Jethro are moving to the center of the map near Mount Sinai. The center of the map is the traditional site of Mount Sinai, but it is possible Mount Sinai was in a different location. Mount Sinai is a very large mountain. It was probably well known at the time. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss the following question: People send messages different ways. How will you explain the idea of passing a message such a long way? Pause the audio recording here.

We now hear about Moses's family and how Moses named his sons before this story happened. The names show what happened in Moses's life. Moses says that God saved him from the "sword of Pharaoh." A sword is a long knife that people can use to kill animals or other people. The "sword of Pharaoh" is special language that means that God saved Moses from Pharaoh killing him.

Stop here and discuss the following question: How will you explain that the names of the boys have meaning? How will you explain that the meanings are from stories from before this story about the life of Moses? Pause this audio here.

Moses arrives near Mount Sinai first. Jethro is a priest for the Midian people. He is respected in Midian. Jethro sent a message ahead of himself to Moses to let Moses know Jethro, Zipporah, and the two sons were coming to Moses. When Jethro arrived at camp, someone told Moses, and Moses left his tent to greet Jethro. Moses bows to Jethro. Moses kisses Jethro. Moses and Jethro each ask about the peace of each man, or his health, or how he is doing. Moses bowed his head lower than the head of Jethro. Moses probably bowed and touched his head to the ground in front of Jethro to show honor and respect to the father of his wife and the priest of Midian. Moses greeted Jethro before he acknowledged Zipporah or his sons because of the custom of the people.

Stop here and discuss this as a group: How do people in your language show honor? How do people greet family they have not seen for a long time? Moses kissed Jethro on the cheek. The kiss was a friendly kiss for greeting only. It may have lightly touched the cheek or the air next to the cheek. How will you show the kiss between Moses and Jethro in your language? Pause this audio here.

The Bible never states that Moses greets Zipporah or the sons. Zipporah and the sons stayed out of the tent. In the culture at the time, men and women had separate tents. In this passage, it is unclear if Moses had prepared a tent for Zipporah, his wife, and the sons, but most likely they are in another tent. Moses did not greet his wife and sons in this story, but he probably greeted them later, according to the culture of that time.

Scene two begins with Moses and Jethro inside the tent of Moses. Moses tells Jethro about Yahweh. Yahweh was more powerful than Pharaoh and Egypt. Moses talks about Yahweh completing miracles in earlier passages. Moses told the truth and did not hide the painful times. Yahweh saved Israel again and again in Egypt and after being freed from Egypt. Moses told Jethro how Yahweh rescued Israel from the troubles and scary problems.

Stop here and discuss: It is unclear what was in the tent. Moses would have been a good host as Moses shared with the honored guest in the home of Moses. Pretend you are a host or have an important visitor in your home. What would you do? It was hot in the desert and cooler in the shade of the tent. What kind of things do you do after a long trip? Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, where would two friends sit in a tent as they are talking? Moses cares a lot about Jethro. How will you show you care a lot about your visitor? Moses wants to share very important news about Yahweh with Jethro. Moses wants Jethro to understand more about Yahweh. How can Moses help Jethro be more comfortable so Jethro will listen and learn about Yahweh? Pause the audio recording here.

Scene two ends with Jethro rejoicing over the victory of Yahweh. Yahweh defeated Pharaoh and the Egyptians. Yahweh rescued Israel. Jethro blessed Yahweh. Jethro exclaims Yahweh frees Israel from arrogant Pharaoh and Egypt. Jethro is convinced that Yahweh is greater than all those gods that people worship.

Scene three begins with Jethro wanting to honor Yahweh with a sacrifice. Jethro took or brought a whole animal to be sacrificed. The Bible does not say Jethro killed the animal. Jethro, Moses, or Aaron may have sacrificed the animal. Aaron will someday be the high priest of the Israelites, so it may have been Aaron who sacrificed the animal. Aaron and the Israelite elders came to join Moses and Jethro. Now Jethro the Midianite, who is family of Moses and a distant relative of Israel, will worship the God of Creation as one family together with the Israelites.

The whole animal they sacrificed may have been a sheep or a goat, because we know that Jethro owned sheep and goats. Jethro offered other sacrifices. Other sacrifices may have been animals, grains, bread, or wine. Other

animals or grain were not burned completely like the whole animal so Jethro, Moses, Aaron, and the elder Israelites could eat some of those animals together as part of worship. Jethro the Midianite and the Israelites united during the worship meal. This is significant because both the Midianites and the Israelites were descendants of Abraham from long ago.

Stop here and discuss: Jethro recognized that Yahweh is the saving God. Jethro wanted to recognize or honor Yahweh because Jethro understands Yahweh is the greatest. How do people in your culture show honor? How do people show when they understand a new and wonderful idea? Many people believe Jethro may have accepted Yahweh as the one true God in this story. Jethro is excited about Yahweh. How will you show excitement for Yahweh and the victories of Yahweh that Jethro understands?

Jethro, Moses, Aaron, and the elders ate together in the presence of God. This means that their meal was an act of worship to God together.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How will you act out the worship meal? How will you talk about eating together "in the presence of God?" Pause the audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 18:1-12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has three scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Jethro
- Zipporah with the two sons (travel with Jethro but do not speak in this passage)
- Aaron (does not speak in this passage)
- Elders of Israel (do not speak)

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

As scene one begins, Jethro, Zipporah, and the sons of Zipporah are living in Midian in the East. Before this passage, Moses had sent his wife, Zipporah, and his two sons to the father of Zipporah, Jethro, a priest of the Midian people. Jethro took Zipporah and the two sons to live with Jethro away from Egypt. Earlier, Moses gave each son a name with extra meaning about the life of Moses. The first son of Moses was Gershom which means a visitor, traveler, or stranger living in a place for a while. Moses named his second son Eliezer which means the God of Moses helped and delivered Moses from the sword of Pharaoh. Delivered from the sword of Pharaoh means God saved Moses from Pharaoh trying to kill him earlier.

Now, Jethro hears all the God of Creation has done for Moses and the Israelites. Jethro hears that Yahweh brought Moses and the Israelites out of Egypt.

Pause the drama.

Ask the actors playing Zipporah and the sons, "How do the names of the sons show the true feelings of Moses?" You may hear answers like, "Moses felt like a stranger in Egypt and in Midian because he was a Hebrew," or "Moses was lonely since Moses never had a home just for Moses," or "Moses knew someday he would travel a long way before living in the promised land."

Ask the actor playing Jethro how Jethro felt when Zipporah and the sons came to live with Jethro. You may hear answers like, "I was surprised to see my daughter. She was a married woman and a mother. Was Zipporah in trouble with Moses?" or "Why was Zipporah not with Moses? Were Zipporah and the sons in danger?" or "What can I do to keep Zipporah and the sons safe and healthy?"

Ask the actor playing Jethro how Jethro felt about Moses. You may hear answers like, "I like Moses and I miss him," or "I was surprised and worried and angry Moses sent my daughter and the sons across the dangerous desert without Moses for protection," or "I know God blessed Moses and I am curious about what is happening to Moses."

Ask the actor playing Moses how he feels about Jethro. You may hear answers like, "I admire the father of my wife. I want him to know Yahweh like I know Yahweh," or "I need help from Jethro to keep Zipporah and the boys safe," or "I know Jethro can keep Zipporah and the boys safe away from Pharaoh."

Ask the actor playing Moses how he feels about Zipporah and the sons. You may hear answers like, "I know my wife Zipporah is a smart, capable woman who can cross a desert safely because she grew up in a desert," or "I sent Zipporah and the boys away so my family will stay free from slavery," or "I love and miss Zipporah and my two sons very much." [!end] Continue the drama.

Now Jethro hears how God helped Moses and the Israelites and freed the Israelites from Pharaoh and the Egyptians. Jethro travels to meet Moses at or near Mount Sinai. Jethro brings Zipporah and the two sons. Jethro sends a message to Moses telling Moses the travel plan of Jethro, Zipporah, and the two sons. Moses receives the message and goes out of his tent to greet Jethro. When Moses sees Jethro, Moses bows to Jethro and kisses the cheek of Jethro. Both Jethro and Moses ask about the other man and his health, or peace, or how he is doing.

Pause the drama.

Ask the actor playing Moses how he feels after seeing his family after such a long time and so many dangers. You may hear answers like, "I hope Jethro is well. Jethro is a very old man and the trip would be hard for him. I am so humbled that Jethro would travel to see me," or "I love my family and want to show respect," or "I miss them after being without them in Egypt." [!end] Continue the drama.

As scene two begins, Moses and Jethro enter the tent. Moses tells Jethro about all the ways Yahweh rescues Moses and the Israelites from the arrogant Pharaoh and the Egyptians. Yahweh delivers the Israelites from the Egyptians. Moses explains the hard experiences. Moses explains Yahweh is solving problems with miracles. Next Jethro was glad about Yahweh achieving victory over Egypt and Pharaoh. Jethro exclaims a blessing for Yahweh. Jethro testifies that Yahweh delivered Moses and the Israelites from the control of Pharaoh and the Egyptians. Jethro proclaims Yahweh the greatest of all gods Jethro has heard about.

Pause the drama.

Ask the actor playing Jethro how Jethro feels when Jethro hears the stories. You may hear answers like, "I was amazed," or "I was curious about Yahweh," or "I now understand why Zipporah needed to stay with me," or "I now understand Yahweh is the greatest."

Ask Jethro why knowing more makes Jethro bless Yahweh. You may hear answers like, "I am so excited. I now understand Moses and why he chose to go back to Egypt," or "I am so relieved. Yahweh is a great God worthy of praise," or "I finally understand why Moses and other Israelites are dedicated. Yahweh is great and powerful." [!end] Continue the drama.

Scene three begins with Jethro taking an animal for sacrifice. Aaron and the elders of Israel join Jethro and Moses. Someone sacrifices the animal. The animal is burned completely. Jethro offers other sacrifices such as

smaller animals, or grain, or wine. The specific other sacrifices are unknown. Jethro the Midianite, with Moses, Aaron, and the Israelite elders ate a special meal together. The meal was a worship meal before God.

Pause the drama.

Ask Moses how he feels when Moses sees Jethro, the father of his wife, understand more about Yahweh and want to worship Yahweh in some way. You may hear answers like, "I was humbled to know I helped the father of my wife know my God, the one true God," or "I am happy to worship as a family," or "I am glad to have my Midian family and my Israeli family under one roof."

Ask the actor playing Aaron how he feels about overseeing a sacrifice with someone who is not a Jew. You may hear answers like, "At first, I was concerned. Later I welcomed worship with Jethro," or "I was happy because Jethro cared about Yahweh the one true God," or "I trust my brother Moses. I trust my God."

Ask the elders how they felt about worshiping with a Midianite. You may hear answers like, "We just left Egypt and survived a war with the Amalekites. Jethro the Midian is the first person who is not an Israelite who learned about Yahweh. I feel unsure about him, but glad," or "I am glad to worship with distant cousins the same One True God, Yahweh."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 18:1-12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

This story reunites Moses with his wife, children, and father-in-law, Jethro.

The story begins with Jethro being reintroduced. Jethro is the father-in-law of Moses, or the father of Moses's wife, Zipporah. Jethro was a Midianite. In this story, Jethro worshiped a god and was a **priest**, meaning a religious leader for the Midianites. Please note that Jethro was not a priest for Yahweh. Before this passage it is unclear if Jethro fully knew Yahweh or if Jethro knew only a little about Yahweh. Before this passage, Jethro may not have known Yahweh at all. Translate priest in the same way you have before, and for more information on priest, refer to the Master Glossary.

In this passage, the writer carefully chooses two names to describe the God of the Israelites. He used the general name for **God** and God's personal name **Yahweh**. The general name for God shows God has a relationship with the world because he created it. The name Yahweh shows God has a personal, private, powerful relationship with his people. Both God and Yahweh are in the Master Glossary. Use the same words you have used in previous passages for these titles or names of God.

The first son of Moses was **Gershon** which means a visitor, traveler, or stranger living in a place for a while. Moses named his second son Eliezer. **Eliezer** means Moses and the father of Moses worshiped God and God helped and delivered Moses **from the sword of Pharaoh**. **Father of Moses** in this passage can mean either the birth father of Moses or all the Israeli forefathers back to Abraham long ago. Delivered from the sword of Pharaoh means God saved Moses from Pharaoh trying to kill him earlier. In this story, a sword is a word picture for so much power a person can kill a person. A **sword** is a long blade used in battle.

Jethro now hears Moses and the Israelites were free from Egypt and were near Midian. Jethro takes Zipporah and the two sons to meet Moses in the wilderness, or desert area, at or near **Mount Sinai**. Mount Sinai means mountain of God and is sometimes called Mountain of God in the story.

When Moses and Jethro greeted each other, Moses asked Jethro about his welfare, or health. Moses and Jethro used the word **shalom**, which means peace. In this passage, shalom asks about the health or peaceful travel of the man. Moses and Jethro were not blessing each other with peace, but blessing each other with fullness of life, which includes unity in their family and community and good health. It was a greeting. For more information about peace, see the Master Glossary.

Jethro heard about Yahweh. For the first time, Jethro **blessed** and **praised** Yahweh, the one true God. When a person blesses God, the person praises, or means God is wonderful. Translate bless or praise in the same way you have in previous passages, and for more information on blessed, refer to the Master Glossary. Jethro is convinced Yahweh is the highest god because Moses shared with Jethro the truth about how Yahweh saved the

Israelites from the Egyptians. Some translations use words that say Yahweh saved the Israelites from the **hand of Pharaoh**, meaning the power or control of Pharaoh.

Next, Jethro decides to honor God of creation with Moses, his family. Jethro brought an animal to be burned whole for a **sacrifice**. Use the same word for sacrifice you used in earlier passages. For more information on sacrifice, refer to the Master Glossary. Moses's brother, Aaron, and other Israelite elders joined the thanksgiving to God before God. Aaron, the Israelite elders, Moses, and Jethro worshiped and ate a special meal together before God. **Bread or meal** in this passage means a community meal of thanksgiving giving honor to God. The meal would include meat from the sacrifice, probably real bread, and perhaps other sacrificed food. **Before God** means to face God, or in the presence of God. Therefore, the meal was clearly a worship experience between the men honoring God and including God.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 18:1-12

Audio Content

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Exodus 18:13–27

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 18:13–27 and put it in your hearts.

Pause this audio here.

Listen to an audio version of 18:13–27 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage? Pause this audio here.

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 18:13–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This story is a narrative about Moses and Jethro after Jethro understands Yahweh is the highest or most powerful God he has ever heard about. Before this story, Jethro heard how Yahweh saved the Israelites and delivered the Israelites from Egyptian slavery. Just before this story, Jethro brought his daughter, the wife of Moses, and the two sons to meet Moses near Mount Sinai. It could be that they are near Mt. Sinai or in the surrounding area or approaching Mt. Sinai. This story explains Israel's shift from thinking like slaves to organizing a nation.

This story begins the day after the meal shared between Jethro, Moses, Aaron, and the elders of Israel in the presence of God. Jethro watched Moses work for the Israelite people. Moses sat and judged the Israelite people. This means that Moses actually sat down and the people stood. When someone sat, it showed that they had authority to judge and make legal decisions about problems between people. It also showed that Moses had the authority to make a decision and then carry out the punishment as necessary. Notice the Israelite people stood about or over Moses while he sat and listened to different cases, arguments, or disputes throughout the day.

Stop here and discuss this as a group: Tell a story about a time when you saw a large group of people waiting for something. What were they waiting for, and why were they waiting? How long did they wait? Could they change how long they had to wait? Who was in charge or the leader? Pause the recording here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Previously the Israelites were slaves to Egyptians. Now, the Israelites were free but had no authority figures but Moses and elders. Israelites did not fully trust Moses as their new leader. Yahweh chose Moses to lead. Moses was now leading and judging all the disputes between the Israelite people. How do people in your culture settle disputes? What happens when disputes are settled? Who makes the

decision? Where do people stand or sit while they are talking? Who punishes the wrongdoer if someone says that they did something wrong? Pause the recording here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Moses was the only person God chose to lead the people. Slaves wait for a master or ruler to make decisions. Free people make independent decisions. Tell a story about a slave or person who is learning to make their own decisions. How did this person learn to make decisions? Who helped them learn to make decisions? Pause this audio here.

Moses settled disputes for the Israelite people from morning until night. Jethro watched or observed carefully that Moses worked all day for the people. Jethro asks Moses a question but does not expect Moses to answer the question. Jethro knows the answer to the question. Jethro asks the question because he wants Moses to think about the issue or work Moses does all day long. Jethro asks Moses, "Moses what work do you do all day?" Jethro asks Moses, "Moses, why are you the only one settling disputes and why are the people allowed to crowd around you, Moses?" Moses explains that the Israelites want Moses to ask God about the problems of the Israelites. The Israelites ask Moses to settle disputes between Israelites. Moses listens to disputes between Israelites and makes a decision about the dispute based on the statutes or instructions of God and God's teachings on how to live.

Jethro tells Moses that Moses is not doing the job well. Moses will make Moses too tired or even sick from too much work by being the only one settling disputes. Jethro says Moses will make the Israelites too tired waiting on only Moses to settle all disputes. The work is a burden too big for Moses or one person to do alone. Jethro wants to give Moses advice. Jethro believes if Moses will pay attention to the advice of Jethro, God will be with or bless Moses. Moses will continue as the Israelite representative before God. Moses will bring disputes in front of or in the presence of God.

Next, Jethro tells Moses to teach Israelites the statutes, or individual laws, and the law system, or the many laws working together for a system for living. Later, Moses will explain the law to Israelites. Jethro tells Moses to show the people the way in which they should walk, or live their lives, and the work that they should do.

First Jethro tells Moses to watch the Israelite men. Then, Moses carefully observes and chooses men from all the Israelites. The men will have four qualities. First, the men are capable, or full of ability. Second, the men fear God or revere God, which means that they honor and obey God. Third, the men are trustworthy or reliable. Fourth, the men are honest and do not take bribes or illegal profit.

Next, Jethro suggests Moses place men as leaders over Israelites in organized groups. Some men will be leaders over thousands of Israelites. Some men will be leaders over hundreds of Israelites. Some men will be leaders of fifty Israelites. Some leaders will be over ten Israelites. The men will judge and settle minor disputes as a daily, permanent job. The men will bring major or difficult disputes to Moses. The men will carry the burden of judging disputes with Moses, making it easier for Moses and the men. Jethro gave a last advice for Moses. Jethro advises Moses that if God tells Moses to follow this advice, Moses will get a good reward. Jethro assumes that God will agree with his advice, and that Moses should follow it. The good reward is Moses will endure and not be too tired from the work. Also, the Israelites will arrive to their homes in peace or fully satisfied.

Stop here and discuss as a group types of people who judge or settle disputes, decide who is right and wrong, and give and implement punishments. How do you choose people who can judge if something is right or wrong? Pause the audio here.

Moses listened to Jethro. Moses followed all the advice of Jethro. Moses chose capable Israelite men. Moses appoints the men to rule and settle disputes of groups of Israelites. Israelite groups were one thousand, one hundred, fifty, and ten in each group of people. The Israelite men continually ruled and settled minor cases. The Israelite rulers sent difficult cases to Moses to settle. Then Moses said goodbye to Jethro and Jethro left to go home to Midian.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 18:13–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: This passage begins the day after Jethro has a worship meal in the presence of God with Moses, Aaron who is the brother of Moses and is the high priest, and other elder Israelite men. Jethro watches and thinks about Moses. Jethro sees Moses sit with authority making decisions all day for the Israelite people. Moses settles all disputes and answers questions about God for the Israelite people. Jethro tells Moses that Moses will become tired and not do a good job. Jethro gives advice to Moses to help Moses share the work.

In the second scene: The second scene begins with Moses listening to Jethro. Moses chose Israelite men to rule and settle disputes with Moses.

In the third scene: Moses says good-bye to Jethro, the father of his wife. Jethro returns to his home in Midian.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Jethro
- Israelite men, do not speak

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Scene one begins the day after Jethro eats a meal in the presence of God with Moses, Aaron, and elder Israelite men. Today, Jethro watches the Israelites. He watches Moses closely. He has never seen the Israelite people before. Jethro speaks to Moses at probably around the time the sun was setting. We know this because the Bible said Moses sat and judged until evening. Jethro watched Moses all day.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a time you visited people in a different people group who were very different from you. How did they act differently? How did they make decisions differently? Pause this audio here.

Jethro asks Moses questions about the work Moses does. The Bible does not say where the conversation happened. It may have happened in the tent of Moses to be private. Jethro asks what Moses is doing even though Jethro just watched Moses. Jethro wants to know why Moses is the only person settling disputes. Moses explains that some Israelites have questions to ask God and other Israelites have disputes to settle. Jethro tells Moses the way Moses works is not good because Moses is the only one settling disputes. Moses is the only one who knows the law of God. Moses and the Israelite people will become tired. The burden is too heavy or too hard for one person.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story about a time when someone was doing work that was too difficult for them. Describe the work and describe how the work affected them. Pay attention to the words you use when you describe doing work that is too difficult for you to do alone. Pause this audio here.

Jethro believes if Moses will pay attention to the advice of Jethro, God will be with or bless Moses. Jethro says that Moses should continue as the Israelite representative before God. Moses will bring disputes in front of, or in the presence, of God.

Jethro gives several steps or a list to his advice. Jethro gives Moses advice in an orderly way. First, Jethro gives Moses general advice about how Moses should teach the people. The first advice is for Moses to teach all Israelites the law of God. Moses should teach the Israelite people how to live in daily life.

Then, Jethro tells Moses to choose men with four characteristics: men with ability, men who fear or honor God, men who are truthful, and men who do not steal. The men will share the burden of leading with Moses. Jethro tells Moses the men will settle disputes for groups of one thousand, one hundred, fifty, and ten people. Again, Jethro works from big problems to little problems and big groups to little groups. The men will settle minor or small disputes. The men will bring large or hard disputes to Moses. Moses will need to do the advice of Jethro if God commands Moses in order to get the good reward. The good reward is Moses will endure and not be too tired from the work. Also, the Israelites will arrive home in peace, or fully satisfied.

In scene two, Moses listened to Jethro and followed all of Jethro's advice. Moses followed all the advice of Jethro. It is unclear when Moses started to do what Jethro told him to do. We do not know how Moses taught all the

people the laws and law systems working together. Moses chose capable Israelite men. Moses appoints the men to rule and settle disputes of groups of Israelites. Israelite groups were one thousand, one hundred, fifty, and ten in each group of people. The Israelite men continually ruled and settled minor cases. The Israelite rulers sent difficult cases to Moses to settle.

In scene three, Moses said goodbye to Jethro, and Jethro left to go home to Midian. We do not know how long Jethro stayed and watched Israel grow into a nation with the first leaders with Moses. The language of the story tells us that Moses and Jethro said good-bye on good terms. Moses' wife and sons are not mentioned, so we assume that they stayed with Moses and the Israelites.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 18:13–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has three scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Jethro
- Israelite men, do not speak

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

This story begins the day after Jethro shared a meal in God's presence with Moses, Aaron, and the elders of Israel. Jethro watched Moses work for the Israelite people. Moses sat and settled problems between people. The Israelite people stood about or over Moses while he sat and listened to different cases, arguments, or disputes throughout the day. Jethro spent the day watching Moses answer questions and settle disputes from sunrise to sunset. Jethro saw many Israelites standing around Moses all day waiting on a question or problem to be answered.

Pause the drama.

"These people are speaking a different language than you, are you comfortable walking around them?" You may hear answers like, "I do not understand what they are saying. Some of them are friendly and some are shy. I wish I could talk to more of them."

"They are standing and doing nothing as they wait for Moses. Jethro is a leader in his community. Is it frustrating to watch a leader not lead well?" You may hear answers like, "I feel sorry for the Israelites. They have suffered so much and now they waste their days waiting on Moses." Or, "I feel sorry for Moses. He works so hard for his people. Moses will make himself sick from working so hard. Moses needs help. Can I help Moses?" Or, "The Israelites have no leaders but Moses. Why do they not lead? Why does only Moses lead?"

"Moses is your son in law. Will he listen to you and the advice you give?" You may hear answers like, "I hope Moses listens to me." Or, "I hope my advice helps Moses and the Israelites."

Ask the actor playing the Israelite men, how do they feel standing around doing nothing all day? You may hear answers like, "I wish Moses would hear my problem." Or, "I want to help but I do not know how to help." Or, "I am frustrated with doing nothing all day."

Ask the actor playing Moses, "How do you feel listening to the problems and disputes of other people all day?" You may hear answers like, "I am so tired and frustrated. I cannot get other jobs done." Or, "I do not like everyone standing and leaning over me." "I am angry that the people cannot get jobs done." Or, "I need help but I do not know who to ask." [!end] Continue the drama.

Jethro believes if Moses will pay attention to the advice of Jethro, God will be with or bless Moses. Moses will continue as the Israelite representative before God. Moses will bring disputes in front of or in the presence of God.

Pause the drama.

Jethro gives several steps or a list to his advice. The first advice is for Moses to teach all Israelites the law of God. Second, Jethro tells Moses to choose men with four characteristics: men with ability, men who fear or honor God, men who are truthful, and men who do not steal. The men will share the burden of leading with Moses. Jethro tells Moses the men will settle disputes for groups of one thousand, one hundred, fifty, and ten people. The men will settle minor or small disputes. The men will bring large or hard disputes to Moses. Moses will need to do the advice of Jethro if God commands Moses in order to get the good reward. The good reward is Moses will endure and not be too tired from the work. Also, the Israelites will arrive home in peace.

Moses listened to Jethro. Moses followed all the advice of Jethro. Moses chose capable Israelite men. Moses appoints the men to rule and settle disputes of groups of Israelites. Then Moses said goodbye to Jethro, and Jethro left to go home to Midian.

Pause the drama.

Ask the actor playing the Israelite men, how does it feel to now be responsible for leading and settling disputes? You may hear answers like, "I am so surprised Moses picked me to lead," or "I am happy to settle disputes and help my people," or "I hope I can help solve problems. The job is so big."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 18:13–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Jethro watched Moses work for the Israelite people. Moses sat and judged the Israelite people. Moses was not the same as a judge in a courtroom in some countries. Moses was more like a high leader solving problems.

Stop here and discuss how you will say Moses was a judge. If you have used "judge" in other stories, discuss how you may use the same words here. Role play how you will show authority to make decisions and settle arguments. Discuss how Moses settled disputes the same way or differently than people in your language do. Pause the audio here.

After watching Moses settle disputes all day, Jethro asks Moses why Moses is the only one settling disputes. Moses listens to disputes between Israelites and makes a decision about the dispute based on the statutes of God and God's teachings on how to live. **Statutes** are specific instructions or rules. God's teachings on how to live were God's laws, or instructions about daily life and how to generally live life in obedience to God.

*Stop here and talk about how you will translate **statutes** and **laws** about how to follow God's teachings. See the Master Glossary for more information about statutes and laws. Pause this audio here.*

Moses will watch the Israelite men and choose men to help him make decisions. Moses wants the men to **fear God**. Fear God means the men revere or honor God. Translate this the same way as in the previous passages. For more information refer to the Master Glossary for fear of God.

Someday, the Israelites will arrive in **peace** at the place they want to go. We are not sure where the place is, so use a general term for place. Translate peace the same way as before. For more information on peace, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 18:13–27

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (5340782 KB)

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Exodus 19:1-15

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 19:1-15 and put it in your hearts.

Pause this audio here.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 19:1-15 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 19:1-15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous story, God helped the people of Israel escape from Egypt through his servant Moses. They have been traveling since they went out of Egypt. They are going to the place that God promised to give them. While they were on the way, they stopped and camped at a place called Rephidim. Then after some time, they continued their journey. In the present story, they arrived in a place called Sinai.

The story begins on the third new moon, or three months after the people of Israel came out of Egypt. This month is called the third new moon in the story because, in the Hebrew calendar, a new month begins when the new moon appears. On the first day of the third month, the people of Israel arrived in the wilderness of Sinai. A wilderness or a desert is a very dry and hot place because rain does not come there very often. People and animals do not usually live there because there is no water to drink. This wilderness is in the place called Sinai. There they set up another camp to stay for a while. There is also a mountain in Sinai that is called Mount Sinai. Moses went up to that mountain to talk with God. People at that time believed that it was possible to meet God when you go up to a very high place like a mountain.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of Sinai with Mount Sinai and the wilderness of Sinai in view. Pause this audio here.

Then Yahweh called Moses from the top of the mountain. Here Moses uses God's personal name, Yahweh, to describe what happens when he speaks with Yahweh on the mountain. Yahweh told Moses to give his instructions to the house of Jacob, the people of Israel. Sometimes, the people of Israel are called "the house of Jacob" or "the descendants of Jacob" because they are the descendants of Jacob which is another name for Isaac's son, Israel. Yahweh said that the people of Israel saw what he did to the Egyptians. Yahweh was reminding the people of Israel about the powerful things that he did to the Egyptians when he rescued the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. Yahweh also said that he carried the people of Israel on eagle's wings and brought them to himself. An eagle is a large, strong bird. It can eat smaller animals and it can fly very high in the sky. When a young eagle learns to fly, it often falls from the sky. The mother eagle ensures that when the young eagle falls, she will catch it so it will not fall to the ground. Yahweh is saying that he is like a mother eagle. He cared for the people of Israel, and he carried them away from Egypt so they could be with him.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of an eagle. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh also said that even though he owns all the earth and everything in it, Yahweh will consider the people of Israel a treasured possession, his very special people. This means that Yahweh will show special care and love for the people of Israel among all the people of the earth. The people of Israel will also be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. Priests were people that Yahweh called to serve him in a special way. Yahweh gave

them the task to help their fellow people to know Yahweh and lead them to Yahweh. The people of Israel will be called a kingdom of priests because Yahweh is the king, and the people of Israel will lead the people of the earth to Yahweh. The people of Israel will also be called a holy nation. When someone is holy, it means that he is not like everyone else around him. Rather, it means that he is like Yahweh who is also holy, and he must serve Yahweh only for all his life. For the people of Israel, this means that they should worship and serve Yahweh only for all their lives. Through the people of Israel, the people of the world will know Yahweh. Yahweh will do this if they obey Yahweh's voice or his instructions, and if they keep Yahweh's covenant. A covenant is an agreement between two people or groups of people. People who enter into covenants agree to have certain obligations to each other, and they expect each other to do everything to fulfill their obligations. People who fulfill their covenant obligations receive honor and reward, while those who fail lose honor and are punished. For the people of Israel, this means they must fulfill their covenant obligations to Yahweh by serving and worshiping him alone for all their lives. These are things that Yahweh said Moses should tell the people of Israel.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture make agreements with other people? What happens when they fulfill their obligations? What happens when they don't fulfill their obligations? Pause this audio here.

Moses did what Yahweh told him to do. Moses went down from the mountain. Then, he called the elders and told them everything that Yahweh told him. Moses talked to the elders first because the elders were the most respected people in the tribe. They gave wisdom and guidance to their communities, and they were responsible for telling them everything that Yahweh said. When the people heard from the elders what Yahweh told them, all the people responded to Yahweh. They agreed and they made a promise that they would do everything that Yahweh told them to do. When the people of Israel agreed to everything that Yahweh said, they entered into a covenant with Yahweh. This means that they promised to fulfill their obligations to Yahweh by worshiping him, serving him, and obeying him only for the rest of their lives.

Moses reported the words of the people to Yahweh. When Moses talked to Yahweh, he most likely went up again to the mountain. Then, Yahweh said to Moses that he was coming to meet Moses in a thick cloud. Yahweh will do this so that the people may hear Yahweh speak to Moses, and the people would know that Yahweh speaks to him. As a result, the people should believe and trust in Moses for as long as they live.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of clouds. Pause this audio here.

Also, when Moses reported the people's words to Yahweh, Yahweh told Moses to consecrate the people. Consecration was the practice of making something or someone pure in the sight of God so that they could be set apart, or holy for Yahweh's purposes. A person who undergoes consecration typically takes a bath and washes his clothes. Yahweh is holy and pure. If the people are to see Yahweh, they also need to be holy and pure. Yahweh said that they need to be ready because on the third day, Yahweh will come down on Mount Sinai and all the people will see him. When Yahweh comes down on the mountain, that mountain becomes a holy place that no person can go or touch without Yahweh's permission. Any person or animal that touches the mountain would have to be punished by death. People must either throw stones at the person or the animal until he dies or shoot him with arrows. People must kill the offender in this way because no one can touch him. But God cares for and protects his people from death because they are his special people. So, Yahweh told Moses to set limits around the mountain. This means that Moses needs to surround the mountain with a sign that warns the people not to go up to the mountain or touch it. They are only allowed to go up to the mountain when they hear the sound of the long trumpet blast. A trumpet was a horn made from the horn of an animal, usually a ram. This kind of horn produces a loud blast when people blow it.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of a ram's horn. Pause this audio here.

So, Moses went down from the mountain to consecrate the people. The people washed their clothes so that they would be ritually clean or pure. Moses also told them to be ready for the third day. As part of their preparation for Yahweh's coming, men must not go near a woman. This means that men must not have sexual relations with any woman during this time. This is because people at that time believed that fluids that come out of a man's or a woman's body, especially during sex, represented life. All life is considered valuable by God. All the people must keep their lives pure and intact. One way of doing this is by avoiding any sexual relations.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What do people in your culture do to prepare themselves for special occasions? If God were to meet your people, how would they purify themselves so that God would be pleased to meet them? Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 19:1-15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has five scenes.

In the first scene: The people of Israel arrived in Sinai from Rephidim. They set up camp in the wilderness of Sinai, and Moses goes up to Mount Sinai.

In the second scene: Yahweh speaks of the covenant with the people through Moses.

In the third scene: Moses talks to the elders.

In the fourth scene: Yahweh gives instructions to Moses.

In the fifth scene: Moses consecrates the people and gives them other instructions from Yahweh.

The characters in this passage are:

- God or Yahweh
- Moses
- The elders
- The people of Israel

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In scene one, the people of Israel start their journey again from a place called Rephidim to go to Sinai. Rephidim is very close to Sinai. It only takes a day to go from Rephidim to Sinai. On the third new moon, or three months after the people of Israel came out of Egypt, the people of Israel arrived in the wilderness of Sinai. In that wilderness, the people of Israel set up their camp. This means that the people of Israel pitched their tents in that place. The scene ends with Moses going up to the mountain which is also in Sinai.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of Sinai with Mount Sinai and the wilderness of Sinai in view. Pause this audio here.

In scene two, Yahweh talks to Moses about what he needs to tell the people of Israel. In this scene, Yahweh himself speaks to Moses. Here, Yahweh gives three speeches. The first one is for Moses when he tells him, "You shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the people of Israel..." The words "house of Jacob" and "the people of Israel" both refer to the Israelites. Yahweh referred to the Israelites in two different ways here because he wants to emphasize that everything that he is about to say is for them. Yahweh wants the Israelites to listen carefully to what he is about to say. This is followed by the second speech. In this second speech, Yahweh is still talking to Moses, but the speech is for the people of Israel. So, Moses listens carefully because he needs to tell everything to the people later. Yahweh said that the people of Israel saw for themselves what God did. He defeated the Egyptians, and like a mother eagle, he helped and carried them away from Egypt, so they could be with him. When Yahweh said this, he emphasized the fact that the people of Israel saw everything that Yahweh did. After saying this, Yahweh turns to a new focus, that is the covenant. Yahweh starts this new focus by using a word that shows that everything that Yahweh is about to say is very important. The people should listen carefully because Yahweh is about to tell them what he expects the people would do after they saw everything that he did for them. Yahweh said that if the people would hear his voice and keep his covenant, Yahweh would reward them. Hearing the voice of Yahweh meant that they should obey Yahweh, and keeping his covenant meant that they should worship and serve Yahweh only. These were the covenant obligations of the people of Israel. If they did these, Yahweh would fulfill his covenant obligations and reward the people of Israel. Yahweh

said that he would make the people of Israel his treasured possession, or his special people among all the peoples of the earth. He also said he would make them a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. As a kingdom of priests and a holy nation, they were to show all the people of the world what Yahweh is like. Through them, the people of the world would know Yahweh and come to Yahweh. This ends Yahweh's second speech. After this, Yahweh speaks his third and final speech, which is again for Moses, where he says, "These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel." In acting out the scene, it is important to act it out using the actual speeches of Yahweh.

In scene three, Moses goes down from the mountain. Then, he calls the elders and tells them everything that Yahweh said. Then the elders told everything to their communities until all the people of Israel heard Yahweh's words. After they heard everything from the elders, the people of Israel answered together and said, "All that Yahweh has spoken, we will do." In this response, the people emphasized how much they were willing to obey Yahweh. They said they would do everything, as in all that Yahweh had spoken. After this, the elders told Moses everything that the people said.

In scene four, Moses goes up to the mountain again to report the people's response to Yahweh. Just like in the second scene, Yahweh speaks to Moses again in three speeches. In the first speech, Yahweh tells Moses what he is about to do, and what Moses needs to do to prepare the people. Yahweh begins this speech by using a word that tells Moses that he needs to listen carefully to what Yahweh is going to say. Yahweh is coming to Moses in a thick cloud. This means that when Yahweh comes, there will be a thick cloud surrounding him. Yahweh would come to Moses so that the people would hear him speaking to Moses, and the people would trust Moses for all as long as they live. Then for a second time, Moses reports the people's response to Yahweh. We don't know if Moses went down, and then went back up again when he reported this speech a second time. It is also possible that Moses did not come down from the mountain. If Moses did not come down from the mountain, it is possible that Moses decided to report the people's response again to Yahweh as his own way of responding to Yahweh's instructions. Then, Yahweh tells Moses to go and consecrate the people today and tomorrow. To consecrate themselves, they need to wash their bodies and their clothes clean. They need to be ready for the third day, or the day after tomorrow, because on the third day, Yahweh will come down on Mount Sinai and they will see Yahweh. Yahweh also told Moses to put a sign around the mountain to tell the people that they should not touch the mountain or go up to it. We don't know for sure what this sign looked like. But when people see this sign, they should feel that they need to be careful so that they do not touch the mountain. After this, Yahweh goes to his second speech which is for the people of Israel. In this second speech, Yahweh tells the people that they should be careful not to touch the mountain or go up to it. Anyone who touches the mountain, whether man or animal, must be punished by death. People must either throw stones at him until he dies or shoot him with arrows. He must die and no one can touch him. This ends the second speech. Yahweh's third and final speech is for Moses, where he said that the people can come up to the mountain when they hear the long sound of the trumpet blast.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture warn others that they should not go to a certain place because it is dangerous? What objects do they use to show that a certain place is dangerous and that people are not allowed to go there? As you describe these things, pay attention to how you talk about these boundaries. Pause this audio here.

In scene five, Moses goes down again from the mountain. He did what Yahweh told him and consecrated the people. The people washed themselves and their clothes. He also told the people to be ready for the third day. He also said to the men among them not to go near a woman. This means that men should not have sexual relations with any women as they prepare for Yahweh's coming.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 19:1–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has five scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- God, or Yahweh
- Moses
- The elders
- The people of Israel

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

In scene one, the people of Israel arrived in Sinai from Rephidim. They set up camp in the wilderness of Sinai, and Moses goes up to Mount Sinai.

Pause the drama.

In the second scene, Yahweh speaks of the covenant with the people through Moses.

Pause the drama.

In the third scene, Moses tells the elders everything that Yahweh said, so the elders would also tell everything to their communities. The people agree to do everything that Yahweh said.

Pause the drama.

In the fourth scene, Moses reports the people's answer to Yahweh. Yahweh gives instructions to Moses to prepare the people because he will come down to meet with Moses. All the people will see Yahweh when he comes.

Pause the drama.

In the fifth scene, Moses consecrates the people and gives them other instructions from Yahweh.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 19:1–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The present story is about how God and the people of Israel agree to make a covenant with each other.

The story begins on the **third new moon**. The third new moon is the third month since the time the people of Israel left Egypt. It is called the third new moon in the story because, in the Hebrew calendar, a new month begins when the new moon appears.

On the first day of the third new moon, the people arrived in the **wilderness** of Sinai. A wilderness, or a desert, is a very dry and hot place because rain does not come there very often. People and animals do not usually live there because there is no water to drink. Use the same word that you have used before for the word wilderness. You may check the Master Glossary for more information on wilderness. There is also a mountain in Sinai that is called **Mount Sinai**. Use the same word that you have used before for the word Sinai.

The general word for God is used at the beginning of this passage when Moses says that he went up to God. But here, Moses calls God by his personal name, **Yahweh**, and it is used throughout this passage. Use the same name for Yahweh that you have used in previous passages. Look up Yahweh in the Master Glossary for more information.

Yahweh told Moses to remind the people of Israel about what he did to the **Egyptians**. Egyptians were the people who were living in Egypt. Yahweh also carried them on **eagle's wings** and brought them to him. Yahweh is comparing himself to an eagle. Yahweh is saying that like an eagle who carries its young eagle on its wings, Yahweh also carried the people of Israel out of Egypt.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of an eagle. Pause this audio here and discuss how you might translate the word eagle.

Yahweh said that if the people will **listen to his voice**, or if they obey Yahweh's instructions, and if they **keep his covenant**, or if they fulfill their covenant obligations to Yahweh, he will make them his **treasured possession**. That means that among all the people of the earth, God will consider the people of Israel as his very special people. They will be a **kingdom of priests** who will lead the people of the earth to Yahweh. They will also be a **holy nation** who will be like God, and they will worship and serve God only. You may check the Master Glossary for more information on the words covenant, nation, priests, and holy.

Moses told everything that Yahweh said to the **elders**. Moses talked to the elders first because the elders were the most respected people in the tribe. They were responsible for telling them everything that Yahweh said. You may check the Master Glossary for more information on elders. After the people heard everything that Yahweh said from the elders, they agreed to do everything that God told them.

Moses reported the people's answer to Yahweh. Then Yahweh said that he would come to Moses in a thick cloud so that the people may hear Yahweh speak with Moses and the people will trust Moses forever. Yahweh also told Moses to **consecrate** the people of Israel for two days because he would come down on the third day. Consecration was the practice of making something or someone pure in the sight of God so that they could be holy, or set apart for service to God. A person who undergoes consecration typically takes a bath and washes his clothes. Use the same word that you have used before for the word consecrate. You may check the Master Glossary for more information on the word consecrate.

Yahweh told Moses to surround the mountain with a sign that warns the people not to go up to the mountain or touch it. They are only allowed to go up to the mountain when they hear the sound of the long trumpet blast. In this story, the people used a **ram's horn** as their trumpet. This kind of horn produces a loud blast when people blow it.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of a ram's horn. Pause this audio here and discuss how you might translate the word ram's horn.

So, Moses went down from the mountain to consecrate the people and the people washed their clothes. Moses also told them to be ready for the third day. As part of their preparation for Yahweh's coming, **men must not go near a woman**, or have sexual relations, with any woman during this time. This is because people at that time believed that fluids that come out of a man's or a woman's body represented life, and all life is considered valuable before God.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 19:1–15

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (4902218 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Exodus 19:16–25

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 19:16–25 and put it in your hearts.

Pause this audio here.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 19:16–25 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.

4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 19:16–25 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous story, the people of Israel arrived in Sinai. In that story, Yahweh and the people of Israel agreed to make a covenant. Moses gave instructions to the people to consecrate themselves, or make themselves holy, because Yahweh would be coming down and the people needed to be ready. The present story talks about what happened when Yahweh came down to meet the people of Israel.

The story begins on the morning of the third day after they arrived in the wilderness of Sinai. There was thunder and lightning, and a very thick cloud all around the mountain. Lightning is a big spark of light in the sky that is often accompanied by a loud sound called thunder. Lightning is very dangerous. When lightning hits a person, the person often dies. Thunder, lightning, and thick clouds are common forces of nature that appear in the sky when there is a storm.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of Mount Sinai with thick cloud around it and with lightning or in stormy conditions. Pause this audio here.

The people heard a very loud trumpet blast, although we do not know who blew the trumpet. A trumpet was a horn made from the horn of an animal which is usually a ram. It produces a loud blast when people blow it.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of a ram's horn. Pause this audio here.

As a result of everything they saw and heard that morning, all the people shook in fear. Then, Moses led the people out of their camp to meet God. They stood at the very bottom of the mountain.

Then Yahweh came down from heaven and there was fire all around him. People at that time believed that only Yahweh had the power over things in nature like fire, thunder, and lightning. When Yahweh showed himself to people, usually at least fire, thunder, or lightning were present as well. First, thunder, lightning, and a thick cloud came to signal that Yahweh was coming. Then, when Yahweh came, he came with fire surrounding him. It is also possible that Yahweh actually came in the form of fire. That means, what the people saw was fire, but actually it was Yahweh. As a result, there was a lot of smoke around the mountain and the mountain also shook greatly. The smoke went up like the smoke coming out of a kiln or a furnace. A kiln was like a small building made of bricks with fire inside it, where people baked pottery and other materials. When they baked something, smoke came out of the top of the kiln.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of a kiln that was made of bricks with smoke coming out of it.

You may also discuss this question as a group: How might people in your culture imagine God coming down to meet them? What are some things the people would expect to see if God were to come down? Pause this audio here.

As this was happening, the trumpet noise became louder and louder. When Moses talked to Yahweh, God answered him in thunder. This means that God was using a loud voice that was like thunder to speak to Moses. Only Moses knew what Yahweh was saying through the thunder. Even though the people never saw Yahweh's face, and even though they never heard Yahweh's voice, Yahweh was with them at that time. The people met Yahweh. Then Yahweh called Moses to go up to the top of the mountain. So, Moses went up.

On top of the mountain, Yahweh talked to Moses. Yahweh told Moses to remind the people that they should not break through the limits that Moses had previously put around the mountain. In the previous story, Yahweh told Moses to set limits around the mountain. Moses surrounded the mountain with a sign to tell the people that they should not touch the mountain or go up to it. Yahweh did not allow any man to see him face to face. If anyone saw Yahweh's face without his permission, he would die. This is why Yahweh only showed himself using fire and smoke. Even the priests who regularly came near Yahweh to serve him had to consecrate themselves, otherwise Yahweh would be angry with them and would punish them. Consecration was the

practice of making something or someone pure in the sight of Yahweh so that they were set apart for his service. Yahweh was serious about his holiness, and he expected everyone who came to him to be pure and clean. A person who undergoes consecration typically takes a bath and washes his clothes. If the priests did not consecrate themselves before Yahweh, Yahweh would be angry at them, and he would punish them.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What do people in your culture do to prepare themselves for special occasions? If God were to meet your people, how would they purify themselves so that God would be pleased to meet them? Pause this audio here.

Moses answered Yahweh. He said that the people could not come up to Mount Sinai because Yahweh told them to set limits around the mountain and consecrate it. Then Yahweh told Moses to go down and come up again with his brother Aaron. Then Yahweh emphasizes again that Moses must not permit the priests and the rest of the people to break through the limits that Moses set. If they did, Yahweh would be angry at them, and he would punish them. So, Moses went down to the people and told them what Yahweh said.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 19:16–25 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has three scenes.

In the first scene: There was thunder, lightning, and a thick cloud around Mount Sinai and the sound of a trumpet. Moses led the people outside their camp to meet God.

In the second scene: Yahweh came down with fire surrounding him. There was great smoke all around the mountain, and the mountain also trembled greatly. Yahweh called Moses to go up to the mountain.

In the third scene: Yahweh and Moses talk about warning the people so that they will not force their way to see Yahweh. Yahweh also told Moses to bring his brother Aaron with him to the mountain.

The characters in this passage are:

- God or Yahweh
- Moses
- The people of Israel

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In visualizing this story, it is important to remember that Moses and the people were in the place called Sinai. This place has a wilderness and a mountain. The people were living inside their camps in the wilderness. In the story, Yahweh came down on the mountain, while the people stayed at the foot of the mountain. Scenes one and two happened at the foot of the mountain, while scene three happened on top of the mountain.

In scene one, there was thunder, lightning, and a thick cloud around Mount Sinai. These great or dramatic forces of nature appeared to signal that Yahweh was about to come down on Mount Sinai. As these things were happening, someone blew a trumpet very loudly. The people in the camp trembled because they were afraid of what was happening. Then, Moses led the people out of the camp, or out of their tents to meet God. Because the people of Israel were so many, Moses may have asked the help of the elders to lead the people. This would have taken some time because there were so many people. Then, the people stood at the foot of the mountain, perhaps looking up at thunder, lightning, and a thick cloud around Mount Sinai.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of Mount Sinai with thunder, lightning, and a thick cloud around it. Pause this audio here.

In scene two, Yahweh came down from heaven and there was fire all around him. There was also a great smoke that went up like the smoke of a kiln.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of a kiln that was made of bricks with smoke coming out of it. Pause this audio here.

You may also discuss this question as a group: what object in your culture is like a kiln that has smoke coming out of it? In describing the smoke, a person may draw on the ground or use his hands to say that the smoke was like the smoke of a kiln. Pause this audio here.

The whole mountain was shaking greatly. As this was happening, the people at the foot of the mountain may have felt the shaking, and they were likely afraid of what was happening. Meanwhile, the person who was blowing the trumpet blew it louder and louder. Moses was still at the foot of the mountain with the people. Moses was speaking to Yahweh again and again, and Yahweh was answering in a voice that sounded like thunder. Then Yahweh came down to the top of the mountain. Then he called Moses to go up to the mountain, and Moses climbed up. It is important to remember in acting out this scene that the people never saw Yahweh, only the lightning, the thunder, the thick clouds, the fire, and the smoke that surrounded Mount Sinai. The people also did not hear Yahweh's voice. They only heard thunder and the trumpet. Only Moses knew what Yahweh was saying through the thunder.

In scene three, the focus changes to the top of the mountain. Yahweh talked to Moses and gave him instructions to warn the people that they should not break through the limits that Moses put around the mountain. As Yahweh was mentioning this, Yahweh may have pointed to the sign or the boundaries that Moses put around. Yahweh also said that even the priests who regularly came near Yahweh to serve him must consecrate themselves to show that they were holy, or set apart for service to Yahweh. This means the priests must wash themselves, and their clothes. If they did not do this, Yahweh would be angry at them, and he would punish them. Moses answered Yahweh and said that the people could not go up Mount Sinai. Moses explained why by using the exact words that Yahweh spoke in the previous story. Moses said, "The people cannot come up to Mount Sinai, for you yourself warned us, saying, 'Set limits around the mountain and consecrate it.'" Then, Yahweh told Moses to go down the mountain and come up again with his brother Aaron. Yahweh said again that Moses must be careful to make sure that he would not let the priests and the people break through the limits around the mountain and go up to see Yahweh. If they did this, Yahweh would be angry at the people, and he would punish them. The scene ends with Moses going down the mountain and telling the people about everything that Yahweh told him. In acting out this scene, remember that it was Yahweh and Moses who were speaking. That means it is important to use the words that Yahweh and Moses spoke. It is also important to show that when Yahweh was speaking about warning the people, Yahweh was showing his love and care for them. At the same time, when Yahweh was speaking about punishing the people if they disobeyed, Yahweh was really serious. He would really punish the people if they disobeyed.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 19:16–25 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has three scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- God or Yahweh
- Moses
- The people of Israel

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

In scene one, there was thunder, lightning, and a thick cloud around Mount Sinai. The people were afraid but Moses led the people outside their camp to meet God.

Pause the drama.

In the second scene, Yahweh came down with fire surrounding him. There was great smoke all around the mountain, and the mountain also trembled greatly. Yahweh called Moses to go up to the mountain.

Pause the drama.

In the third scene, Yahweh and Moses talk about warning the people so that they would not force their way to see Yahweh. Yahweh also told Moses to bring his brother Aaron with him to the mountain.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 19:16–25 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The present story is about what happened when God came down on Mount Sinai to meet the people of Israel.

The story begins on the morning of the **third day**. This is the third day after they arrived in the wilderness of Sinai. The people were living in the camp in the tents that they pitched.

On this day, **thunder** roared and **lightning** flashed. This means that the people saw flashes of lightning and heard the sounds of thunder over and over again, and they saw **a thick cloud** on Mount Sinai. Thunder, lightning, and thick clouds are common forces of nature that appear in the sky when there is a storm. There is usually rain that goes with a storm but not always. In this case, it only appears that there is a storm, but there is no mention of rain. While this was happening, someone blew the **trumpet** very loudly. A trumpet was a horn made from the horn of an animal, usually a ram. This kind of horn produces a loud blast when people blow it. When the people heard the loud trumpet blast, the people **trembled**. This means that the people shook in fear. Use the same words that you used before for the words, thunder, lightning, cloud, and trumpet.

Moses led the people out of the camp, or out of their tents. Then, the people stood at the **foot of the mountain**. The foot of the mountain is the very bottom of the mountain.

The general word for God is used at the beginning of this passage. But God will be called by his personal name **Yahweh** sometimes in this passage. Use the same name for Yahweh that you have used in previous passages. Look up Yahweh in the Master Glossary for more information.

Mount Sinai was **wrapped in smoke** because Yahweh came down on it **in fire**. When Yahweh came down in fire, it means that Yahweh was surrounded with fire, or that Yahweh came in the form of fire. That means, what the people saw was fire, but actually it was Yahweh. As a result, there was a lot of smoke around the mountain and the mountain also shook greatly. The smoke went up like the smoke coming out of a **kiln**. A kiln was like a small building made of bricks. People did not live in it because people used it to bake pottery and other materials. When they baked something, smoke came out of the top of the kiln. Use the same words that you used before for the words fire and kiln.

Yahweh called Moses to go up to the mountain. So, Moses went up. When Moses talked to Yahweh, God answered him **in thunder**. This means that God was using thunder to speak to Moses.

Yahweh told Moses to warn the people that they should not cross the sign that warns them not to go up to the mountain or touch it. This means that they should not force their way to go up to the mountain to see Yahweh, because Yahweh did not allow any man to see him. If they did this, they would **perish**. This means, they would

die. Even the priests who regularly came near Yahweh to serve him must **consecrate** themselves. Consecration was the practice of making something or someone pure in the sight of Yahweh so that they could be holy, or set apart for service to God. A person who undergoes consecration typically takes a bath and washes his clothes. Use the same word that you have used before for the word consecrate. You may check the Master Glossary for more information on the word consecrate. If the priests did not consecrate themselves before Yahweh, Yahweh would **break out against them**. This means Yahweh would be angry at them, and he would punish them.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

This is the end of recording.

Exodus 19:16–25

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3698922 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Exodus 20:1–7

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 20:1–7 and put it in your hearts.

Pause this audio here.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 20:1–7 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 20:1–7 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The previous story was about what happened when Yahweh came down to meet the people of Israel on Mount Sinai. The story ended when Moses obeyed God's instructions to bring his brother Aaron with him and to warn the people of Israel that they should not force their way up to the mountain. The present and the next stories talk about God's words for the people of Israel to obey.

The story begins with an introduction, "And God spoke all these words." This story and the next story show that God gave ten words to the people of Israel. Most people call these ten words the Ten Commandments because they are a list of instructions that God expects the people to obey for as long as they live. These words are very important because they show the people of Israel how to live peacefully with other people, and how to live in a way that will please God. By obeying these words, all the people around them should see the right way of living that pleases God. The present story talks only about the first three commandments.

In this story God was speaking to all the people of Israel. In the previous story, God told Moses to go down from the mountain and bring his brother Aaron back up the mountain with him. Moses obeyed God and went down from the mountain as God commanded. So, in the present story, Moses was probably at the bottom of the mountain, with the people at their camp.

God said, "I am Yahweh your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery." God is saying three things to the people of Israel in this speech. First, God is saying that his name is Yahweh, and this is his personal name. Yahweh is reminding the people who he is. Second, Yahweh is the God of Israel. The people of Israel have no other God but Yahweh. Third, Yahweh, who is the God of Israel, rescued them out of Egypt, from the land where they were slaves. This speech by God reminds the people of who God is, what God has

done for them, and their relationship with God. This is why God now gives the Israelite people the ten words which they need to obey. This is important. This means that the people of Israel should obey God because God loved them and rescued them from Egypt.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: When a person in your culture does something good to another person, what does he expect in return? Pause this audio here.

In the first commandment, God said, "You shall have no other gods before me." Other nations worship other gods, but there is only one God who rescued Israel from Egypt, and God made a covenant with the people of Israel. That one God is Yahweh. Therefore, the people of Israel must worship and obey only Yahweh. They cannot worship any other God but Yahweh.

The second commandment is related to the first. God said that the people of Israel shall not make any carved image or an idol, or any likeness of any being. People from other nations did not only worship other gods, they also made idols or carved images of certain people or animals that represented their gods. They would shape these images using wood, stone, clay, or metal. After they made them, the people worshiped them. They believed that if they worshiped the idols or the images of their gods, the gods would bless them. But Yahweh said that the people of Israel must not follow what other nations were doing. The people must not create any idol or image that looks like any being in the sky such as birds, or beings on earth such as snakes, or beings in the ocean such as fish.

Stop here and as a group, look at a picture of an idol or an ancient carved image. Pause this audio here.

You may also discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture worship their god? If they make an image or an idol, what do they do to the image that represents their god? Pause this audio here.

God said that the people must not make such idols, or images, and worship them because he, Yahweh, is a jealous God. The word "jealous" shows that God values his special covenant relationship with the people of Israel so much that he wants to be the only God that they worship. This is like a marriage relationship where two people promise to be faithful to each other, which means to be covenant partners.

God feels hurt and upset when the people betray him by worshipping other gods using the images they have created. He does not tolerate this behaviour; he considers it a sign that the people hate him. This would lead to God punishing them.

God goes on to say that he will even extend punishment beyond those who disobey, to include their families-children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. In the Old Testament a person's actions and wrongdoing affected the whole family. When parents did something, their children followed them and did the same thing. Then the whole family would follow them. If parents did not worship Yahweh, but instead worshiped another god, their children, their grandchildren, and great-grandchildren would likely worship the same god. This is why God's punishment extends beyond those who disobey.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture feel when the people they love and trust betray them? Pause this audio here.

But God shows steadfast love to thousands or many generations of people who love him and obey him. For God, loving him means obeying his commandments. For those who do love him and keep his commandments, he shows steadfast love to them and their household and future generations. Steadfast love describes a kind of love, kindness, and mercy that lasts and does not change. God has made a covenant with his people, so this means God will love the people of Israel and he will keep his promises with them, even if the people would be unfaithful to him.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What do people in your culture call the kind of love that is like steadfast love? How do they show that they have this kind of love? Pause this audio here.

In the third commandment, God said, "You shall not take the name of Yahweh your God in vain." God warns here against misusing Yahweh's name for evil or dishonest purposes. Making promises in Yahweh's name is serious. If someone breaks a promise they made in Yahweh's name, Yahweh's reputation is ruined. Yahweh also forbids using his name for magic or manipulation. Disobeying this commandment means a person will face Yahweh's punishment, as "Yahweh will not hold him guiltless."

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What do people in your culture do when other people insult or damage their honor or reputation? You may also ask this question as a group: How might people in your culture use the name of God for evil purposes?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 20:1–7 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has three scenes.

In the first scene: God reminds the people of Israel about who he is, what he has done for them, and their relationship with God.

In the second scene: God gives his first and second commandments.

In the third scene: God gives his third commandment.

The characters in this passage are:

- God or Yahweh
- Moses
- The people of Israel

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In visualizing this story, it is important to remember that Moses and the people were in the place called Sinai. This place has a wilderness and a mountain called Mount Sinai. There was lightning, thunder, a thick cloud, a great fire, and great smoke surrounding the top of the mountain. Moses is with the people at the bottom of the mountain. In the story, God would be speaking from the mountain through the cloud and thunder. He would be speaking to all the people of Israel at the bottom of the mountain. The people heard God but also heard the trumpet getting louder and closer to them.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of Mount Sinai in stormy conditions. Pause this audio here.

The whole story records God's speeches. In acting out the story, it is important to act out the scenes using the very words that God spoke in the story.

In scene one, God said, "I am Yahweh your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery." In this speech, God was reminding the people of Israel about who he is, what he has done for them, and their relationship with God.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture remind other people about something very important? Pause this audio here.

In scene two, God tells the people of Israel that they should not worship other gods. God also tells the people that they should not make idols or carved images of persons or animals that they see in the sky, on land, and in the ocean. They should not make images, nor bow down to worship them or serve them. God explains, "For I Yahweh your God am a jealous God." This means that only Yahweh God deserves the people's love and worship. If the people give their love and worship to other gods, it will mean that the people hate Yahweh their God. In response, God would surely punish the people and their whole household. Then God shows a strong contrast when he explains what he will do to the people when they love and obey God's commandments. God says he will show steadfast love to them and their future descendants when they love God. These will be the most important commandments in later stories. In acting out this scene, be sure to show that Yahweh is emphasizing these commandments and their consequences.

In scene three, God says that the people should not take the name of Yahweh their God in vain. This means that the people should not use the name of God to manipulate him or deceive people. God will surely punish people who will use God's name for evil. In the original language, God uses a negative form of this statement, "I will not

let him go unpunished." This is a really forceful way to say that he will surely punish people who use God's name for evil.

It is important to notice that the first three commandments focused on how the people of Israel should relate to Yahweh their God. Specifically, these are things that the people of Israel should not do against Yahweh. Remember that in the previous stories, God said that he would make the people of Israel a holy nation. This means that the people of Israel would be different from other nations; they would not follow the behaviours and practices of other nations in their worship of other gods.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: If people in your culture want to tell others that they should not do a certain action or behavior, how do they say it in a way that emphasizes that they should really avoid doing it?

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 20:1–7 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has three scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- God, or Yahweh
- Moses
- The people of Israel

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

In scene one, God reminds the people of Israel about who he is, what he has done for them, and their relationship with God.

Pause the drama.

In the second scene, God gives his first and second commandments.

Pause the drama.

In the third scene, God gives the third commandment.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 20:1–7 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The present story is about the first three words that God gave to the people of Israel.

The story begins with an introduction, "And God spoke all these **words**." The words that God spoke here are also called commandments because they are a list of instructions that God expects the people to obey for all their lives. Use the same word for "words" or "commandments" that you have used in previous passages. For more information on the word commandments, you may refer to the Master Glossary.

Then God said, "I am **Yahweh** your **God**, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the **house of slavery**." The house of slavery is another way of referring to Egypt where the people of Israel were slaves. Yahweh is the personal name of God. It is important to listen carefully to the story because sometimes the general word for "God" is used, and sometimes God's personal name Yahweh is used. Look up Yahweh and slave in the Master Glossary for more information.

Then God gave the first commandment, "You shall have **no other gods before me**." These gods, or idols, are false gods. People from other nations worship these false gods. But the people of Israel should not worship them as other nations do. They are to worship Yahweh because Yahweh is the only true God, and he is the only God of the people of Israel. For more information on the word gods, you may refer to the Master Glossary.

Then God gave the second commandment. God said that the people of Israel shall not make an **idol**, or **carved image**, of any person or object, whether it is from heaven, on land, or in the sea. An idol, or a carved image, is an object that people make using wood, stone, clay, or metal. They made these images and then worshiped them because they believed that their gods would bless them if they worshiped these images.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How would you translate the word idol or carved image in your language? Look up the word idol in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

God said that they should not make or worship these idols, or carved images, because Yahweh is a **jealous God**. God is saying that only he deserves the people's love and worship. If the people give their love and worship to other gods, it will mean that the people hate Yahweh their God. In response, God would **visit the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations**. The word iniquity is not the same thing as sin. Iniquity refers to a person's guilt, or his responsibility to face the negative consequences of his sin when he sins against God. This expression means that God would punish not only the person who worships another god but also his family, his entire household.

Stop here and discuss how you will translate the phrase, "God will visit the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations." Pay attention to the words for generation and iniquity. You may use the same word for generation as you used in previous passages. Look up the word generation in the Master Glossary for more information. How would you translate the word iniquity, or guilt, in your language? Pause this audio here.

But if the people will love and obey God's commandments, God will also show **steadfast love** to thousands, or to the present and future descendants. Steadfast love describes a kind of love that does not change. It is a kind of love that shows kindness and mercy, and a kind of love that never fails. Yahweh's steadfast love refers to his unchanging love for the people of Israel. Yahweh loves them so much that even if they become unfaithful to their covenant with Yahweh, Yahweh's steadfast love will keep him faithful to his covenant with them. Yahweh's steadfast love is an important idea throughout the Old Testament because it is the kind of love that God always shows to his people, and the kind of love he expects from his people. Translate steadfast love in the same way you have translated it before.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 20:1–7

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3777633 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Exodus 20:8–17

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 20:8–17 and put it in your hearts.

Pause this audio here.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 20:8–17 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.

4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 20:8-17 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The previous story is about the first three words that God gave to the people of Israel. The previous and the present stories show that God gave ten words to the people of Israel. Most people call these ten words the Ten Commandments because they are a list of instructions that God expects the people to obey for all their lives. These words are very important because they show the people of Israel how to live peacefully with other people, and how to live in a way that will please God. By obeying these words, all the people around them should see the right way of living that pleases God. The present story talks only about the next seven commandments.

This story begins with the fourth word, or commandment. God said, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy." In this instruction about the Sabbath day, God tells the people to remember it and keep it special as a day of rest. God is clear that the people should work for six days, but the people should dedicate the seventh day, which God calls the Sabbath, to Yahweh their God. God uses his personal name Yahweh here to emphasize to his people that He is their God and that he chose them. People, their families, servants, and even animals should not work on this Sabbath day. God does not tell his people what it means to "work," but later He gives them examples. God justifies this commandment by re-telling the creation story. He emphasizes that He, Yahweh, created the world in six days and then rested on the seventh day. Then Yahweh blessed the seventh day and made it a special day for Him. The Israelites are God's chosen people, so God expects the Israelites to set themselves apart by observing the Sabbath. This imitates what God did on the seventh day. They should dedicate the day to worship and connection with Yahweh, their God.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How might people in your culture rest from all the work that they do and dedicate that day to God? Pause this audio here.

Starting from God's fifth commandment, God's instructions would be about right relationship with other people. The previous commandments were about honoring God. A natural behavior that follows is to also honor earthly authorities, in this case, the parents. In God's fifth commandment, he said "Honor your father and your mother." Honoring a person means showing that the person is great and worthy of respect. The people are to honor their parents by showing respect, obedience, and care for them. It is important to note that this instruction recognises the value of mothers, which is different from the ideas of the culture at that time, where men held greater importance in society. Men typically had the power and made decisions. They led nations and families, and their sons, as male heirs, inherited their father's possessions. They too had leadership roles. So, although women were considered less important, God's command here stresses equal honor for both parents. If the people honored their parents, God promised the people a long and prosperous life in the land that He has given them.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do children in your culture show that they honor their father and mother? Pause this audio here.

Both the fourth and the fifth commandments are positive commandments. God focuses on what the people of Israel should do: They are to keep the Sabbath day holy, and they are to honor their father and mother. The first three commandments before this, and the next five commandments after this are negative commandments, meaning that God focuses on what the people of Israel should not do.

In the sixth commandment, God said, "You shall not murder." Murder is when a person kills another person without God's approval. God does not say here when it is okay to kill another person, but God will give examples in later stories. The point here is that God does not want the people of Israel to go and kill anyone just because they hated someone or just because they wanted to take revenge. If they have a problem with anyone in the community, they cannot just decide to be violent and seek justice on their own. God would give instructions to the people later about what to do if they have a problem with anyone in the community. But for God, murder is

not an option. In Genesis, God made clear that he created humans in his image. God created humans to be like him. God values life.

In the seventh commandment, God said, "You shall not commit adultery." Adultery commonly refers to the act of engaging in sexual intercourse with a married person. So, if a married man has sex with a married woman other than his wife, that action would be called the sin of adultery. If a married woman has sex with any man other than her husband, that action would also be called the sin of adultery. Adultery, therefore, was a sin that involved sex. God did not allow married persons to have sex with men or women other than their husband or wife because sex normally results in bearing children. At that time, it was important to be sure who the father was of any children that would be born. For example, if a married woman has sex with another man other than her husband, and she gets pregnant, she would not be able to tell if the father of the child she is bearing is her husband or the other man. This commandment shows the importance God places on marriage and the honor of the household in general.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What do people in your culture call the action of a person when he or she has sex with a person other than his or her own husband or wife? Pause this audio here.

In the eighth commandment, God said "You shall not steal." Stealing is the act of taking someone else's property without his or her permission. A person may do this secretly or in the open where people can see him. A person may also do this by deceiving or forcing the other person to give to him what he or she owns. Regardless of how a person does it, if he takes what another person owns without the person's permission, it is the sin of stealing, and God does not allow that.

In the ninth commandment, God said, "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor." Neighbor refers to any individual in the community, a family member, a friend, or simply a fellow Israelite. Bearing witness for or against a neighbor was the common practice of people at that time during a trial. A trial is a meeting where a judge decides what the outcome should be for people in certain situations. In a trial, the judge would ask for witnesses, or people who might have important information that could help him make a decision. The judge expected that witnesses would give true and correct information so that his decision would also be correct. If a witness gave false information about a person, the judge might make the wrong decision which could harm an innocent person. This commandment is important because it shows that God wants the people of Israel to be fair and honest just like he is. This means that in giving justice, the people of Israel must learn to tell what is true and what is not true, and must give people what they deserve, whether it is reward or punishment. This also means that God values honesty and truth. So, God's covenant people should never tell lies.

In the tenth and last commandment, God said, "You shall not covet your neighbor's house." Covet refers to the feeling when a person really wants to take something that belongs to another person. The neighbor's house refers to everything that his neighbor owns. God explains what this includes: he must not covet his neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that this neighbor owns. An ox is a full-grown bull. A donkey is an animal that looks like a horse but is smaller than a horse. People consider the ox and the donkey as work animals. They used these animals to help them with their work so they normally lived together with the people who owned them. God is saying that the people of Israel should not crave or strongly desire anything that belongs to their neighbor.

Stop here and as a group, look at a picture of an ox and a donkey.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 20:8-17 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has seven scenes.

In the first scene: God gives the fourth commandment about the Sabbath day.

In the second scene: God gives the fifth commandment about honoring their father and mother.

In the third scene: God gives the sixth commandment about murder.

In the fourth scene: God gives the seventh commandment about adultery.

In the fifth scene: God gives the eighth commandment about stealing.

In the sixth scene: God gives the ninth commandment about giving false witness against their neighbor.

In the seventh scene: God gives the tenth commandment about coveting their neighbor's properties.

The characters in this passage are:

- God, or Yahweh
- Moses
- The people of Israel

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In visualizing this story, it is important to remember that Moses and the people were in the place called Sinai. This place has a wilderness and a mountain called Mount Sinai. There was lightning, thunder, a thick cloud, a great fire, and great smoke surrounding the top of the mountain. Moses is with the people at the bottom of the mountain. In the story, God would be speaking from the mountain through the cloud and thunder. He would be speaking to all the people of Israel at the bottom of the mountain. The people heard God but also heard the trumpet getting louder and closer to them.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of Mount Sinai with thunder, lightning, and a thick cloud around it. Pause this audio here.

The whole story records God's speeches. In acting out the story, it is important to act out the scenes using the very words that God spoke in the story.

In scene one, God said, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy." This commandment starts with a command that shows that the Israelites are already doing this action, and God wants them to continue doing it. The people are to labor, or work, for six days, but also, the seventh day is a special day for Yahweh, their God. Yahweh has blessed the seventh day as a Sabbath for him. God lists the people who must not work on this day: their son, daughter, male servant, female servant, work animals, and any foreigner in the city. Then, God explains the reason for this commandment. In six days, he created everything-the heavens, or sky, the earth, the sea, and everything in it. But on the seventh day, he rested from all his work. The next statement is important because it summarizes this commandment. God blessed the seventh day as the Sabbath day, and made it holy, a special day dedicated for him.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture talk about continuing to do something that they are already doing? Pause this audio here.

In scene two, God said that the people must honor their father and mother so that God would bless them with a long and prosperous life in the land that God is giving them. It is important to note that God mentions both the father and mother in this commandment.

In scene three, God said that the people must not murder anyone. In the original language, God stated this commandment in a negative form to emphasize that they should not do this.

In scene four, God said that the people must not commit adultery. In the original language, God stated this commandment in a negative form to emphasize that they should not do this.

In scene five, God said that the people must not steal. In the original language, God stated this commandment in a negative form to emphasize that they should not do this.

In scene six, God said that the people must not bear false witness against their neighbor. In the original language, God stated this commandment in a negative form to emphasize that they should not do this.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What do people in your culture call the action of a person when he or she tells lies about a person? Pause this audio here.

In scene seven, God said that the people must not covet their neighbor's house, or the neighbor's properties. Then, God restates the first part of the commandment, and then lists the kinds of properties that they must not covet: their neighbor's wife, male servants, female servants, their ox, their donkey, or anything that their neighbor owns.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, who do people consider as members of their family and household? Pause this audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 20:8-17 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has seven scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- God, or Yahweh
- Moses
- The people of Israel

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

In scene one, God gives the fourth commandment about the Sabbath day.

Pause the drama.

In the second scene, God gives the fifth commandment about honoring their father and mother.

Pause the drama.

In the third scene, God gives the sixth commandment about murder.

Pause the drama.

In the fourth scene, God gives the seventh commandment about adultery.

Pause the drama.

In the fifth scene, God gives the eighth commandment about stealing.

Pause the drama.

In the sixth scene, God gives the ninth commandment about giving false witness against their neighbor.

Pause the drama.

In the seventh scene, God gives the tenth commandment about coveting their neighbor's property.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 20:8–17 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The present story is about the next seven words, or commandments, that God gave to the people of Israel.

The story begins with the fourth commandment. God said, "Remember the **Sabbath** day, to keep it **holy**." The word Sabbath means rest, and the Sabbath day means a day of rest. The word holy means to be separated for service to God. Any person or object that is holy means that God owns that person or that object. In this story, keeping the Sabbath holy means that the people should consider the seventh day, or the Sabbath day, as God's day. They should dedicate that day not for work, but for God. Translate the words holy and Sabbath in the same way you have translated them before, and look them up in the Master Glossary for more information.

God also said, "Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to **Yahweh** your God." Yahweh is the personal name of God. Use the same name for Yahweh that you have used in previous passages. Look up Yahweh in the Master Glossary for more information.

"On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female **servant**, or your **livestock**, or the **sojourner who is within your gates**." A servant is someone who lives in the same household as his master to serve the needs of his master's family. A servant could be male or female. Livestock refer to the animals that the people use to help with their work. The sojourner within the gate refers to a person who is not really a member of their nation or people group but is living inside their territory for some reason. Translate the words servant, livestock, and sojourner in the same way you have translated them before. Look up servant and sojourner in the Master Glossary for more information.

God explains the reason for this commandment, "For in six days Yahweh made the **heaven**, the **earth**, the **sea**, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore, Yahweh **blessed** the Sabbath day and made it holy." The heavens here refer to the sky and the place where the stars are. The earth refers to all the land in the world. The sea refers to all the waters in the world. Blessing is when a person gives favor to another person. When Yahweh blessed the Sabbath day, it means that he made it holy, a special day dedicated for God alone. Translate the words heaven, earth, sea, and bless in the same way you have translated them before. Look up the words heaven and bless in the Master Glossary for more information.

Then God gave the sixth commandment. God said, "You shall not **murder**." Murder is when a person kills another person without God's approval. God does not say here when it is okay to kill another person, but God will give examples in later stories.

Then God gave the seventh commandment. God said, "You shall not commit, or do, **adultery**." Adultery commonly refers to an act of engaging in sexual intercourse with a married person that you are not married to.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for adultery. For more information on adultery, you may refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

Then God gave the eighth commandment. God said, "You shall not **steal**." Stealing is the act of taking someone else's property without his or her permission.

Then God gave the ninth commandment. God said, "You shall not bear false **witness** against your **neighbor**." The word neighbor refers to any individual in the community. He could be a family member, a friend, or simply a fellow Israelite. Translate the words witness and neighbor in the same way you have translated them before. For more information on the word neighbor, you may refer to the Master Glossary.

Then God gave the tenth and last commandment. God said, "You shall not **covet** your **neighbor's house**; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's." Covet refers to the feeling when a person wants to take something that belongs to another person. The neighbor's house refers to everything that his neighbor owns.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 20:8-17

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (4486323 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (7602122 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Exodus 20:18–26

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 20:18–26 and put it in your hearts.

Pause this audio here.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 20:18–26 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 20:18–26 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The previous stories were about the ten words that God gave the people of Israel. Most people call these ten words the Ten Commandments because they are a list of instructions that God expects the people to obey for all their lives. The present story is about how the people then responded to God. In this story, God also talks about building an altar for him.

In this story God was speaking to all the people of Israel. In the previous story, God told Moses to go down from the mountain and bring his brother Aaron back up the mountain with him. Moses obeyed God and went down from the mountain as God commanded. So, in the present story, Moses was probably at the bottom of the mountain, with the people at their camp. The people still could not see what was happening on the mountain. All they could see was the thunder, the flashes of lightning, and the smoke surrounding the mountain. There was also a very loud trumpet blast. This means someone blew a trumpet loudly. A trumpet was a horn made from the horn of an animal, usually a ram which produces a loud blast when people blow it.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of a ram's horn. Pause this audio here.

Fire, thunder, and lightning are great forces of nature. People at that time believed that only Yahweh had power over these great forces of nature. So, whenever Yahweh was present, one or all these forces of nature were usually present as well. When the people saw these great forces of nature, they were afraid, and they trembled. So, they stood far off the mountain. This means that the people moved away from the mountain to find a place where they felt safe.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of Mount Sinai with thunder, lightning, a thick cloud, and smoke around it. Pause this audio here.

Then the people asked Moses to speak to them and they would listen. The people felt more comfortable with Moses telling them God's words to them, instead of God directly communicating with them. They asked Moses not to let Yahweh speak to them, or they would die. In a previous story, we learned that when God spoke, he spoke in thunder. Whenever the people heard thunder, it meant that God was speaking. If there was thunder, it also means that there was lightning. This is perhaps the reason why the people of Israel did not want God to speak to them. Because if God spoke to them, it meant that there would be lightning and thunder. Lightning and thunder were dangerous, and the people were afraid that if God spoke to them, they would die.

Moses answered the people and said to them that they should not fear God, or be afraid of him. God did not come down with the lightning and thunder to kill them. Moses said that God came down in this way to test them. Moses is saying that the reason that God came down was to see if the people of Israel would have the fear

of God once they saw that God was very powerful. So, Moses said that the people should not be afraid of God. But they should have the fear of God, or a great honor and respect for God.

It is important to understand that there are two kinds of fears that Moses was talking about here. The first kind of fear describes what a person feels when he is afraid because he does not feel safe. When a person has this kind of fear, he normally wants to avoid any person, object, or place that does not help him feel safe. This was the kind of fear that the people of Israel had. They did not feel safe to be near God because of the lightning and thunder that appeared when God spoke. But Moses told the people not to fear God in this way. The fear that God wanted the people of Israel to have was the fear of God. The fear of God refers to the great respect and honor that a person has for God. A person who has a fear of God wants to come near to God. He is also eager to learn about what makes God happy and how God works in the world. He also obeys God and does not sin against him. Sin refers to the action of a person who disobeys God.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture show that they are afraid of something? Pause this audio here.

You may also discuss this question as a group: How might people in your culture show that they have a great honor and respect for God? Pause this audio here.

Even though Moses told them not to be afraid of God, the people stood far off. They stood far from the mountain while Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was. This means that Moses went in the direction of the mountain where there was thick darkness because of the cloud and smoke that was covering the mountain. God was on the mountain, so Moses went to the mountain where God was.

When Moses met God on top of the mountain, Yahweh talked to Moses. Yahweh is the personal name for God. Yahweh said that the people saw for themselves that he talked to them from heaven. This means that the people saw with their very own eyes how Yahweh went down from heaven to talk to them. Then Yahweh said that the people were not to make gods of silver or gods of gold, which means any man-made images of a god. Here, Yahweh was reminding Moses about the first and second commandments that God told him. The people of Israel have no other god. The only God of the people of Israel is Yahweh, their God. Therefore, the people are not to make images or statues to represent other gods.

Instead of images or statues, Yahweh said that the people were to make an altar of earth for Yahweh. An altar of earth was an object that people made using either stone or soil. They shaped these materials to create an elevated platform where they could sacrifice their offerings, or gifts, to God. A sacrifice refers to an animal that a person kills so he can give it as an offering to Yahweh. There are different kinds of offerings, and Yahweh would explain the different offerings in later stories. But here, Yahweh mentioned some examples of the offerings that the people could offer using the altar of earth. These include burnt offerings, or animals that people burn on the altar, and peace, or fellowship offerings, or animals that people don't burn. Yahweh also mentioned sheep and oxen as examples of animals that they could offer.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of an altar that was made of soil and a picture of a sheep and an ox. Pause this audio here.

Then Yahweh said, "In every place where I cause my name to be remembered I will come to you and bless you." This means that when Yahweh chooses a place for the people to remember and worship him, the people must build an altar there. When the people offer sacrifices, he would also come down from heaven to be with the people and bless them. In this story, Yahweh will bless the people by prospering them so that they will have everything they need. Yahweh will prosper the people so that they will have everything they need in life, and they will be successful in life as they obey Yahweh.

Yahweh also said that if the people were to make an altar of stone for God, they should not build that altar using hewn stones, or stones that people cut using tools to create different shapes. God did not want the people to cut the stones because God didn't want the people to carve cut stones to make images, as other nations did. Yahweh told them not to make carved images of anyone or anything, including Him. So, if they decided to make an altar of stone, they must simply find natural stones in their raw form and put them together. If the people were to make an altar of stone using hewn stones, God would consider it unfit or disrespectful, and He would not accept the altar of stone, as well as any offering that people would offer using that altar.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of a stone altar. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh adds another instruction. The people were not to go up to Yahweh's altar using steps because they might reveal their nakedness. People from other nations built high altars with stairs. Because people at the time wore loose clothing, people who were standing below the altar could see the person's nakedness, or his genitalia, when he went up the altar. Yahweh possibly said this because he does not want the people's genitalia exposed to the holy altar that they would use in worship. This is what other nations did when they worshiped their god, but the Israelites were to be holy. So, when they come to Yahweh to worship and make their offerings, they should behave and wear clothes in a way that people would respect them. It also means that they need to respect others. This means that when they build the altar of earth or stone, it should not be a high altar with steps.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture talk about the people's genitalia, or private parts? Pause this audio here.

You may also discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture show respect to God and other people during worship?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 20:18–26 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has two scenes.

In the first scene: The people see lightning and thunder surrounding the mountain and the people are afraid. So, they tell Moses not to let God speak to them. But Moses tells them that they should not fear God. But the people stood far away from the mountain.

In the second scene: Yahweh tells Moses to tell the people of Israel that they should not make gods of silver or gold. Instead, they should build an altar of earth for Yahweh. Yahweh also gives instructions about making a stone altar.

The characters in this passage are:

- God, or Yahweh
- Moses
- The people of Israel

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Here, the general word for God is used, but when God begins speaking directly to Moses, Moses uses God's personal name, Yahweh.

In visualizing this story, it is important to remember that Moses and the people were in the place called Sinai. This place has a wilderness and a mountain. The people were at the bottom of the mountain outside their tents, and Moses is with the people at the bottom of the mountain. In the story, God would be speaking from the mountain through the cloud and thunder. He would be speaking to all the people of Israel at the bottom of the mountain. Scene one focuses on the bottom of the mountain, while scene two focuses on the top of the mountain. All scenes also show the characters speaking. So, it is important to use the speeches of the characters in each scene.

In scene one, there was lightning, thunder, a thick cloud, a great fire, and great smoke surrounding the mountain. We also hear the sound of the trumpet, but we don't know who is blowing it. When the people of Israel saw and heard all this, they were afraid, and they trembled, or shook, in fear. Then, they stood far off, away from the mountain. Then the people asked Moses to speak to them instead of God, and they would listen. Moses must not let God speak to them directly. The people are very afraid that they might die if God speaks to them. This is because when God spoke, lightning and thunder appeared. In visualizing this, it is important to show that the people are very afraid, and as a consequence they asked Moses to speak to them instead of Yahweh.

Stop here and as a group look again at a picture of Mount Sinai in stormy conditions, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Moses told the people that they should not be afraid of God. God did not come down to kill them, but to test them. God wanted to know if the people would have the fear of God so that the people would obey Yahweh and not sin against him. Remember that Moses was talking about two kinds of fear here. The first kind of fear describes what a person feels when he is afraid because he does not feel safe. The other kind of fear which the Israelites must have is the fear of God, which refers to the great respect and honor that a person has for God. But the people stood far away from the mountain. Meanwhile, Moses drew closer to the thick darkness where God was.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How might people in your culture describe these two kinds of fear? What words do they use? Pause this audio here.

In scene two, the scene focuses on the top of the mountain where Yahweh talked to Moses. Here, Yahweh gave instructions to the people of Israel about building an altar for him. Yahweh began his speech with an instruction to Moses: "This is what you will say to the people of Israel." Then, he gives his next speech which is for the people. Yahweh said that the people saw with their own eyes how God came down from heaven to talk to them. They saw that God was really powerful. So, the people should not make images made of silver or gold to represent other gods. "Gods of silver" or "gods of gold" is a repetition that means that they shouldn't make gods of any kind of materials.

Instead, Yahweh said that they should build an altar of earth for Yahweh. They are to build an altar at each place "where my name is remembered." The phrase, "where my name is remembered," is a way of saying that Yahweh wants the people to remember and worship him. They are to use that altar to sacrifice burnt offerings and peace offerings using both their sheep and their oxen. Whenever the people sacrifice their offerings, Yahweh will come down from heaven, and bless the people. This means that Yahweh will provide for the needs of the people, and he will help them prosper as they obey Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What objects might people give as gifts to God? Also, how might they offer these gifts to God? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh also said that if the people decide to make an altar using stone rather than earth, they are not to use hewn stones, or stones that people had cut using tools. Yahweh said that he will consider it disrespectful. God would not accept the altar of cut stone, as well as any offering that people would give using that altar. In addition, if they were to make a stone altar, they should not go up by steps to the altar. Yahweh says that the people must not build stairs for the stone altar because if they go up to Yahweh's altar, they might expose their nakedness, or their genitalia, to the altar. God does not want them to expose their nakedness, or their genitalia, when they go up to Yahweh's altar.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 20:18–26 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This story has two scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- God, or Yahweh
- Moses
- The people of Israel

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the story without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

In scene one, the people see lightning and thunder surrounding the mountain and the people are afraid. So, they tell Moses not to let God speak to them directly. But Moses tells them that they should not fear God. But the people stood far away from the mountain.

Pause the drama.

In scene two, Yahweh tells Moses to tell the people of Israel that they should not make gods of silver or gold. Instead, they should build an altar of earth for Yahweh. Yahweh also gives instructions about making a stone altar.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 20:18–26 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The story begins when the people saw the thunder, the lightning, the sound of trumpet, and mountain smoking. Thunder, lightning, and thick clouds are common forces of nature that appear in the sky when there is a storm. There is usually rain that goes with a storm, but not always. In this case, it only appears that there is a storm, but there is no mention of rain. While this was happening, someone blew the trumpet very loudly. A trumpet was a horn made from the horn of an animal, usually a ram which produces a loud blast when people blow it. Mount Sinai was smoking because God came down on it in a fire. It means that God was surrounded with fire, or that God came in the form of fire. When the people saw and heard all this, the people were afraid and they trembled. This means that the people shook in fear. Then they stood far off. This means that the people moved away from the mountain to find a place where they felt safe. Translate the words thunder, lightning, trumpet, smoke, and trembled the way you have translated them before.

When the people feared God, Moses answered the people. He said that the people should not be afraid because God came down to test them, not to kill them. Testing means that God wanted to see if the people would have the **fear of God** upon them so that they may not **sin**. The fear of God refers to the great respect and honor that a person has for God. A person who has a fear of God obeys him so that he does not sin against him. Sin refers to the action of a person who disobeys God. Translate the words test and sin the same way you have translated them before. For more information on the fear of God and sin, you may refer to the Master Glossary.

Even though Moses told them not to be afraid of God, the people stood far off. This means that the people remained standing somewhere far from the mountain because they did not feel safe standing near the mountain. Meanwhile, Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was. This means that Moses went in the direction of the mountain where there was thick darkness because of the cloud and smoke that was covering the mountain. God was on the mountain, so Moses went to the mountain where God was.

Then Yahweh talked to Moses again. **Yahweh** called Moses from the top of the mountain. Yahweh is the personal name of God, and it is used throughout this passage. Use the same name for Yahweh that you have used in previous passages. Look up Yahweh in the Master Glossary for more information. Yahweh told Moses to tell the people that they have seen for themselves, or with their own eyes, that Yahweh talked to them from heaven. This means that the people saw with their very own eyes how God went down from heaven to talk to them.

Yahweh also said that the people should not make **gods of silver**. In the same way, they should not make for themselves **gods of gold**. The people are not to make any images or statues to represent other gods. The people of Israel have only one God, and that is Yahweh. Instead of making gods, the people are to make an **altar** of earth for Yahweh. An altar was an object that people made using either stone or soil. They shaped these materials to create an elevated platform where they could sacrifice their offerings, or gifts, to God. An altar of earth was an altar made of soil. Yahweh said that they were to use this altar to **sacrifice** their **burnt offerings** and their **peace, or fellowship offerings**, using their sheep and oxen. A sacrifice refers to an animal that a person kills so he can give it as an offering to Yahweh. Burnt offerings were animals that people killed and burned as their gift to God. Peace offerings were animals that people killed but did not burn as their gift to God. Translate the words **altar**, **sacrifice**, **burnt offering**, and **peace, or fellowship offering**, the same way you have translated them before. For more information on these words, you may refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh also said, "In every place where I cause my name to be remembered I will come to you and **bless** you." This means that when God chooses a place for the people to remember and worship him, the people must build an altar there. When the people offer sacrifices, he would come down from heaven to be with the people and bless them. Blessing is when a person gives favor to another person. In this story, it means that Yahweh will prosper the people so that they will have everything they need in life, and they will be successful in life as they obey Yahweh. Translate the word **bless** the same way you have translated it before. For more information on the word **bless**, you may refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh adds that if the people were to make an altar of stone, the people should not use hewn stones. Hewn stones were stones that people cut using tools to create different shapes of stones. If the people were to use tools to cut the stones to build the altar of stone, God would consider the altar profane or disrespectful. God would not accept the altar of stone, as well as any offering that people would give using that altar. The people should not also go up by steps to Yahweh's altar. This means that when the people build the stone altar, they should not build stairs. Yahweh does not want them to show their nakedness, or their genitalia, whenever they go up to Yahweh's altar.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for nakedness or genitalia. Remember to use a word that is appropriate to your culture.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 20:18–26

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (4567872 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
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- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

Exodus 21:1–11

In this step, hear Exodus 21:1–11 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 21:1–11 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 21:1–11 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh tells Moses specific laws about male slaves. Male slaves should leave their master at the end of their contract after six years in the same way they came into the contract. If they come in married, they should leave married. If they come in single, they should leave single.

In the second scene: Yahweh tells Moses a law about how a male slave can work for his master for the rest of his life.

In the third scene: Yahweh tells Moses some laws about the treatment of female slaves.

The characters in this passage are:

- Master
- Male slave
- Male slave's wife and children
- Father
- Daughter, who becomes the servant wife
- Master's son
- And the master's first wife

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In this passage, remember that Yahweh is still giving Moses these laws on the Mountain of Sinai. These laws are the first laws in the Book of the Covenant. The laws in all three scenes are about male and female slaves. Remember that these laws are to protect the male and female slaves. Remember also that the people of Israel were slaves in Egypt, and that the Egyptians treated the Israelites badly in Egypt. Now, Yahweh is giving the people of Israel specific rules about how to take care of their own slaves or servants. Remember that Yahweh wants the Israelites to treat their slaves fairly as workers with rights and freedom after completing their six year agreement.

In the first scene, the first part says these are the laws to give the people of Israel. Remember that the first laws are about male slaves. This law is about a situation an Israelite might be in if he buys a male slave. First, there is a law about an unmarried slave. Remember the male slave probably sold himself to the master and worked for the master. At the end of the six years of the work contract, the law says the male slave must go free. If he was not married at the beginning of the contract, and he is still not married at the end of the contract, he does not need to pay the master any money. Remember this Hebrew slave might be another Israelite, or he might be from a different tribe of people, or a lower class of people.

Next, if the male slave is married when he starts working for the master, then the male slave should take his wife with him when he finishes his contract. The wife and any children would be living in the master's house with the male slave, and the master would give them all food and clothing. The male slave came into the contract married, and he ended the six-year contract also married. Remember the male slave's children also would go with the male slave.

Finally, if the master gives the male slave a female slave to marry during the six years of working for his master, then the male slave cannot take his new wife and children with him. The male slave started the contract unmarried, so he must leave the contract without his wife. Remember that the master gave the male slave this female slave as a wife, and the male slave had no money to pay for his new wife. The male slave is working to pay for his wife. If he finishes his work contract with the master, the male slave still needs to pay the master more money for his wife.

In the second scene, remember this starts with a different possible situation. In this situation, the male slave does not want to leave his wife and children. The male slave tells the master he wants to stay with his new wife and children. The male slave decides to make a promise to work for the master for the rest of his life. Remember that this is a good situation for the male slave because the master will continue to provide food, housing, and probably clothing for the slave and his wife and children.

Remember the laws protect both the master and the male slave. The master and slave must go to the place of worship where the people meet with Yahweh and make the promise in front of the leaders and in front of Yahweh. Remember also that the master puts the slave next to a door or doorpost and makes a hole in the

slave's ear lobe. This hole in his ear is a reminder everyday of this promise that the master will give the male slave food, a home, clothing, and work. Remember that everyone in the community could see that the slave promised to work for the master for the rest of the slave's life.

Stop here and look at pictures of a door, doorposts, and an awl again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

In the third scene, remember that the father who sells his daughter as a servant probably needs to pay a debt. Remember that this was common during Moses' time. Also, it is likely the father sold his daughter as a wife as well as a servant. Remember that the law about male slaves is not the same law for these kinds of female slaves. These female slaves cannot leave after six years of working for their master.

Remember that the laws about female slaves protect them. If the man who buys the servant wife is not happy with her, he cannot decide to sell her to anyone he wants. The man must sell her back to her own father. The servant wife will return to her own family. Remember this is because the man who bought her broke his contract by not wanting to stay married to her.

Remember also that if the man gives the servant girl to his own son so they can get married, there are laws to protect her. The man needs to care for this servant wife of his son in the same way he cares for his own daughter.

It is also important to remember that if the man marries a second wife, whether she is a servant or not, he needs to treat her equally with the first wife that he already has. He must treat both wives the same. The man should give the first wife the same amount of food, clothing, and marriage rights that he gives the second wife. A servant wife is free to leave the man if the man does not treat her in the same way as the other wife. The servant wife's father does not need to pay any money to get her back. The servant wife is free to leave without any payment of money.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Exodus 21:1-11

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (1250572 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)

[mp3 zip](#) (2078288 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)

Exodus 21:12-17

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 21:12-17 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

In the first scene: There are three laws about killing someone. For a person who kills someone else on purpose, the punishment is death of the person who killed someone. For someone killing someone else by accident, Yahweh's law protects them from death.

In the second scene: There are three laws about crimes, or wrongdoings, that all result in death as the punishment for the crime. Two of the laws are about attacking or cursing a person's own parents. The other law is about kidnapping, or stealing someone.

The characters in this passage are:

- Person who plans to kill someone
- Person who is killed by another person
- People in the community who kill the person who killed someone
- Person who kills someone by accident
- Person who attacks his mother or father
- Mother and father
- Kidnapper
- Person who is stolen
- Person who still has the stolen person
- And a person who curses his parents

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In this passage, remember that Yahweh is still giving Moses these laws on the Mountain of Sinai. These laws are laws in the Book of the Covenant. The laws in both scenes are about crimes, or wrongdoings, with the punishment of death. Remember that the death of the person who committed their wrongdoings shows how much Yahweh values human life. Remember also there were no jails, or prisons, for people who did wrong actions during Moses' time. A jail, or prison, is a place to put people who do wrong actions. People in jail, or prison, are not free to leave. Remember that for each law, there is a description of the crime, or wrong action, and then the punishment for that crime.

In the first scene, there are three laws about killing someone. Remember, the first law and the third law are both about someone who plans to kill a person. Remember, the middle law is about someone who kills someone else by accident.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What patterns do you use in your laws, or sayings? For example, is it common to have two similar laws at the beginning and end of a set of laws? How do you order laws in your language or show which laws are most important? How do you explain a crime and the punishment for that crime? Pause this audio here.

Remember that if the killing is planned, the person who killed someone needs to die. The community of Yahweh's people will kill the person who killed someone as his punishment. If the murder is an accident, Yahweh's law protects the person who killed someone accidentally. The custom was for a person to go to the altar of Yahweh for protection if they killed someone by accident. In later laws to Moses, Yahweh will explain more about where people can go for protection. Remember, this law is different from the other laws in other nations during Moses' time—laws in other nations said that any person who kills another person deserves to die, whether or not the killing was planned or was an accident.

Finally, the last law in this section is again about a murder that the murderer plans to do. The first and last laws were both about murder that is planned, and the middle law is about an accidental death. During Moses' time, it was common to talk about three related laws together. Often, the first and last laws were about the same thing, and the middle law was slightly different. This was a common way to structure laws during Moses' time. In the original language, this law about a murder that someone plans says, "when a man becomes heated against his fellow." This means the murderer is angry with the other person. He is so angry that he decides to kill him with a clever or evil plan.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What is another way to say someone gets angry in your language? Examples could be a person is heated, feels rage, is boiling, or is red with anger. Pause this audio here.

If a person kills someone and it is not an accident, that person must die. There is no place the person who killed someone on purpose can go to be protected or safe. Remember that some people thought if they held onto the horns of the altar of Yahweh, Yahweh would protect them from the punishment of death. The law says the people should drag the person who killed someone from the altar and kill him as his punishment.

Stop here and look at a picture of an altar again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

In the second scene, there are three laws with the punishment of death. Remember that the crime, or wrongdoing, in each of these three laws is not killing people, but the punishment is still death. Yahweh considered all three of these crimes worthy of death-attacking your parents, kidnapping someone, or cursing your parents. Remember also that the first and last laws in this scene are both about wrongdoing against a person's parents. The middle law is about kidnapping.

It is important to remember that in the first law, the parent does not die. The person strikes, or attacks, their parent and the parent is hurt badly, but he or she does not die. In the original language, this word means attacking someone and leaving them motionless on the ground to die. Remember, if the parent dies, then the law about killing someone on purpose means the person needs to die. Also, remember the punishment of death is the same whether or not the person attacks their mother or their father, or even a grandmother or grandfather-all of these crimes deserve death. Remember the fifth word, or commandment, in the law Yahweh gave to Moses is "honor your father and mother," but there is no punishment in the commandment for what happens if someone does not honor his father or mother. Here, Yahweh says the punishment is death. Remember also the law does not say anything about why the person attacks their mother or father-the law only says that if the person attacks their mother or father, they must die.

Next, there is a law about kidnapping. Remember, this is related to the eighth word, or commandment, about not stealing. Here, there is a punishment listed for what happens if someone steals another person and takes them from their home and family. Remember, the punishment of death is for the kidnapper, and also for any person who still has the stolen person. Remember, the stolen person could be any person-man, woman, old, young, rich, or poor.

The third law in the second scene is about parents again. This time, a person must die if they curse their mother or father. Remember the word "curse" probably means saying publicly that a person wants nothing to do with their parents, and that the person wishes harm on their parents. Remember during Moses' time that a person was expected to take care of their parents when the parents got old. A person who curses their parents says they will not care for their parents in old age. This is dishonoring to the parents. Remember that the punishment for this person is death.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Exodus 21:12-17

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (1255884 KB)

- [FIA Step 3](#)

[mp3 zip](#) (2076319 KB)

- [FIA Step 3](#)

Exodus 21:18-27

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 21:18-27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh gives a law about the punishment for someone who injures someone in a fight who does not die from their injury.

In the second scene: Yahweh gives a law for punishing a man who injures his male or female slave.

In the third scene: Yahweh gives laws for punishing men who are fighting and accidentally injure a pregnant woman. There are also laws that give a standard for any injury on any other person.

In the fourth scene: Yahweh gives laws to show what the punishment should be when a man permanently injures his male or female slave.

The characters in this passage are:

- A man who injures another man
- Injured man
- A man who injures his male or female slave
- Male or female slave who is injured
- Two men who fight each other
- Pregnant woman
- Pregnant woman's husband
- And judges

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In this passage, remember that Yahweh is still giving Moses these laws on the Mountain of Sinai. These laws are laws in the Book of the Covenant. Remember that before this passage, Yahweh gave laws about how to treat male and female slaves, and about the punishment for killing other people, dishonoring your father or mother, or kidnapping or stealing another person. Remember that the laws in this passage are all about the punishment for injuring people in other ways. Also, remember that the structure of the laws is "If someone does something, this thing will happen." The laws are talking about an event that hasn't actually happened yet.

In the first scene, there is a law about two men who fight each other. Remember the law uses the phrase "with a fist or a stone."

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How will you translate the phrase "with a fist or a stone?" Remember this phrase means hitting with any part of the body or with any kind of weapon. Pause this audio here.

One man injures the other man, and the injury is bad enough that the injured man needs to stay in bed from his injury. The injured man gets up from his bed and walks around with his staff outside as he recovers, and he is not permanently injured.

Stop here and look at a picture of a staff again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

Remember that the man who injures the other man needs to pay for the time the injured man could not work while he was in bed. The man who injures the other man also needs to pay for the injured man's recovery until the injured man is completely healed. Remember there is no additional punishment for the man who injured the other man in the fight. The injured man should be paid for his loss of earnings and for his healing, but no more than that.

In the second scene, Yahweh gives a law for when a man strikes his male or female slave. If the man strikes his male or female slave with a rod and the slave dies, the man needs to be punished. Remember the man is probably disciplining his male or female slave for some kind of wrongdoing, such as stealing.

Stop here and look at a picture of a staff, club, and rod again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

If the man strikes his male or female slave and the male or female slave recovers from the temporary injury, there is no punishment for the man. Remember that slaves were the property of their owners, and any time the slave did not work was a loss of money for the owner. Remember the slave might miss a day or two of work, but the slave is not permanently injured. Remember there is a later law about what happens if the man permanently injures his male or female slave. Remember also that some people think that if the slave actually dies from his injury, but not for a few days, there is no punishment for the slave owner.

In the third scene, the situation is that two men are fighting, and they injure a pregnant woman. Remember that the original language says, "her children go out." This probably means she has a miscarriage, or that she is injured, but she is still able to have children. Remember that even if she is not permanently injured, there is a penalty for injuring her at all. Remember the man who injured her needs to pay her husband money, and the judges will help decide the amount of money.

Remember if the pregnant woman suffers a serious injury, there is a serious punishment for the man who injured the pregnant woman. The penalty for the man who injured the pregnant woman should equal the injury she suffers.

It is important to remember that the next part of Yahweh's laws is about the punishment for injuring a pregnant woman, and it is also a standard for all of God's people in punishing any kind of injury to any other person. The phrase "you are to take life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth" shows that the punishment should not be more or less than the injury. Also, remember this law is very different from other laws in other nearby nations during Moses' time. It was common for a wealthy person to easily pay money to a poor person for an injury, and for a poor person not to be able to pay. Yahweh wants there to be equal laws for all people, regardless of whether they are rich or poor.

Remember that the law does not literally mean that people should take another person's eye to pay for losing their eye or knock out another person's tooth to make up for losing their own tooth. The meaning of the law is that the person who injures another person's eye or tooth or hand should have an equal punishment for the loss of eye or tooth or hand. The punishment could be needing to pay money, banishment from the community, losing property, or something else. Remember there is a specific penalty for each different kind of permanent injury, and it applies to everyone regardless of wealth or social status.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: An "eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth" is a way to talk about how a punishment for an injury should be equal in consequence to the injury itself. What kinds of phrases do you have in your language to show that a punishment is equally severe to the offense? Pause this audio here.

In the fourth scene, remember these two laws show examples of the "life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth" laws in the third scene. Remember the example is of a man who owns a male or female slave. The man permanently injures the eye of his male or female slave, and the punishment for the man is that the male or female slave must go free. Remember this is surprising because the man owns the male or female slave, and it was common for slave owners to discipline, or punish, their slaves. Remember that Yahweh is protecting the male and female slaves by letting them go free if their owner permanently injures them. The slave owner still has a penalty for injuring his male or female slave, even though the slave owner is wealthier and is in a higher social class than the male or female slave.

Remember there is a second example that if the slave owner knocks out the tooth of his male or female slave, the male or female slave must go free. Remember that these two laws show that if the slave owner permanently injures his slave in any way-male or female-the slave is free and does not need to complete their work contract.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Exodus 21:18-27

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (1276935 KB)

- [FIA Step 3](#)

[mp3 zip](#) (2139019 KB)

- [FIA Step 3](#)

Exodus 21:28–36

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 21:28–36 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh gives several laws about a bull that kills a person. There are specific laws about what to do if people knew the bull was dangerous, or if the person is a child or a slave.

In the second scene: Yahweh gives a law about a bull or donkey that falls into an open pit.

In the third scene: Yahweh gives laws about a person's bull that causes the death of another person's bull.

The characters in this passage are:

- Bull who kills a person
- Owner of the bull who kills a person
- Person who dies
- Family of the person who dies
- Bull that people know is dangerous
- Owner of the bull that people know is dangerous
- Boy or girl who dies
- Male or female slave
- Owner of the male or female slave
- Man who opens a pit
- Bull or donkey who falls into the pit
- Owner of the bull or donkey who falls into the pit
- Owner of the pit (might be the same person who opens the pit)
- Bull who kills another bull
- Owner of the bull who kills another bull
- Bull who dies
- Owner of the dead bull
- And a live bull to pay for the dead bull

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In this passage, remember that Yahweh is still giving Moses these laws on the Mountain of Sinai. These laws are laws in the Book of the Covenant. Remember that before this passage, Yahweh gave laws about how to treat

male and female slaves, and about the punishment for killing other people, dishonoring your father or mother, kidnapping another person, or injuring people in other ways. Remember that the laws in this passage are all about injuries involving animals. Also, remember that farming and animals were common during Moses' time. Most people owned at least some animals, so these laws are important for when an animal injures or kills another person or another animal.

It was common during Moses' time to group laws or sayings with two similar laws at the beginning and the end, and a different related law in the middle of the two similar laws. This made laws easier to remember. In this passage, the first scene has laws about the punishment for a person whose bull kills another person. The third scene has similar laws about what to do if a person's bull kills another person's bull. The second scene is not about bulls killing people or animals—this scene is about what to do if a bull or donkey falls into an open pit and dies. Also, remember that the structure of the laws is "If someone does something, this thing will happen." The laws are talking about an event that hasn't actually happened yet.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about laws and sayings in your culture. How do people say important laws, or sayings, so that everyone can easily remember them? Pause this audio here.

In the first scene, remember there are several situations involving a bull that kills a person. Remember a bull has horns on its head and it is the largest and strongest of all the farm animals. First, a person's bull kills a man or woman. Remember that animals like bulls were valuable and also very dangerous. The bull uses its horns to injure the man or woman, and the man or woman dies from their injuries.

Stop here and look at a picture of a bull again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

Also, stop here and discuss this question as a group: Discuss how you will translate the word "bull." Will you use a word like bull, ox, cattle, or something else? Pause this audio here.

Remember that the punishment when a bull kills a man or woman is that the bull must die. People should kill the bull by throwing stones on it until it dies. Remember that the owner loses his valuable bull, and the owner cannot even take the meat from his dead bull. Remember there is no other punishment for the owner of the bull.

Remember that the next part of this scene is about a bull that people know is dangerous. People in the community knew this bull had previously tried to hurt people with its horns, and the bull's owner did not restrain the bull. Remember that this probably means the owner did not put the bull behind a fence or enclosed area. This dangerous bull kills someone. Again, people must kill the bull by throwing stones on it until it dies. Remember the owner of the dangerous bull has an additional punishment as well—the owner of the bull must die.

Next, there is a section of the law about what must happen if there is a ransom made for the owner of the bull. Remember a ransom is paying money to buy back a person's life. The previous law says the owner of the bull must die, but it is possible that a judge might decide the owner of the bull can live if he pays the full amount decided by the judge for his life. The owner of the bull must pay this ransom money to the family of the person who dies.

Remember the law is the same for a son or daughter, meaning a child. Remember this shows the bull and the bull's owner have the same punishment as the punishment if the bull kills a man or woman. A child or young person's life has the same value as an older person's life, so the punishment is the same whether a young or old person dies from a bull hurting him or her.

Finally, the last part of the first scene describes a situation where a bull gores a male or female slave. Remember it is likely the male or female slave dies from their injuries. The bull must die—people should throw stones on the bull to kill it. Remember the owner of the bull does not die in this situation. Instead, the bull's owner must pay 30 shekels of silver to the owner of the slave. Remember that a shekel of silver was worth about 3 kilograms of the best wheat. Remember slaves had no rights, and the owner of the slave probably told the slave to work with the bull. The owner of the slave must take some responsibility for the death of his slave.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Discuss how you might translate "30 shekels of silver" in your language. What is the best way to communicate this large amount of money? Pause this audio here.

In the second scene, there are laws about a bull or donkey that falls into an open pit. Remember a pit is a place to collect and store rainwater, and that someone digs the pit or opens the pit. The pit has no cover on it, which is dangerous. A person or animal could fall into the open pit.

Stop here and look at pictures of a donkey and a pit again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

Remember that the bull or donkey dies from falling into the pit. Remember that the punishment is for the owner of the pit—this might or might not be the same person as the person who uncovers the pit. The owner of the pit must pay the owner of the dead bull or donkey the full amount of money for the value of the dead bull or donkey. The owner of the pit also owns the dead bull or donkey. Remember this “payment in full” shows that the owner of the pit is taking full responsibility for the death of the bull or donkey.

In the third scene, a person's bull causes the death of another person's bull. Remember that the two bulls are equally valuable. The injured bull dies from its injuries. After the death of the injured bull, the two men must do a few things. First, they must sell the bull that is still alive, and split the money they get from selling this live bull. Then, the two men must divide the meat of the dead bull between them.

The last law in the third scene is also about a person's bull that causes the death of another person's bull. Again, the injured bull dies from its injuries. This time, however, people knew that the bull who killed the other bull was dangerous. The owner of the dangerous bull did not restrain the bull by keeping it behind a fence or an enclosed area, and so the owner of the dangerous bull is responsible for the death of the other bull. The owner of the dangerous bull must give a live bull to the other man. The owner of the dangerous bull now owns the dead bull. Remember this law shows that people are responsible for the animals they own.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Exodus 21:28–36

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (1436344 KB)

- [FIA Step 3](#)

[mp3 zip](#) (2412443 KB)

- [FIA Step 3](#)

Exodus 22:1–6

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 22:1–6 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh gives laws about the punishment for thieves. There are laws for a thief who steals an animal, a thief who breaks into another person's house during the day or at night, and a thief who cannot make the full payment.

In the second scene: Yahweh gives laws about a person who neglects the property of another person. The neglect could be from letting their animals graze on the other person's land, or from letting a fire spread to another person's land so it destroys their property.

The characters in this passage are:

- A thief
- An ox or a sheep
- Owner of the stolen ox or the stolen sheep
- Five oxen
- Four sheep
- Owner of a house
- Owner of animals who graze in his neighbor's fields
- Neighbor who owns fields nearby
- And a farmer who starts a fire on his land

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In this passage, remember that Yahweh is still giving Moses these laws on the Mountain of Sinai. These laws are laws in the Book of the Covenant. Remember that before this passage, Yahweh gave laws about how to treat male and female slaves, about the punishment for killing other people, dishonoring your father or mother, kidnapping another person, injuring people in other ways, or injuries involving animals. Remember this section is about the punishment when someone steals another person's property or neglects to care for another person's property. Remember there were no jails or prisons, so the punishment means the wrongdoer makes a payment to the other person.

Remember that for each law, there is a description of the crime, or wrongdoing, and then the punishment for that crime, or wrongdoing. Remember also this is the first half of a two-part passage.

In the first scene, remember that there are five laws about thieves stealing something. Remember there is a pattern for the laws—the first and the last laws are similar, and the middle three laws are different. Remember that putting similar laws at the beginning and the end of a section was a common way for people during Moses' time to help remember the laws.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you order laws in your language or show which laws are most important? For example, is it common to have two similar laws at the beginning and end of a set of laws? Pause this audio here.

The first law is about a thief who steals an ox or a sheep from another person. Remember the thief killed or sold the animal already. The thief must pay five oxen to the owner of the ox if the thief stole an ox. The thief must pay four sheep to the owner of the sheep if the thief stole a sheep. Remember oxen are more valuable than sheep, so that is why a thief who steals an ox needs to pay back more than a thief who steals a sheep.

Stop here and look at a picture of an ox and a sheep again as a group if needed. Remember that an ox can be any kind of cattle, and a sheep can be a sheep or a goat. Pause this audio here.

Remember the next two laws are both about a thief who breaks into another person's house. Remember the thief probably had to dig through or under the wall of the mud brick house.

Stop here and look at a picture of a mud brick house as a group. Pause this audio here.

In the first law, the thief breaks into the owner's house at night. If the owner of the house kills the thief, then there is no punishment for the owner of the house. Remember it is nighttime and it is probably difficult to see what is happening.

If the thief breaks into the owner's house during the day, there is a penalty for the owner of the house if he kills the thief. There is light, and the owner of the house can see the thief, so the owner of the house is guilty of shedding the blood of the thief.

Next, remember there is a general law about a thief who is caught alive and is not killed. The thief must pay back in full to the owner of the stolen property. If the thief cannot make the full payment, the thief must sell

himself as a slave to pay for the stolen property. Remember there is still a punishment for a poor thief, even if he does not have the money to make the required payment.

Remember that the last law in this section returns to the situation that the first law talks about. This law is again about a thief who steals an ox, a donkey, or a sheep from another person.

Stop here and look at a picture of a donkey again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

Someone catches the thief before the thief kills or sells the stolen animal. Remember the penalty for the thief is he must pay back double of what he stole. For example, this means if the thief stole an ox, and the ox is still alive when they catch the thief, the thief must return the stolen ox to the owner of the stolen ox. Remember that it is unclear if the thief must give one additional ox to the owner of the stolen ox, or two additional oxen to the owner of the stolen ox.

In the second scene, remember there are two main laws about the punishment for a person who neglects the property of another person. Remember this means the person causes harm to the other person's property, but it is not the same situation as a thief who steals property. Remember the punishment is also less harsh for these situations than the punishment for a thief who steals property from another person.

In the first law of the second scene, a person causes harm to another person's property when he lets his own animals graze on the land of the other person. Remember that it was normal during Moses' time for people to take care of their own animals by letting them graze, or eat, in their own fields and vineyards. Remember that a responsible farmer put his animals in a fence or pen at night to make sure they did not wander to another person's property.

Stop here and look at pictures of a field and a vineyard again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

Remember that the penalty for a farmer who lets his animals graze on another person's land means the farmer must give the best of the crops from his fields and vineyards to the other person.

The second law in the second scene is about a neglectful farmer who starts a fire on his own land, and the fire spreads to another person's land. The thornbushes at the edge of the farmer's land catch fire, and this spreads the fire to the other person's land. The fire destroys the stacked grain, standing grain, or the whole field of the other person. Remember the penalty for the neglectful farmer who started the fire is the farmer needs to pay the other person back in full for everything that was destroyed.

Stop here and look at pictures of thornbushes, stacked grain, and standing grain again as a group if needed.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Exodus 22:1–6

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (1187114 KB)

- [FIA Step 3](#)

[mp3 zip](#) (1983678 KB)

- [FIA Step 3](#)

Exodus 22:7–15

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 22:7–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh gives laws about who is responsible when someone keeps property safe for another person, and then a thief steals the property.

In the second scene: Yahweh gives laws about disagreements over property, and how to settle those disagreements.

In the third scene: Yahweh gives more laws about injury or death to a borrowed or rented animal.

The characters in this passage are:

- Person who gives items to a neighbor for safekeeping
- Neighbor who is looking after items in his house for safekeeping
- Thief
- Ox, donkey, or sheep
- Owner of an ox, donkey, or sheep who gives it to his neighbor for safekeeping
- Neighbor who borrows the ox, donkey, or sheep
- And Yahweh

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In this passage, remember that Yahweh is still giving Moses these laws on the Mountain of Sinai. These laws are laws in the Book of the Covenant. Remember that before this passage, Yahweh gave laws about the punishment when someone steals another person's property or neglects to care for another person's property.

Remember that for each law, there is a description of the crime, and then the punishment for that crime. Remember also this is the second half of a two-part passage.

In the first scene, remember that one man gives his neighbor items to keep safe. These items might be money or something else that is valuable, like gold and silver jewelry.

Stop here and look at a picture of gold and silver items as a group. Pause this audio here.

In the first law of this scene, it is clear that a thief steals the borrowed items. Someone catches the thief. The thief must pay back double for the items he stole. Remember, this penalty is not as harsh as other countries during Moses' time-some countries said a thief must die for stealing items from another person.

In the second law of this scene, it is not clear who steals the borrowed items. It might be a thief, or it might be the person who was keeping the items safe. No one catches the thief, so the owner of the house, where the looked after items were, must go before God in the place of worship where Yahweh is in order to let Yahweh decide if he is guilty or not. Remember, it is not clear how Yahweh decided this, but it is possible the owner of the house must make a strong statement before Yahweh that he did not take the items.

In the second scene, there is a disagreement between two people over some kind of property. Remember, this disagreement may be about an ox, a donkey, a sheep, a garment, or any kind of lost item. Remember that an ox, a donkey, and a sheep are all common animals during Moses' time. Also, a garment is also called a cloak.

Stop here and look at pictures of an ox, a donkey, a sheep, and a cloak again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

Remember, both people claim the property is theirs, and they must both go before Yahweh. They probably both must make oaths, or strong statements, that they are the true owner of the property. Yahweh will decide which person is guilty, and the guilty person must pay back double to the other person.

Next, there are laws about a person who gives his animal to a neighbor for safekeeping, and what the punishment should be if the looked after animal dies, is hurt, or is taken captive. Remember, the neighbor who was looking after the animal must make an oath, or strong statement, that he did not take the animal.

Remember, the owner of the animal must accept the neighbor's statement. The neighbor does not have to pay anything to the owner of the animal.

The next law says that if someone does steal the animal, the neighbor must pay back the owner of the animal for the stolen animal. Remember that someone needs to catch the thief in order to prove the animal really was stolen.

The last law in this scene is about what to do if a wild animal kills the looked after animal. The neighbor must bring the dead animal to the animal's owner to show that wild animals did kill the looked after animal. There is no payment needed for the neighbor if wild animals did kill the looked after animal.

In the third scene, there are three laws about a person who borrows or rents an animal from his neighbor. If the person borrows an animal, and the borrowed animal dies or is injured while the neighbor is borrowing the animal, the neighbor must pay the animal's owner. Remember, the animal's owner is not with the animal.

The next law is also about a person that borrows an animal, but the animal's owner goes with his animal. In this case, the animal's owner is himself responsible to care for his own animal. If the animal dies or is injured while its own owner is with it, the person borrowing the animal does not need to pay anything.

The last law in this scene is about an owner who rents his animal to his neighbor. The rental fee includes extra money for if the borrowed animal dies. Remember, this is the last law in the section about property laws in the Book of the Covenant.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Exodus 22:7-15

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (927493 KB)

- [FIA Step 3](#)

[mp3 zip](#) (1553942 KB)

- [FIA Step 3](#)

Exodus 22:16-24

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 22:16-24 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh gives laws for if a man seduces a virgin.

In the second scene: Yahweh gives laws about sorcery, people who have sexual relations with animals, and people who give sacrifices to other gods besides Yahweh.

In the third scene: Yahweh gives laws for how to treat foreigners, widows, and orphans.

The characters in this passage are:

- A man who seduces a virgin
- Virgin
- Virgin's father
- Sorceress
- Person who has sexual relations with an animal
- Person who gives sacrifices to another god
- Foreigner
- Widows
- Orphans
- Yahweh
- Israelite men
- Wives of the Israelites
- And children of the Israelites

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In this passage, remember that Yahweh is still giving Moses these laws on the Mountain of Sinai. These laws are laws in the Book of the Covenant. Remember that before this passage, Yahweh gave many other laws, including laws about property disputes. This passage starts a section about social responsibility. This passage is about the bride price, three laws with the punishment of death, and laws about how to treat vulnerable people in society. Remember that for each law, there is a description of the crime, or wrongdoing, and then the punishment for that crime.

In the first scene, remember that the law about the man seducing a virgin is usually included with this current passage because it is about social responsibility to other people. Remember the virgin is not engaged or in a promise of marriage to anyone, and she is old enough to get married.

Remember also that a bride price is the money the man must pay to the girl's father to marry her. Remember that when the man seduces the virgin, he does not follow the traditional customs for engagement and marriage in the culture.

Remember also that the man must still pay the bride-price after he has also seduced the virgin. Remember that the bride-price is paid in silver, and the man was required to pay the normal amount of silver to the father for the bride-price. Remember that the bride-price is money the man gives to the girl's family to compensate for the loss of their daughter. Remember also that even if the father refuses to give his daughter to the man in marriage, the man must still pay the normal amount of silver for the bride-price. Remember that in the original language, the words for sexual relations here are "lie with her" or "sleep with her."

Stop here and look at a picture of silver that would be used as money again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

The laws in the second scene have more formal legal terms than laws in the first scene. These three laws are probably easier to remember because they all use more formal language.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you state laws in a formal way in your language? Give an example of a formal law in your community. Pause this audio here.

In the second scene, remember the three laws all have the punishment of death. Remember that these are not the only laws that deserve death, but these are three examples of the kinds of things that Yahweh does not tolerate in his covenant community. Remember that all three laws are about common practices that other nations did during Moses' time.

Remember the first law is about sorcery. A sorceress is a woman who uses herbs or drugs for doing magic on other people, or seeks supernatural power or knowledge by calling on evil spirits. Remember the punishment for someone doing sorcery was death.

Remember the second law is about having sexual relations with animals. Remember the original language says do not "lie with an animal." Remember that Canaanites had sexual relations with animals as a part of their fertility practices, but Yahweh does not want his people to do this. The punishment for having sexual relations with animals was also death.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Both here and in the law about a man seducing a virgin, the original language uses the phrase "to lie with someone." Talk about how your community discusses sexual relations. What is an appropriate way to say this law in your language? Pause this audio here.

Finally, the third law in this section is about not sacrificing to any other gods. Remember that sacrificing means giving a gift to a god, usually offering food to a god, and it is the same as worshiping that god. Remember also that other nations worshiped many different gods for different reasons. Yahweh did not want his people to worship any other gods for any reason.

Remember also that the punishment for sacrificing to any other god is that the person will be completely destroyed. Remember the original language says the person will be put "under the ban," which means Yahweh will completely destroy the person.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Share a story about a time when God totally destroyed someone or something. Pay attention to how you talk about God totally destroying someone. Pause this audio here.

In the third scene, remember that there are two laws about how to treat vulnerable people. The first law is about not oppressing foreigners, and the second law is about not mistreating widows and orphans. There is also a description of the punishment for people who mistreat widows and orphans.

In the first law, remember that a foreigner does not have the same rights as a citizen of a country. Remember also that Yahweh also gives a reason for the law about not mistreating or oppressing foreigners. Yahweh says that his people were also foreigners themselves in Egypt, and Yahweh does not want his people to become like the Egyptians and mistreat foreigners in their land. Remember it is possible that Israel would want to act like the other nations around them and mistreat foreigners, and Yahweh says he does not tolerate this in his covenant community.

In the second law, remember that Yahweh says not to mistreat widows and orphans. Widows and orphans both lack protection in the community, and Yahweh does not want his people to take advantage of widows and orphans. Remember that in this passage, an orphan is a child with no father.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Who are considered orphans in your community? Is it a child with no father or mother, or only one parent? How can you translate this word in your language to show the meaning that the child has no father? Pause this audio here.

Finally, Yahweh says the punishment if his people mistreat widows or orphans. Yahweh says if the widow or orphan cries out to him, he will hear them and become their protector. Yahweh will become angry at the people who mistreat widows or orphans. Remember the original language says, "my nose will become hot" to show Yahweh will become angry.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about someone becoming very angry. Pay attention to the words you use to describe his or her anger. What are some other ways you talk about people becoming angry? Some examples could be getting red with anger or boiling with anger. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh will kill these people with the sword if they mistreat widows and orphans. Remember this means Yahweh will let other nations attack his people and kill them. Remember their own wives will become widows and their own children will become orphans.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your language, how do you talk about other nations coming to kill your people?

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Exodus 22:16–24

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (1376453 KB)

- [FIA Step 3](#)

[mp3 zip](#) (2303458 KB)

- [FIA Step 3](#)

Exodus 22:25–31

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 22:25–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh gives laws about borrowing and lending money.

In the second scene: Yahweh gives laws about respect for Yahweh and respect for Israel's leaders. Yahweh also gives laws about correct offerings to Yahweh in their grain and wine, their firstborn sons, and their firstborn oxen, sheep, and goats.

The characters in this passage are:

- An Israelite who lends money to someone
- Moneylender
- Poor person
- A neighbor who gives his cloak for his money loan
- A moneylender who takes the cloak
- Yahweh
- Israelites
- Leaders of Israel
- Firstborn sons
- Families of the firstborn sons
- Firstborn cattle and sheep
- Owners of the firstborn oxen and sheep
- And mothers of the firstborn oxen and sheep

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In this passage, remember that Yahweh is still giving Moses these laws on the Mountain of Sinai. These laws are laws in the Book of the Covenant. Remember that before this passage, Yahweh gave many other laws, including laws about property disputes and how to treat vulnerable people in society. Remember this section

is a continuation of the section about treating vulnerable people fairly. This section has laws about borrowing and lending money and not taking advantage of poor people. There are also laws about respecting Yahweh's holiness.

In the first scene, remember that moneylending was common during Moses' time. People often asked other people for money, and a person who lends the money is called a moneylender. Remember that charging interest was common, meaning a person who borrows money had to pay back more money than they borrowed. Remember the money people used then was silver. This silver was usually not in the form of coins, but in certain shapes. The silver's weight determined how much it was worth.

Stop here and look at a picture of silver again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

Remember that Yahweh says his people must not charge interest when they lend money to poor or needy people among them. Remember this also means that Yahweh's people should not charge any other Israelite interest for a loan of money. Moneylenders can charge interest to foreigners. This is the way that professional moneylenders, if there were any in Israel, would have to make their money.

Remember the next law is also about caring for the poor. Remember that a person who borrows money often has to give the lender some kind of property to ensure he would pay back the money he owes to the lender. Remember that if the borrower cannot pay back the money, the lender can keep this property.

Remember Yahweh gives the example of a lender taking the cloak of his neighbor, or fellow Israelite, who is borrowing money as the property that guarantees he will pay back the lender. A cloak is common outer clothing that people wore, and people also used it as a blanket to stay warm at night. Remember that if a person gives his cloak as his guarantee on the loan, the person probably has nothing else to give. Also, remember the cloak is one example of something that is essential, but this law would be the same for taking anything that was necessary for someone's life.

Stop here and look at a picture of a cloak again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh says the lender must return the neighbor's cloak at sunset because the neighbor has nothing else to keep warm at night. Yahweh asks the question "in what can he lie down?" Yahweh does not expect an answer to this question, but he is showing the poor person has no other blanket besides his cloak. Yahweh wants to protect the health of the poor person.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about how you will translate this in your language. Will you use a question or some other form of statement? An example could be "the poor person does not have anything else to cover himself with at night." Pause this audio here.

Remember Yahweh says if the poor person cries out to him, Yahweh will hear this person because Yahweh is compassionate and gracious.

In the second scene, remember that Yahweh gives laws about Yahweh's holiness and how Yahweh's people must also be holy. First, Yahweh's people should not curse or blaspheme Yahweh, meaning they should not insult or speak disrespectfully about Yahweh. Yahweh's people must also treat their human leaders with respect because their leaders represent Yahweh to the people.

Next, remember that Yahweh gives three ways his people must give correct offerings to Yahweh to respect Yahweh. First, they must give Yahweh their grain and drink offerings. Remember this probably means they must give their barley or wheat, and also their wine from their grapes and their olive oil from their olives.

Second, Yahweh's people must give him their firstborn sons. Remember this does not mean their firstborn sons must die. Remember the family would pay money or give an animal to buy back their firstborn sons from Yahweh. The firstborn sons were dedicated to Yahweh for special service.

Third, Yahweh's people must give Yahweh the firstborn of their oxen, sheep, and goats. Remember that oxen are large farm animals, and sheep and goats are smaller animals. Remember the word for "sheep" can mean both sheep and goats.

Stop here and look at pictures of oxen and sheep again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh's people must sacrifice these firstborn animals on the eighth day of their lives. They must let the firstborn animals stay with their mothers for the first seven days of their lives. Remember this probably was for the mothers of the newborn animals to clean them and also for them to gain weight before their owners gave them to Yahweh.

Finally, the last law in this scene is also about holiness. Yahweh's people needed to be holy or set apart for special service to Yahweh. One way they needed to be holy was in the food they ate. Remember there are many other laws about food that Yahweh's people should and should not eat, but this law is about not eating an animal killed by other animals in the field. This most likely refers to wild animals, although that's not stated. "Animals in the field" meant wild animals. Remember Yahweh wants his people to be set apart and different, and it probably also kept his people from getting sick if they didn't eat a dead animal found in the field.

Yahweh's people should give this dead animal's meat to their dogs. They should not eat it themselves. Remember a dog is a ritually unclean animal during Moses' time. An unclean animal is not fit for service to Yahweh, and a person cannot give Yahweh an unclean animal, like a dog, as an offering.

Stop here and look at a picture of a dog again as a group if needed.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Exodus 22:25–31

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (1199613 KB)

- [FIA Step 3](#)

[mp3 zip](#) (1998237 KB)

- [FIA Step 3](#)

Exodus 23:1–9

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 23:1–9 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 23:1–9 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 23:1–9 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this passage Yahweh is giving the Israelites, through Moses, a way to preserve justice for all people. This passage teaches God's people to be honest witnesses in court, helpful and kind even to their enemies, and be

fair in giving out justice. It encourages both a caring attitude towards the weak and vulnerable members of society, and a concern that the legal system be totally fair. The Israelites are to treat everyone equally regardless of their class. A witness must not be swayed by social pressure, and should ensure that his or her testimony is truthful. These teachings are more about what kind of person you should be than about detailed laws and instructions.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How does the legal system work in your culture? Do you favor some people more than others? Tell a story of someone you know that has had a legal issue in your culture. What happened? How did people treat them? Pause this audio here.

The justice system in that culture depended on the testimony of 2 or more witnesses. God is giving instructions to His people not to lie as a witness, and not to help out someone who is wicked and wants to lie about someone else. This would be giving a false testimony, or cooperating with someone who has evil intent. The people of God also should not allow large groups of evil people to influence them. In the same way, God's people should not change their testimony to favor someone just because that person is poor. These are instructions for witnesses in a court of law, or a place where judges judge whether a person is guilty or innocent of a crime.

In the next section, Yahweh tells the people to behave in a godly and compassionate way, even when the law does not tell them to. A human court is unlikely to prosecute someone for not returning his enemy's ox or donkey. However, God demands that his people should overcome evil with good. The point in this section is not to take advantage of another's hardship because he happens to be an enemy. The loose animal is usually enjoying himself, and the animal that lies down under a poorly arranged load is protecting himself. The one at risk is the owner, who may lose a valuable animal or have to unload and reload an animal in an insecure spot and without help. If someone lost an ox or donkey, they couldn't grow as many crops or harvest as easily. They couldn't get their crops to market. This would affect the way they earn a living.

Stop here and look at a picture of an ox or a donkey. Pause this audio here.

Under normal circumstances, anyone would help catch a stray animal or help a stranger rearrange a load. But if the animal should belong to an enemy, to one who hates and is perhaps therefore hated, there is a temptation to permit and to hope for the worst to happen, and to take satisfaction from this hardship. God forbids a member of His community to do so; instead, he should catch and return the straying animal, or assist in the arrangement of a poorly placed load.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do enemies treat each other in your culture? Tell a story of a time you or someone you know was kind to someone you thought was an enemy. Pause this audio here.

The last part of this passage seems to come back to the legal system but may be addressing the judges of the court specifically. To preserve the integrity of the legal process in Israel, judges are commanded to provide equal justice to all regardless of their class. Sometimes in that culture, the poor were not treated as fairly as the rich. Judges were also told not to punish the innocent people because God will have justice on the guilty ones. If the judges punish the innocent people, they are guilty before God. God also tells judges not to take bribes, which are money or favors to lean in a specific direction. The judges were not to take bribes because then it will not be true justice.

Lastly God tells His people not to oppress those who are foreigners or strangers to their land. God is probably saying that the court system should also treat foreigners and strangers fairly. God reminds the Israelites that the Egyptians treated them terribly while they were in Egypt. The Israelites should remember how that felt and act differently than the Egyptians did. This should give them compassion for foreigners since they have been in the same position.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How are foreigners treated in your culture? Tell a story of how a foreigner was treated, whether good or bad, in your culture.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 23:1-9 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

In the first scene: God is giving godly instruction on honesty in court. God tells His people not to lie or to help those who are wicked, and not to twist the truth to help someone because they're poor.

In the second scene: God tells His people to help those who may even be their enemies. If one of their working animals goes astray or is trapped under a burden that isn't secured properly, it is good to help them get their animal back or help pack the animal properly.

In the third scene: It seems that God is talking to judges or chiefs to be honest when they give justice. God tells them not to deny justice to the poor, not to sentence anyone to death who is not guilty, or honest. God says that He will never call the guilty people innocent. Then God tells them not to take bribes to influence the court decision one way or the other.

In the fourth scene: God tells His people to not oppress the foreigner because they were once foreigners when they were in Egypt.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh (though He's not mentioned)
- Moses (though he's not mentioned)
- "You"-The Israelites, or the people being talked to
- Evil people
- A crowd of people
- The poor
- Your enemy
- Your enemy's animal, like an ox or donkey
- Innocent people
- Guilty people
- Innocent and righteous people
- Foreigners

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: This passage takes place on Mount Sinai where Yahweh is meeting with Moses. The Israelites have been led into the wilderness by Yahweh. Yahweh has them consecrate themselves and wash their clothing for three days. Then Yahweh descends on Mount Sinai to meet with Moses and Yahweh forbids the people from going up the mountain into Yahweh's presence. Here Yahweh gives Moses the ten commandments, as well as other instructions for godly behavior and treatment of others. These instructions are part of the covenant Yahweh is setting up with the Israelites. This passage is part of those instructions.

Stop here and look at a map of Egypt and the Sinai Peninsula where Mount Sinai was. Pause this audio here.

The majority of these instructions take part in a courtroom, or a place where judges give justice to the people. In the first scene, the Israelites are told not to testify falsely about someone, and not to help someone else who is wicked or guilty testify falsely against someone. Then they are told that a crowd of people should not change their testimony, but they should be honest. Also they should not change their testimony to help someone just because they are poor.

Stop here and have two people make up a lie about another person in the group. Try to have each side convince the others that they are telling the truth. How does this feel for each side? How do those trying to be convinced of the truth feel? Pause this audio here.

In the second scene, a person's work animal has wandered off, or is trapped under a burden that was not secured correctly. So this set of instructions takes place outside. These instructions tell the Israelites how they should act, instead of things they should not do. These are more like a set of good behaviors, rather than laws. The Israelite people should not walk away because the animal belongs to their enemy. Instead, they should return the animal that has strayed to their enemy, or help the animal of their enemy that is trapped.

In the third scene, it is likely that Yahweh is speaking about those who hand out verdicts of justice, or judges. Yahweh tells them to give justice to those who are poor. They are also not to sentence innocent and honest people who follow the law to death, because Yahweh will not call the guilty innocent at any point. This means that Yahweh will know who is guilty and who is innocent, and he will punish the guilty people. Yahweh also tells them not to take a bribe, which is when someone gives judges money in order to make their side win. Yahweh says that taking bribes will blind the eyes of those who see, or the clear sighted. So the judge who knows the truth will choose to ignore it, and give the wrong punishment. A bribe turns upside down the cause of the innocent person, or it twists the truth to make it seem as if the innocent person is guilty.

In the last scene, Yahweh tells Israel to treat the foreigner well and not to oppress them. This foreigner is not just someone stopping by, but someone who lives in a land that is not their home land. Yahweh reminds Israel that they know what it feels like, or know the heart of a foreigner, since they were once foreigners in Egypt. The Egyptians treated the Israelites poorly, and so the Israelites should have compassion for foreigners who live with them.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 23:1-9 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh (though He's not mentioned)
- Moses (though he's not mentioned)
- "You"-The Israelites, or the people being talked to
- Evil people
- A crowd of people
- The poor
- Your enemy
- Your enemy's animal (ox or donkey)
- Innocent people
- Guilty people
- Innocent and righteous people
- Foreigners

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

God is giving godly instruction on honesty in court. God tells His people not to lie or to help those who are wicked, and not to twist the truth to help someone because they're poor.

God tells His people to help those who may even be their enemies. If one of their working animals goes astray or is trapped under a burden that isn't secured properly, it is good to help them get their animal back or help pack the animal properly.

Pause the drama.

God tells judges not to deny justice to the poor, not to sentence anyone to death who is innocent. God says that He will never call the guilty innocent and the guilty will be punished.

Pause the drama.

Then God tells them not to take bribes to sway the court decision one way or the other.

God tells His people not to oppress the foreigner because they were once foreigners when they were in Egypt.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 23:1-9 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Do not give a **false report**, and do not help those who are **wicked** by being a **malicious witness**. A false report is a testimony, or statement that is not true about someone else. Those who are wicked are people who are guilty of a crime, or murder. They are generally hostile people. A malicious witness is someone who is making an intentionally wrong statement saying that they saw what happened, in order to harm someone else or their reputation. For more information on wickedness refer to the Master Glossary.

You should also not follow the crowds of people who are doing **evil** or let the crowds sway you when you **testify** or **bear witness**, in order to **twist or pervert justice**. Nor should you change your testimony to help a **poor** man with his lawsuit or dispute. To do evil is to do what is wrong according to God. A testimony is declaring the truth about something based on experience. And to twist or pervert justice is to make it so that someone is not treated fairly according to the law. A poor man is someone with very little money or resources. Use the same words you've used before for evil, testify or bear witness, justice, and poor. For more information on evil, testimony, and justice, refer to the Master Glossary.

If you see or come upon your **enemy's donkey or ox** going astray, take it back to its owner. Or if you see the donkey of someone who hates you has collapsed under its load, stop and help the donkey. An enemy is someone who opposes God's people or hates them. A donkey or an ox is an animal that can carry a heavy load.

Stop here and look at a picture of the donkey and the ox. Pause this audio here.

In a dispute or lawsuit, do not deny justice to the poor. Don't charge anyone wrongly with evil, and don't sentence an **innocent**, or **righteous**, person to death. For God will never call the **guilty** person innocent. A person is innocent when they are blameless because they have followed the law. A righteous person is even more. A righteous person is innocent, but also usually honest and kind in all they do. Someone who is guilty deserves punishment because they broke the law.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for innocent, or righteous, and guilty. For more information on righteousness, refer to the Master Glossary. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

Do not take a bribe because it causes even the righteous to lose sight and twists the words of those who are innocent. And do not oppress the **foreigner** because the Israelites were foreigners in Egypt and know how it feels. A foreigner is someone who lives in a country that is not their own. A foreigner has the understanding as well that their religious practices are different from the ones in the land where they are staying. Use the same word for foreigner that you've used before. For more information on foreigner, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 23:1-9

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (2991614 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

[mp3 zip](#) (5204865 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

Exodus 23:10–19

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 23:10–19 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 23:10–19 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 23:10–19 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Yahweh is still speaking with Moses on Mount Sinai. Yahweh is setting up instructions and laws for the Israelites so that they can be in a relationship with Yahweh. This passage gives a set of laws dealing with sabbaths, or days of rest, and three main annual festivals. These laws all help the Israelites continue to have faith in Yahweh's covenant with them and worship Yahweh. Yahweh wanted them to have regular reminders of their relationship to Him and His people. The weekly Sabbath worship routine would provide a renewal every seventh day especially for the slave, the stranger, and the animals; the annual routine would provide three reminders and renewals throughout the year. This passage gives the Israelites hope that the promised land would be good for planting crops. Also, the observance of the Sabbath was important because it was the sign of the covenant which was established between God and Israel. The Sabbath day each week and the three annual festivals helped the Israelites worship Yahweh.

Stop and discuss this question as a group: Do you have any regular ways, throughout the week, of focusing on worship of God in your culture? How often do you practice those ways to remember and worship God? Talk about some of the ways you celebrate God's goodness in your culture. Pause this audio here.

Now God gives the Israelites laws to help their society care for the poor and bring the society rest and refreshment. After six years of planting and harvest, land is to be left alone for a year. Whatever the land produces on its own, which comes through no effort of cultivation, the poor of the land are to have, and anything they leave, the wild animals are not to be deterred from eating. The Israelites will need to leave vineyards, or places where grapes grow, and olive orchards alone as well. It is not clear whether or not all of the farmers and landowners were to be on the same seven year schedule or if they were staggered years that each one rested. Either way, the Israelites should always consider and care for the poor.

Stop here and look at a picture of vineyards and olive groves together as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop and discuss this question as a group: Talk about the cycles of harvest in your culture. If there is time, go and speak to a farmer and ask about the planting and harvesting cycle for their crop. Pause this audio here.

Stop and discuss this question as a group: How does your culture treat and care for the poor? Pause this audio here.

Then each person is to work for 6 days and then rest for one day. This rest is just to stop the work that they were doing. This day of rest is more for the work animals, oxen and donkeys, as well as the slaves. The phrase, "son of your female slave" is used in some versions. This means the slave that was born into the Israelite household. These slaves would also benefit from the Sabbath rest. This was a time of refreshing, or being able to breathe and rest, for the animals and slaves.

Yahweh then tells the people to pay attention to all of Yahweh's instructions. They are not to pray to, or call on, or even say the names of any other gods. Often in other cultures, it was normal to call on the name of a god for blessing as fields were planted and harvested. This instruction not to even say the name of another god was to remind the Israelites of their covenant with Yahweh and Yahweh alone.

The three annual festivals which celebrate God's goodness towards Israel are focused on worship of Yahweh. Yahweh gives instructions for celebrations, or festivals, that are to be pilgrimage festivals. Each person and family must make the trip to the central place of worship, where Yahweh's presence was once they entered the promised land, to celebrate the feasts. These three feasts were the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which was later called the Passover; the Feast of Harvest, which was the Feast of Weeks; and the Feast of Final Harvest, or Ingathering, which became the Feast of Booths.

The Feast of Unleavened Bread was celebrated at the beginning of the barley harvest, about mid-May to mid-June, to remember the Passover, when God and Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt. This festival was just after planting season, so it was a time of rest. Each person was supposed to eat only bread that did not have leaven or yeast, which makes bread rise, for seven days. They were also to bring an offering of food to Yahweh.

The Feast of Harvest was also known as the "Feast of Weeks" because it was celebrated seven weeks after the Feast of Unleavened Bread. It was to take place after the wheat and grain harvest. Some versions call the festival the Feast of Harvest of the first fruits. Some versions make the distinction that the first fruit of the harvest, or the first crop that is harvested, is what people bring to Yahweh at the festival.

The Feast of Ingathering, or Final Harvest, was also known as the "Feast of Tabernacles" or "Booths" which took place towards the end of the agricultural year where the final harvest of grain and tree crops, like olives, were harvested.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What celebrations do you have every year to worship God? Talk about those festivals and what you do in order to celebrate God. Who comes to those celebrations? Do you go somewhere to celebrate? How do you worship God at those celebrations? Pause this audio here.

Three times a year the men, specifically, were to come and appear before Yahweh at these festivals. However, there were restrictions on how to offer the sacrifices; they could not offer the blood of the animals they killed to sacrifice to Yahweh, along with leavened bread, or bread that had yeast and had risen. The fat of the sacrifice had to be completely burned before the morning. They were to bring the best of the first produce of their harvest to God. All of these rules were directly combatting something that the ancient Canaanites, who lived around them, did. Yahweh wanted his people to be different and to interact with Him in a different way than the Canaanites did.

The instruction not to cook a young goat in its mother's milk is probably related to the Feast of Ingathering and may have been intended to distinguish the celebrations of the Israelites from those of their neighbors. Also it may reflect the principle that what is designed to give life should not become a means of death.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 23:10-19 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh gives instruction on cultivating and harvesting land for six years. Then in the seventh year, the land is to rest and all of the harvest produced should go to the poor and needy people as well as animals.

In the second scene: Yahweh gives instruction on weekly work and rest. People work for six days and then stop working on the seventh day to give slaves and animals a day to refresh themselves.

In the third scene: Yahweh gives direct command to pay attention to all of the instructions He has given. He commands His people not to pray to or pay attention to other gods, or even say their names.

In the fourth scene: Yahweh gives instruction to celebrate three feasts throughout the year. These feasts are to be a time of pilgrimage to a central location where the presence of Yahweh is, once the Israelites enter the promised land. The three feasts are to be a time of worship and sacrifice to Yahweh. The first is a feast of remembrance of the Passover, called The Feast of Unleavened Bread. The second is after the crops are planted, called the Feast of Harvest of the first Fruits. The people are to bring their best and first crops as a sacrifice to Yahweh. The third is after the final harvest of secondary crops, called the Feast of Final Harvest. The men are to bring the sacrifices and are instructed not to bring blood and leavened bread. They are not to leave the fat of the sacrifice until morning. They are to bring their first crops or first fruits to Yahweh. They are not to boil a goat in its mother's milk.

The characters in this passage are:

- You-the Israelites
- Needy and poor people
- Wild animals
- Oxen and donkeys
- Son of the female slave
- Stranger, or foreigner
- Yahweh
- The men or male Israelites
- A young goat and its mother

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: This passage is still a part of the instructions Yahweh gives to Moses on behalf of the Israelites, before they ever enter the promised land. Yahweh is still meeting with Moses on Mount Sinai in the land of Egypt. These practices are to start once they reach the promised land and settle there.

Stop here and look at a map of Egypt and Mount Sinai and the land of Canaan. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh is giving instructions to Moses for the Israelites who He freed from Egypt. When Yahweh says "You", He is speaking to the Israelites. Yahweh gives instruction on cultivating and harvesting, or sowing and reaping, land for six years. Then in the seventh year, the land is to rest, and the landowners must trust in the provision of Yahweh for that seventh year. Yahweh also reminds them to care for one another and let the poor and needy people as well as the animals have the crops that year.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Practice giving a list of rules or list of things to do to each other. Pay attention to how you give the list of rules. Discuss how you might tell this list of instructions from Yahweh to his people. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh then gives instruction on weekly work and rest. People work for six days and then stop working in the fields on the seventh day in order to be refreshed. Again this is a reminder not only of the covenant with Yahweh, but also to one another. The word refresh means to exhale. This day is to give slaves, foreigners, and

animals a day to catch their breath, or refresh themselves. The phrase to catch their breath is a word picture meaning to rest, refresh, or to calm their bodies.

Stop here and take a deep breath together as a group. Breathe in for 7 seconds, hold it for 3 seconds, and breathe out for 7 seconds. Do this 4 times together. Notice how your body feels and discuss together. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh gives a direct command to pay attention to all of the instructions He has given. This command to pay attention doesn't just mean to take notice, but also means to obey. He commands His people not to pray to or pay attention to other gods, or even say their names. The issue here is to whom Israel is loyal in their worship. Israel came out of a place of worshiping many gods. Now Israel was to be loyal to Yahweh alone, the creator of all. They were to trust in Yahweh alone for their provision and harvest of the land.

Yahweh gives instruction to celebrate three feasts throughout the year. These feasts are to be a time to pilgrimage to a central location where the presence of Yahweh is, once the Israelites enter the promised land. The three feasts are to be a time of worship and sacrifice to Yahweh. They were to be focused on Yahweh, not on the people themselves, and therefore would be covenant worship festivals rather than just celebrations of national history or harvest festivals.

The first feast is a feast of remembrance of the Passover, called The Feast of Unleavened Bread. This feast remembered Yahweh bringing the Israelites out of Egypt. Yahweh tells the Israelites, "don't come to me empty handed." This means they are to come with food offerings for Yahweh, in their hand. The second feast is after the crops are planted, called the Feast of Harvest of the first Fruits. The people are to bring their best and first crops as a sacrifice to Yahweh. The third feast is after the final harvest of secondary crops, called the Feast of Final Harvest or Ingathering. The men are to bring the sacrifices and are instructed not to bring blood and leavened bread together. They are not to leave the fat of the sacrifice until morning. They are to bring their first crops, or first fruits, to Yahweh. They are not to boil a goat in its mother's milk.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 23:10-19 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- You-the Israelites
- Needy and poor people
- Wild animals
- Oxen and donkeys
- Son of the female slave
- Stranger, or foreigner
- Yahweh
- The men or male Israelites
- A young goat and its mother.

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Yahweh gives instruction on cultivating and harvesting land for six years. Then in the seventh year, the land is to rest and all of the harvest produced should go to the poor and needy people as well as animals.

Pause the drama.

Yahweh gives instruction on weekly work and rest. People work for six days and then stop working on the seventh day to give slaves and animals a day to catch their breath, or refresh themselves.

Pause the drama.

Yahweh gives direct command to pay attention to all of the instructions He has given. He commands His people not to pray to or pay attention to other gods, or even say their names.

Pause the drama.

Yahweh gives instruction for three feasts throughout the year to celebrate Yahweh. The three feasts are to be a time of worship and sacrifice to Yahweh. The first is a feast of remembrance called The Feast of Unleavened Bread. They are not to eat bread with yeast for seven days and they are to celebrate this in the month of Abib because that is when they came out of Egypt. The Feast of Unleavened Bread is a remembrance of when Yahweh brought them out of Egypt and there they ate unleavened bread.

Pause the drama.

The second is after the crops are planted, called the Feast of Harvest of the first Fruits. The third is after the final harvest of secondary crops, called the Feast of Final Harvest, or the Feast of Ingathering. The men are to appear before Yahweh three times a year.

The sacrifices of blood are not to be given with leavened bread. They are not to leave the fat of the sacrifice until morning. They are to bring their first crops, or first fruits, to the house of Yahweh. They are not to boil a goat in its mother's milk.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 23:10-19 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The Israelites are to **sow** and **harvest** their land for six years. To sow is to plant a seed in the ground. And to harvest is to pull up the crops when they are ready after the seed has grown.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for sow and harvest. If you have already translated these words in another book of the Bible, use the same words that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

In the seventh year the land is to **rest**. Any crops that come up in the seventh year go to the poor and needy people as well as the wild animals. This is to be done with **vineyards** and olive groves as well. To rest means to detach or pull away from. A vineyard is a field of vines that produce a fruit called grapes. Use the same words for rest and vineyard that you have used in previous passages. For more information on vineyards, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh gives instruction on weekly work and rest. His people work for six days and then stop working, or rest, on the seventh day to give the donkey and ox, **slaves born in their household**, and **foreigners** a day to catch their breath, or refresh themselves. Slaves are people who had no choice but to work for their masters. Foreigners are people who live in a country different from the one they were born in. Use the same word for slaves and foreigners that you have used in previous passages. For more information on slaves and foreigners, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh gives a direct command to pay attention to all of the instructions He has given. He commands His people not to pray to or pay attention to other **gods**, or even say their names. Gods are supernatural beings that people worship. The gods that Yahweh is talking about here are not the one creator God that Yahweh is. Use the same word for gods that are not the one creator God, that you have used in previous passages. For more information on gods, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh gives instruction for three feasts throughout the year to celebrate Yahweh. The three feasts are to be a time of worship and sacrifice to Yahweh. The first is a feast of remembrance called **The Feast of Unleavened Bread**. They are not to eat bread with yeast for seven days and they are to celebrate this in the month of Abib because that is when they came out of Egypt. The Feast of Unleavened Bread is a remembrance of when Yahweh brought them out of Egypt and there they ate unleavened bread. Use the same words for Feast or festival of Unleavened Bread that you have used in previous passages. For more information on the Feast of Unleavened Bread, refer to the Master Glossary.

The second is after the crops are planted, called the Feast of Harvest of the first Fruits. The third is after the final harvest of secondary crops, called the Feast of Final Harvest, or the Feast of Ingathering. The men are to appear before **Yahweh** three times a year. Yahweh is the personal and proper name of God. Use the same word you have used for Yahweh in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

The **sacrifices** of blood are not to be given with leavened bread. They are not to leave the fat of the sacrifice until morning. They are to bring their first crops or first fruits to the **house of Yahweh**. They are not to boil a goat in its mother's milk. A sacrifice is an offering to God to thank Him or ask for forgiveness from Him. The house of Yahweh, or the house of God, is the tent that moved from place to place where the Jews were and where they worshiped Yahweh. It was known as the tabernacle where the presence of Yahweh dwelt. It would later become the temple in Jerusalem. Use the same word for sacrifice that you have used in previous passages. For more information on sacrifices refer to the Master Glossary.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for the **House of Yahweh**. Look up House of God in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there.*

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 23:10–19

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3636674 KB)

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Exodus 23:20–33

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 23:20–33 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 23:20–33 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 23:20–33 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This passage is the last part of the covenant Yahweh made with Israel. Two people make a covenant, or strong promise, together to establish friendship and peace. Covenants require the people to have sacrificial love and loyalty for one another. Yahweh's promise to the Israelites was His presence to go with them, to protect, and to lead them. The angel Yahweh sent to guard and lead his people was his angel, and Yahweh promised to personally oppose any who opposed the Israelites. Yahweh promises to provide for His people and give them

life. The Israelites respond by worshiping Yahweh only, and refusing to allow other gods and cultures to influence them. Yahweh would fight the people in the land of Canaan for the Israelites. The people of Canaan were descendants of Noah's grandson Canaan. All of the tribes in the land were known to be descendants of Canaan.

Stop here and look at a map of where each of the tribes lived at that time. Pause this audio here.

Israel was a small nation who would have to grow over time into the size and strength necessary to control all of Canaan. Yahweh warns the Israelites that the danger of allowing the tribes to live in the land was that they might keep Israel from being close and faithful to Yahweh, who was to be their only focus.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about how other beliefs in your area influence your culture. How do they influence your own life? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh is speaking to Moses, who is the representative of the Israelites. They are finishing their conversation on Mount Sinai. Yahweh is preparing the Israelites to enter into the land of Canaan. However, several other tribes already live in that land. So Yahweh tells Moses that He will send an angel to Moses to guard the Israelites and to bring them to the land that Yahweh prepared for them. This angel must be obeyed, just as Yahweh would be obeyed, because Yahweh will not forgive them if they disobey the angel. Yahweh's name is with this angel, which means that Yahweh's presence and authority are with the angel, or literally in the inward parts of the angel.

Yahweh is promising Moses that if the Israelites obey and listen to all of the angel's commands, then Yahweh will protect the Israelites and fight for them. Yahweh wants complete devotion from the Israelites. That means that Israel must drive out the six tribes that live in the land currently, the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hivites, and Jebusites. The Israelites cannot make any agreements with those tribes and must destroy all of the idols and gods that those tribes worship.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What idols, or gods, do people in your culture worship? Talk about any time you have been tempted to worship those idols as well. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh's plan to destroy these tribes sounds harsh. However, Yahweh is making a covenant promise with the Israelites. Yahweh wants the Israelites to be set apart from any other nation around them. Yahweh does not want them to turn away from Him to worship the foreign gods. Yahweh wants them to overthrow the tribes and break their pillars. These pillars were representative of the gods they worshiped. These pillars were large freestanding stones. They represented male and female deities that the tribes worshiped. Sometimes they are called sacred stones.

Stop here and look at a picture of a sacred religious pillar as a group. Pause this audio here.

If the Israelites really obey the voice of the angel, then Yahweh will take care of their bread and water, meaning He will provide their food supply. Yahweh will get rid of their sickness, and Yahweh will keep them multiplying, with no miscarriages, and women who will have no trouble getting pregnant. These were very important things to the ancient cultures of the time.

Yahweh says that He will send His terror before the Israelites. This means that Yahweh will cause the six tribes to be very afraid of Yahweh. He will also cause them confusion, or make them panic. Then the enemies will run away from fighting against Yahweh and the Israelites. Yahweh will use hornets or plagues to drive out three of the tribes from the land. We are not sure if these are actual hornets or plagues that will drive the tribes out of the land. We know that something terrifying and difficult like hornets or plagues will cause panic and drive the people away.

Yahweh tells Moses His plan to drive out the six tribes from the land, and that it will not be immediately, but it will be little by little. Yahweh does not want the land to become a waste land that wild animals will overrun. If all six tribes leave the land right away, the Israelites are not big enough to farm the land and take care of it. Therefore, the land would become a wasteland and wild animals would overrun it. That would not help the Israelites, so Yahweh will drive out the tribes little by little until the Israelites have enough people and power to take care of the land. So the Israelites will have to be careful to obey Yahweh until they multiply and are able to take possession of the full area of land. Yahweh gave the Israelites the borders of the land from the Red Sea

to the Mediterranean Sea to the Euphrates River from the wilderness. The Israelites never fully occupied all of this land.

Stop here and as a group look at a map of the land that Yahweh promised to the Israelites. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh says again that He will give the people living in the land into the hand of the Israelites. In other words, the Israelites will be able to drive out the tribes of the land if the Israelites obey Yahweh. Yahweh tells the Israelites not to make any covenants with them or their gods because they will cause the Israelites to sin against Yahweh. If the Israelites worship the other gods, it will be a snare, or trap for them to turn against Yahweh. The word snare is a word picture of a way that the Israelites used to trap animals. These animals do not see the snare until it traps them. Yahweh is saying that the Israelites will not see the trap to turn away from Him until it is too late.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 23:20–33 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh is speaking to Moses and tells Moses that Yahweh will send an angel before the Israelites. This angel will protect the Israelites, and guide them to the promised land. The Israelites are to pay attention to and obey the angel just as they would obey Yahweh. Yahweh tells them if they rebel against the angel then their sins will not be forgiven. This is because Yahweh's presence and authority are with the angel. If they really obey the angel and do all that Yahweh says, then Yahweh will be an enemy to their enemies.

In the second scene: The angel will go before the Israelites and take them into the land that is already possessed by different tribes. The angel will completely destroy those tribes. The Israelites are not to worship any of the gods of the tribes. In fact, the Israelites are to overthrow the tribes and to break all of their sacred religious pillars. Instead the Israelites are to worship Yahweh only. If they only worship Yahweh, He will provide for them and take away all sickness. He will enable them to multiply their people.

In the third scene: Yahweh promises to go before the Israelites, and make the tribes in the land afraid of Him. Yahweh will cause the other tribes to be confused or panic. Yahweh will use hornets or plagues to drive three of the tribes out of the land. However, Yahweh will not drive them out in a single year. He will drive them out little by little in order to preserve the land. If everyone was gone all at once, the Israelites would not be able to multiply quickly enough to help keep the land cultivated or producing crops.

In the fourth scene: Yahweh loosely defines the boundaries of the land for the Israelites, because Yahweh will drive out the ones who already live there. Yahweh reminds the Israelites not to make a covenant with those tribes or their gods, who are not the true creator God. If the Israelites allow these tribes to live in the land, the people of those tribes will cause Israel to sin against Yahweh and will be a trap for Israel to keep sinning against Yahweh.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Angel
- Moses
- Israelites
- Amorites, Hittites, Jebusites, Canaanites, Perrizites, Hivites
- Hornets

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: This passage takes place on Mount Sinai as Yahweh finishes giving covenant instructions to Moses for the Israelites. However, in this passage, Yahweh

talks a lot about the land that Yahweh has prepared for the Israelites. Yahweh is talking directly to Moses and wants Moses to share this information with the Israelites.

Stop here and look at the map of Sinai and the land of Canaan. Pause this audio here.

In the first scene, Yahweh promises to send an angel to guard and guide the Israelites into the land Yahweh has prepared for them. Yahweh says to the Israelites to "be on your guard with him," meaning the angel. This means the Israelites must pay close attention to the angel and obey the angel. Their obedience to the angel will be like they are obeying Yahweh because Yahweh's presence and authority, or Yahweh's name, is with the angel. If they obey the angel, the angel will lead them to the land of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hivites, and Jebusites.

In the second scene, Yahweh is making sure the Israelites know that they are to be completely set apart for Him. The Israelites are not to worship Yahweh in the same ways that the people in the land worship their gods. In fact, the Israelites are supposed to tear down all of the sacred pillars that the other tribes use in their worship practices. These pillars were large freestanding stones. They often represented male and female fertility deities that the tribes worshiped. Sometimes the pillars are called sacred stones. If they do this, Yahweh will provide for all of their needs, keep them healthy, make them multiply their people, and give them long life.

In the third scene, Yahweh promises to go ahead of the Israelites and to make the tribes in the land very afraid. Yahweh also promises to drive out all of the tribes in the land in His timing. Yahweh will drive out three of the tribes with hornets or plagues. Yahweh will not drive out the tribes quickly because Yahweh wants to preserve the land until the Israelites can grow stronger and multiply in order to possess all of the land.

In the fourth scene, Yahweh tells the Israelites the boundaries of the land He is giving them. This goes from the Red sea to the Mediterranean, and the wilderness to the Euphrates.

Stop here and look again at the map of the boundaries of the land Yahweh is giving the Israelites. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh reminds them to drive out those tribes that live in the land. Yahweh also tells them not to make any covenant, or agreement, with them or their gods. If the Israelites do, they will sin against Yahweh, and be caught in a trap or snare to continue sinning against Yahweh. This word snare is the same word used to catch an animal with a cord that pierces and holds or binds and holds the prey.

Stop here and look at the picture of a snare, or trap, as a group.

Discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture catch, or trap, an animal? How does your trap work? Pause this audio here.

Stop here and play a game of capture the flag. Divide the group into two teams and give a section of the room to each team. Use a t-shirt, a scarf, or some object that you have nearby as a flag. Have one for each team. Put your flag in a place that is not easily seen but can be reached. Each team will try to get the other team's flag and bring it back to their side of the room before being tagged by a person on the other team, and before their team gets your flag. If someone on the other team tags you, you are trapped and must sit where you were tagged, until your teammates tags and frees you. Pause this audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 23:20–33 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Angel
- Moses
- Israelites
- Amorites, Hittites, Jebusites, Canaanites, Perrizites, Hivites
- Hornets

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Yahweh is speaking to Moses and tells Moses that Yahweh will send an angel before the Israelites. This angel will protect the Israelites and guide them to the promised land. The Israelites are to pay attention to and obey the angel just as they would obey Yahweh. Yahweh tells them if they rebel against the angel, then their sins will not be forgiven. This is because Yahweh's presence and authority are with the angel. If they really obey the angel and do all that Yahweh says, then Yahweh will be an enemy to their enemies.

Pause the drama.

The angel will go before the Israelites and take them into the land that is already possessed by different tribes. The angel will completely destroy those tribes. The Israelites are not to worship any of the gods of the tribes. In fact, the Israelites are to overthrow the tribes and to break all of their sacred religious pillars. Instead the Israelites are to worship Yahweh only. If they only worship Yahweh, He will provide for them and take away all sickness. He will enable them to multiply their people and live a long life.

Pause the drama.

Yahweh promises to make the tribes in the land afraid of Him, before the Israelites get there. Yahweh will cause the other tribes to be confused or panic. Yahweh will use hornets or plagues to drive three of the tribes out of the land. However, Yahweh will not drive them out in a single year. He will drive them out little by little in order to preserve the land. If everyone was gone all at once, the Israelites would not be able to multiply quickly enough to help keep the land cultivated or producing crops.

Pause the drama.

Yahweh loosely defines the boundaries of the land for the Israelites, because Yahweh will drive out the ones who already live there.

Pause the drama.

Yahweh reminds the Israelites not to make a covenant with those tribes or their gods, who are not the true creator God. If the Israelites allow these tribes to live in the land, the people of those tribes will cause Israel to sin against Yahweh and will be a trap for Israel to keep sinning against Yahweh.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 23:20–33 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Yahweh is speaking to Moses and tells Moses that Yahweh will send an **angel** before the Israelites. This angel will protect the Israelites, and guide them to the promised land. An angel is a supernatural spiritual being. Although this is the same kind of angel as Angel of Yahweh, or Angel of the Lord, this story only calls this an angel. Use the same word for angel as you have in previous passages, and remember that angel and angel of the Lord is in the Master Glossary.

The Israelites are to pay attention to and **obey** the angel just as they would obey Yahweh. Yahweh tells them if they rebel against the angel then he will not **forgive** their rebellion. This is because Yahweh's name is with the angel. If they really obey the angel and do all that Yahweh says, then Yahweh will be an enemy to their enemies. To obey is to follow the instructions of another person. In forgiveness, the one who was wronged sets aside his rights and does not punish the other as he deserves. Forgiveness can restore a relationship. Use the same words for obey and forgive that you have used in previous passages. For more information on forgiveness, refer to the Master Glossary.

The angel will go before the Israelites and take them into the land that is already possessed by Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the **Canaanites**, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. The angel will completely destroy those tribes. Canaan is the land Yahweh gave to the descendants of Noah's grandson, Canaan. It is the land promised to the Israelites. Canaanites are people who live in the land of Canaan. Use the same word for Canaanites, or people of the land of Canaan, you have used in previous passages. For more information on Canaan, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Israelites are not to **worship** any of the **gods** who are not the creator God of the tribes. In fact, the Israelites are to overthrow the tribes and to break all of their sacred religious **pillars**. The story just talks about pillars, but we know that these are tall columns, usually made of stone, to honor another god besides Yahweh, the one true creator God. Some translations include a description like "sacred or religious pillar" in order to show what kind of pillar it was. Instead the Israelites are to worship Yahweh only. If they only worship Yahweh, He will provide for them and take away all sickness. He will enable them to multiply their people. To worship is to be in awe and wonder of God, or Yahweh. Gods are supernatural beings that people worship. The gods that Yahweh is talking about here are not the one creator God that Yahweh is. Use the same word for worship and gods, that are not the one creator God, that you have used in previous passages. For more information on worship and gods, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for pillars or religious pillars. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh promises to go before the Israelites, and make the tribes in the land afraid of Him. Yahweh will cause the other tribes to be confused or panic. Yahweh will use hornets or plagues to drive three of the tribes out of the land. However, Yahweh will not drive them out in a single year. He will drive them out little by little in order to preserve the land. If everyone was gone all at once, the Israelites would not be able to multiply quickly enough to help keep the land cultivated or producing crops.

Yahweh loosely defines the boundaries of the land for the Israelites, because Yahweh will drive out the ones who already live there. Yahweh tells the Israelites that the boundaries will go from the Red Sea to the Sea of the Philistines, or the Mediterranean Sea, from the **wilderness** to the Euphrates River. The wilderness is a place where no one lives, and no one has cultivated the land. Use the same word for wilderness that you've used in previous passages. For more information on wilderness, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh reminds the Israelites not to make a **covenant** with those tribes or their gods, who are not the true creator God. A covenant is a permanent agreement between two people or groups to establish friendship or peace. Use the same word for covenant that you've used in previous passages. For more information on covenant, refer to the Master Glossary.

If the Israelites allow these tribes to live in the land, the people of those tribes will cause Israel to **sin** against Yahweh and will be a trap, or snare, for Israel to keep sinning against Yahweh. Sin is an act of disobedience before God. Use the same word for sin that you've used in previous passages. For more information on sin, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step.

Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage.

Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene.

Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 23:20–33

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3821444 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Exodus 24:1–8

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart Numbers 20:22–29

In this step, hear Numbers 20:22–29 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 20:22–29 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 24:1–8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Yahweh is finishing talking to Moses on Mount Sinai. Yahweh has just given Moses the ten commandments and the laws that the Israelites are supposed to follow. Yahweh promises to protect the Israelites if they obey those laws and commandments.

This is one of a number of times that Moses went up to the mountain of Sinai. This time, Yahweh speaks to Moses and tells Moses to come up to the mountain with Aaron and Aaron's two oldest sons and seventy of the Israelite elders, or older men who are wise in the community. These men would represent the entire Israelite community in formally accepting the laws and commandments that Yahweh had given them. However, Moses is already on the mountain with Yahweh. It sounds like Yahweh is telling Moses to do something he has already done. However, more than likely Yahweh means for Moses to go back down the mountain, tell the Israelites everything Yahweh said, and then come back up the mountain, with Aaron, Aaron's sons, and the elders.

Yahweh tells Moses to come up with Aaron, his sons Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders, to the mountain to worship Yahweh, but to worship at a distance. This word worship suggests that the men should lie down on their faces, or kneel down with their foreheads touching the ground, before Yahweh as an act of respect for Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture worship the one true God, or other gods that are not the one true creator God? What do they do with their bodies? Are there specific places that they go to worship? Pause this audio here.

Moses went to the Israelites, who are at the base of the mountain, and repeated all of the words and laws Yahweh gave them about how to live as a covenant people. These words and laws make up the covenant that Yahweh has with His people. Moses repeated the covenant to the people just as he had heard it on the mountain. The Israelites answered "in one voice," or altogether, that they will obey everything that Yahweh says to do. Then Moses wrote down all of the words and the law of the covenant with Yahweh. Writing down and reading the law out loud was important if people were to remember it permanently. New members of the community would need to hear the law and know how to keep it. Children would need to be instructed in the covenant as fully as their parents had been. Judges who would have to decide difficult cases would need to remember exactly how God had given his commandments.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture pass down laws or important rules for the people to follow? Pause this audio here.

Moses woke up early the next morning and Moses built the altar and placed the twelve stone and earth pillars to represent the tribes of Israel. These twelve pillars were tall stones that stood upright. The twelve pillars would function as a reminder to all who saw them that Yahweh had made a covenant at this place with the Israelites, and that the Israelites had committed to follow Yahweh. The stone pillars that Moses placed at the base of Mount Sinai were the same type of pillars that other cultures used in their worship. However, these stone pillars were different; they were a reminder of Yahweh's covenant.

Stop here and look at a picture of an altar, and a picture of pillars together as a group. Pause this audio here.

Moses sent young men to offer the sacrifices of young bulls. Burnt offerings are offerings dedicated entirely to Yahweh, burnt to ashes on the altar. People offered burnt offerings to ask for forgiveness. Fellowship or peace offerings are offerings eaten by priests and worshipers, with part of the fat from the animal being sacrificed and dedicated to Yahweh and then burnt to ashes on the altar. People offered the peace or fellowship offering as a way to thank Yahweh for his mercy and goodness. The blood from the animals that the priests splashed on the altar and on the Israelites showed that Yahweh was one party to the covenant, and the Israelites were the other. Some of the blood would remain on the skin of the Israelites for days; some that fell on their clothing would be visible, if faded, for as long as the clothing lasted. The ceremony was intended to help the Israelites keep in mind the fact that Yahweh had joined with the people of Israel in a formal, official covenant. Both Yahweh and the Israelites were now bound by oath. Both sides must keep all of the covenant. Breaking any part of the covenant is the same as breaking all of the covenant.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What do leaders and the rest of the people in your culture do to show that they have accepted and are committing themselves to follow the commands, or requirements, of their gods?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 24:1–8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh is speaking to Moses and tells Moses to come up the mountain, which is Mount Sinai, with Aaron, Aaron's two sons Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel to worship Yahweh. Yahweh tells them that Moses would be the only one to come closer to Him, and the rest would worship at a distance. The rest of the Israelite people were not to come up the mountain at all.

In the second scene: Moses goes to the Israelites and tells the Israelites all of the words, or the ten commandments, and the law that forms the covenant with Yahweh. The Israelites agree to obey all that Yahweh has said. Moses writes down the words and the law of Yahweh.

In the third scene: Moses then builds an altar and twelve pillars representing the twelve tribes of Israel. Moses sends young Israelite men to sacrifice burnt offerings and peace offerings to Yahweh. Moses takes the blood and puts some in bowls, and some Moses splashes on the altar.

In the fourth scene: Moses read the book of the covenant to the Israelites. The Israelites agree again to obey all that Yahweh commanded. Moses then sprinkles the blood in the bowls on the people and tells them that this is the blood of the covenant that Yahweh has made with them in accordance with all of Yahweh's words. This means that all that Yahweh said was the whole covenant with the Israelites.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- Nadab
- Abihu
- 70 elders
- The rest of the Israelites
- Young Israelite men

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: The setting starts on Mount Sinai with Yahweh talking to Moses. Then Moses goes down to the base of the mountain to speak to the Israelites who are still there. The rest of the passage takes place at the base of the mountain.

Stop here and look at a picture of Mount Sinai together as a group. Pause this audio here.

In the first scene, Yahweh is speaking to Moses and giving Moses final instructions to complete the covenant with Yahweh and the Israelites. Yahweh tells Moses to come up to the mountain with Aaron, Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel. The elders were considered men who were leaders of the families, or clans, and were older and wiser. There were more than 70 elders, but only seventy were allowed to come up the mountain. We don't know that Yahweh told Moses which seventy elders, or if Moses was allowed to pick the seventy. However, Moses will not fulfill these instructions until after Moses goes down the mountain to tell the Israelite people all of the commandments and laws Yahweh has given to them.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Discuss what qualities you would look for in an elder or leader for your culture. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses what will happen when Aaron, his sons, and the elders come back up the mountain later. Yahweh told Moses that he was the only one allowed to come near to Yahweh. The seventy elders, Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu had to worship at a distance up on the mountain. The rest of the Israelite people had to wait at the base of the mountain.

The second scene and the rest of the passage takes place at the base of the mountain with Moses talking to the Israelites, and performing the covenant ceremony. Moses told the Israelites everything that Yahweh had said, meaning the law and the ways to keep the covenant with Yahweh. The Israelites agreed that they would obey everything that Yahweh had said. Moses wrote down all of the words of the covenant.

In the third scene Moses got up early the next morning, or the morning after he finished writing the words down. Then Moses began to do what Yahweh told Moses to do in order to complete the process of accepting to obey the words and laws of the covenant. Moses built an altar, or a place of sacrifice, at the base of the mountain, or where the mountain starts to rise. Moses also set up twelve pillars: one for each of the twelve tribes of Israel. These pillars were made of large standing stones. These twelve stones represented the twelve tribes of Israel who were part of the covenant with Yahweh.

Moses sent young men to get the animals to be sacrificed. Young men typically means young unmarried men. These young men could have been apprentices to the priests to help offer the burnt offerings and peace offerings to Yahweh. They slaughtered bulls for the peace offerings. Moses took half of the blood of the bulls on his fingers and splattered or splattered the blood on the altar. This was to represent Yahweh's part in the covenant. The rest of the blood was put into bowls or basins that were used for mixing food. These bowls were big and were approximately sixteen inches wide and about eight inches deep and had handles on them.

Stop here and look at a picture of an altar, a picture of the pillars, and a picture of the bowls together as a group. Pause this audio here.

In the fourth scene Moses reads the covenant and laws to the Israelites. Again they committed themselves by verbally stating that they will obey everything in the covenant. Moses then took the blood on his hands and

splashed the blood from the bowls on the Israelites. Moses said, Behold, or pay attention! This showed that Moses was about to make a serious statement. Moses then pronounced to the people that the blood sealed the covenant between Yahweh and His people Israel. Again this meant that the people would have to obey all of the words and laws in order to keep the whole covenant.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 24:1-8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- Nadab
- Abihu
- 70 elders
- Israelites
- Young men

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Yahweh is speaking to Moses and tells Moses to come up the mountain, which is Mount Sinai, with Aaron, Aaron's two sons, who were called Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel to worship Yahweh. Yahweh tells Moses that Moses would be the only one to come close and the rest would worship at a distance. The Israelite people were not to come up the mountain at all.

Pause the drama.

Moses goes to the Israelites and tells the Israelites all of the words, or the ten commandments, and the law of the covenant of Yahweh.

Pause the drama.

The Israelites agree to obey all that Yahweh has said.

Moses writes down the law and the covenant. Moses then builds an altar and twelve pillars representing the twelve tribes of Israel. Moses sends young Israelite men to sacrifice burnt offerings and peace offerings to Yahweh.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the young men, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I hope we do this right," or "How did we get picked for this job?" [!end] Continue the drama.

Moses takes the blood and puts some in bowls, and some Moses splashes on the altar.

Moses read the book of the covenant to the Israelites. The Israelites agree again to obey all that Yahweh commanded. Moses then sprinkles the blood in the bowls on the people and tells them that this is the blood of the covenant that Yahweh has made with them in accordance with all of Yahweh's words. This means that all that Yahweh said was the whole covenant with the Israelites.

*Pause the drama.**Filling the Gaps*

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 24:1-8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Yahweh told Moses to come up to the mountain with Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy of the **elders of Israel**, and to **worship** Yahweh at a distance. Yahweh is the personal and proper name of God. Elders are older, wiser men in a community who help the people know how to live rightly. Israel is the descendants of Jacob that joined in a covenant with Yahweh. To worship is to be in awe of Yahweh. In this instance it means to lie down on the ground in a position of worship and adoration. Use the words for Yahweh, elders, Israel, and worship that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, elders, Israel, and worship, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh told Moses that Moses would come close to worship, but the rest would worship at a distance, and the rest of the Israelites would not come up the mountain at all. Moses went to the Israelites and told them all of the **words**, or **ten commandments**, and the **laws**, or instructions, about how to live as covenant people. The people said that they would do everything that Yahweh said. Use the same words for words, or ten commandments, and laws that you have used in previous passages. For more information about laws, refer to the Master Glossary.

Then Moses wrote down all of the words of Yahweh. The next morning, Moses got up and built an **altar** and got twelve pillars to represent the twelve tribes of Israel. Then Moses sent young men who offered burnt **offerings** and **sacrificed** young bulls as a peace, or fellowship offering to Yahweh. An altar is usually built of earth and stones and is a place where the Israelites would sacrifice animals and then burn them for Yahweh. The Israelites would give an offering or sacrifice to Yahweh as a way to ask for forgiveness, or to say thanks to Yahweh. Usually the Israelites would kill animals on an altar. But it can be an offering of food or herbs that can be burned on the altar as well. Use the same words for altar, burnt offerings, peace or fellowship offerings, or sacrifices that you've used in previous passages. For more information on altar, burnt offerings, peace or fellowship offerings, and sacrifices refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses took the sacrificial **blood** of the young bulls and put half of it on the altar, and half of it in bowls. Then Moses read the laws and covenant to the people and they agreed to obey all that Yahweh said. Then Moses sprinkled the blood from the bowls on the people and said, this is the blood of the **covenant** that Yahweh made with you according to all that Yahweh said. Blood is often a symbol of life. In this case, blood is used to make something holy or set apart. This was a sign of the covenant between Yahweh and the Israelite people. Covenant is a permanent agreement between two people and it establishes friendship and peace. Use the same word for blood and covenant as you have used in previous passages. For more information on blood and covenant refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 24:1–8

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3127623 KB)

- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

[mp3 zip](#) (5539590 KB)

- [FIA Step 2](#)
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- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

Exodus 24:9–18

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 24:9–18 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 24:9–18 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God?

4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 24:9–18 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this passage, Moses has just told the Israelites all that Yahweh has instructed them to do for the covenant between them and Yahweh. Moses has sealed the covenant by sacrificing burnt offerings and peace offerings and sprinkling the blood of the bulls on the people and on the altar. Now, Moses does what Yahweh told him to do by going back up the mountain to worship Yahweh. Moses takes Aaron, Aaron's two sons who were called Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel up the mountain, which is Mount Sinai.

When Moses and the group that went up the mountain saw Yahweh, or the God that the Israelites worshipped, there appeared to be something like a surface under His feet, made of a blue precious stone called a sapphire, or lapis lazuli. This color was as blue as the sky, or the heavens.

Stop here and look at a picture of a sapphire and lapis lazuli together as a group. Pause this audio here.

God did not lay His hands on the group that went up the mountain. This means that God did not kill or hurt them for coming into His presence. It was believed that no one could see God and live. God had invited them into His presence and so He let them live. Then they saw God and ate and drank. In Moses' culture, covenants were normally finished with a special meal in which animals were cut in half. Then the two people walked between the pieces of the animals, and then the meal was eaten together as a sign of friendship. God's covenant with Israel involved God as one party and the Israelite people as the other. Aaron, Aaron's sons, and the seventy elders represented the Israelite people. Moses stood directly between God and the people as a mediator, and it is possible that he may have eaten God's portion of the meal symbolically as God's representative at the ceremony. In the culture of the Bible, people would eat together if they were allies or family. When people ate together, it was understood to mean acceptance and approval of each other.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture show acceptance and approval of each other? How do people in your culture complete an agreement with one another? Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about the significance of eating a meal together in your culture. Tell a story of a time when you or someone you knew shared a meal together specifically to focus on personal relationships with others or with God. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh then calls Moses to come up to Him on the mountain and tells Moses to wait there, or stay there. This seems to imply that Moses will not only wait for Yahweh to meet him there, but that Moses may be there for a longer time. Yahweh tells Moses that he should come up to the mountain so that Yahweh can give him tablets of smooth, flat stone that Yahweh himself has written, as well as the law and commandments. Most likely, according to the rest of Exodus, the tablets only have the list of the ten words, or commandments, on them. Moses will write the rest of the laws and instructions of the covenant.

Stop here and look at a picture of smooth stone tablets as a group. Pause this audio here.

This section is also a little confusing. We do not know if Moses, Aaron, and Aaron's oldest sons Nadab and Abihu, and the elders went back down the mountain before Yahweh said this to Moses. However, it is most likely that they did go back down the mountain. We think this because when Moses gets up to go back up the mountain, Joshua, Moses' assistant, goes with him. As far as we know, Joshua was not in the group of seventy four that went up the mountain before.

The timing in this passage is also a little confusing. After it says that Moses and Joshua went up the mountain, it states that Moses told the elders to wait for them to return. It is likely that as Moses was going up towards the mountain, or just before Moses and Joshua went up the mountain, that Moses spoke this to the elders. Moses tells the elders to wait until they return. Moses also tells them that Aaron and Hur can settle any arguments, or legal matters, among the people.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about different roles of leadership among leaders in your culture. How does your culture determine who has more responsibility or authority? Pause this audio here.

The cloud that covered the top of Mount Sinai and represented God's glory was similar to that which appeared during the daytime to be a pillar of dark cloud. The cloud represented Yahweh's presence, or Yahweh's light.

It's possible that Moses took six days to climb the mountain before Yahweh called to Moses from the cloud on the seventh day. Since Joshua went up the mountain with Moses, it is likely that Joshua stayed outside of the cloud and waited for Moses. To the Israelites below, at the base of the mountain, the cloud, or Yahweh's glory, seemed to appear like consuming fire on the mountain. Moses entered the cloud and more than likely went up higher on the mountain. Moses stayed there forty days and forty nights.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What are some good and bad uses for fire in your culture? Tell a story about times when you've seen fire used for good and times when you've seen fire used in a bad way.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 24:9–18 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Moses, Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, who are Aaron's sons, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up the mountain to worship Yahweh. When they saw Yahweh, they saw something that looked like a pavement made of a precious blue stone under Yahweh's feet. Yahweh did not hurt them for being in His presence. Then they all ate and drank together.

In the second scene: Yahweh tells Moses to come up the mountain to Yahweh and wait, or stay there. On the mountain, Yahweh will give Moses the commandments and laws that Yahweh wrote on smooth, flat stone tablets. Yahweh tells Moses that the tablets can be used to teach the Israelite people all of the commandments of Yahweh. Moses and Joshua, who is Moses' assistant, went up the mountain to Yahweh. But Moses told the elders to wait at the base of the mountain. Aaron and Hur would stay to help anyone with any disputes.

In the third scene: Moses climbs the mountain and the cloud covers it. Moses waited for six days, and on the seventh day, Yahweh called to Moses from the cloud. To the Israelites, the cloud looked like fire on the top of the mountain. When Moses entered the cloud, he stayed there forty days and forty nights.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- Nadab
- Abihu
- Seventy elders
- Joshua
- Hur
- Israelites
- The cloud

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: This passage takes place around the mountain, Mount Sinai. At the beginning of the passage, the group is on the mountain. We are not sure if or when the

seventy elders and Aaron and his oldest sons go back down the mountain. Moses and Joshua go back up the mountain. Moses goes up to a higher part of the mountain than Joshua. Moses goes into the cloud and Joshua does not go into the cloud.

In the first scene, Moses, Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, who are Aaron's oldest sons, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up the mountain to worship Yahweh. When they saw the God of Israel, there is no mention of what God looked like. However, they saw something that looked like a pavement made of a precious blue stone, called sapphire, or lapis lazuli, under Yahweh's feet.

Stop here and look at the picture of the sapphire and lapis lazuli together as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What kinds of precious stones can you find in your culture? Describe these stones to one another. Pause this audio here.

God did not hurt the noble men, or the main leaders of Israel, for being in His presence. Then they all ate and drank together. This was probably any leftover pieces of the young bulls from the peace offering.

The passage never tells us that Moses and the group went back down the mountain, but we assume that they do after their meal with Yahweh.

In the second scene, Yahweh tells Moses to come up the mountain to Yahweh and wait, or stay there. Yahweh will give Moses the commandments that Yahweh wrote on smooth, flat stone tablets. It is most likely that the tablets only had the ten commandments on them. Moses would write down the rest of the laws. Yahweh tells Moses that the tablets can be used to teach the Israelite people all of the commandments of Yahweh. Moses and Joshua, Moses' assistant, went up the mountain of God to Yahweh. The mountain of God is also what the Israelites called Mount Sinai. We do not know if Joshua went up the mountain with the elders originally, or if he has been at the base of the mountain this whole time. But then Moses told the elders to wait until Moses and Joshua returned. We don't actually know if the elders stayed halfway up the mountain, and it's unclear if the instruction about disputes was about disputes between themselves, or if they went back to the base of the mountain and were to help all the Israelites with their disputes. The action in the passage continues with Moses, but the big group of Israelites are now at the base of the mountain when Moses leaves.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: This part of the passage says Moses went up the mountain before it says that he told the elders what to do, but we know that Moses must have told the elders how to handle disputes before he left them to go further up the mountain. You may want to re-order this in your translation. Talk about how you naturally reorder events to show how they naturally take place. Pause this audio here.

In the third scene, Moses climbs the mountain and the glory of Yahweh in the form of a cloud covers the mountain. Moses climbed possibly for six days and on the seventh day as Moses arrived at the top Yahweh called to Moses from the cloud. Now the passage changes focus for a moment to tell us what the Israelites who were at the base of the mountain saw. To them, the cloud looked like fire that consumed, or ate, the top of the mountain. Then Moses entered the cloud and stayed up on the mountain for forty days and forty nights.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 24:9–18 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has three scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- Nadab
- Abihu
- Seventy elders
- Joshua
- Hur
- Israelites
- The cloud

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Moses, Aaron, Nadab and Abihu (Aaron's sons), and seventy of the elders of Israel went up the mountain to worship Yahweh. When they saw the God of Israel, they saw something that looked like a pavement made of a precious blue stone under God's feet. God did not hurt them for being in His presence. Then they all ate and drank together.

Pause the drama.

Yahweh tells Moses to come up the mountain to Yahweh and wait or stay there. Yahweh will give Moses the commandments that Yahweh wrote on smooth stone tablets. Yahweh tells Moses that the tablets can be used to teach the Israelite people all of the commandments of Yahweh. Moses and Joshua, Moses' assistant, went up the mountain to Yahweh.

Pause the drama.

But Moses told the elders to wait at the base of the mountain. Aaron and Hur would stay to help anyone with any disputes.

Moses climbs the mountain and the cloud covers it. Moses climbed, or waited, for six days and on the seventh day, Yahweh called to Moses from the cloud.

Pause the drama.

To the Israelites, the cloud looked like fire on the top of the mountain.

Pause the drama.

Then Moses entered the cloud and stayed there forty days and forty nights.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 24:9–18 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy of the **elders of Israel**, went up Mount Sinai to the **God of Israel**. Elders are older, wiser men who are leaders in a community who help the people know how to live rightly. In this passage they are referred to as noble, or honorable, men. Here Yahweh is not used when God is interacting with the elders. He is referred to as God. God is the one true creator God. The people of Israel are the descendants of Jacob that joined in a covenant with Yahweh. Use the words for elders, God, and Israel that you have used in previous passages. For more information on elders, God, and Israel refer to the Master Glossary.

The group saw Yahweh, and under His feet appeared to be something like a pavement or walkway of **sapphire**, which is a blue precious stone. The pavement was as clear as the sky, or **heaven**. Heaven refers to either the skies, or the place where Yahweh lives. Here it seems to be referring to the blueness of the sky. Use the same word for heaven that you have used in previous passages. For more information about heaven, refer to the Master Glossary.

The God of Israel did not stretch out His hand against, or harm, the men of Israel. But they saw Yahweh and ate and drank.

Then **Yahweh** told Moses to come up to Him on the mountain. Yahweh is the personal and proper name of God. Use the same word you have used for Yahweh in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh was going to give Moses the **law and the commandments** that Yahweh had written on tablets of stone. These two words are often used together and sometimes mean the same thing. Law here is the general, overall term for all the rules that God gave Moses for the people to live as his covenant people. Commandments is the general word for the instructions, sometimes specifically about the offerings and worship, that God gave Moses. Use the same word for law and commandment that you have used previously. For more information on law and commandments, refer to the Master Glossary.

So Moses and his assistant, Joshua, started to go up to the mountain of God, or Mount Sinai. Moses told the elders to wait until Moses and Joshua returned. Moses told the elders that if any disputes came up that Aaron and Hur would help.

Then Moses went up the mountain and the **cloud** covered the mountain. The **glory** of Yahweh lived on Mount Sinai and the cloud covered it for six days. Then on the seventh day, Yahweh called to Moses from the cloud. A cloud is condensed water or moisture that is in the air. The glory of Yahweh is His presence or how Yahweh displays His power. Use the same words for cloud and glory that you have used in previous passages. For more information on glory, refer to the Master Glossary.

To the people of Israel, the glory appeared to be like fire on the top of the mountain. Moses entered the cloud and stayed there forty days and forty nights.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 24:9–18

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3057059 KB)

- [FIA Step 2](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (5386145 KB)

- [FIA Step 2](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Exodus 25:1–9

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 25:1–9 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 25:1–9 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 25:1–9 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Before Yahweh brought the Israelites out of Egypt, Yahweh told the Israelites to go to their Egyptian neighbors and receive from them several precious metals and cloths. Since bringing them out of Egypt, both Yahweh and the Israelites have agreed to live in covenant relationship with each other. Yahweh called Moses into the cloud on the top of the mountain. Moses has gone up to the top of Mount Sinai to meet with Yahweh. Yahweh now gives Moses the instructions for the Israelites to bring an offering to Yahweh so that the Israelites can build a place of worship to Yahweh and where Yahweh can dwell with the Israelites.

Yahweh tells Moses to tell the Israelites to take up a contribution for Yahweh. Each person who is so moved in their heart, or willing to contribute, can contribute. Yahweh does not make this a mandatory contribution from every person. Yahweh does, however, give specific instructions on what should be contributed.

God then gives Moses a list of materials that the Israelites should gather together for Yahweh's dwelling. The first three items the Israelites were to contribute were several precious metals; gold, silver, and bronze.

Stop here and look at pictures of gold, silver, and bronze items. Pause this audio here.

The next group of items were materials that have been dyed the colors blue, purple, and scarlet, as well as fine linen and goat hair. The dyes were very similar to each other and were shades of purple with slightly different tints. These dyes were very expensive and often symbolized royalty.

Stop here and look at pictures of materials that have been dyed blue, purple, and scarlet. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and talk about what colors of material represent royalty, or a high leader in your culture. Pause this audio here.

Linen was common in Egypt. It was a soft material, like cotton, that was made from a plant called flax. Making linen was a very intensive process and Egyptian linen had more delicate strands of fiber than most other linen.

Stop here and look at a picture of Egyptian linen. Pause this audio here.

People made goat hair into yarn and used it to keep rain out of the dwelling, while allowing breezes to pass through. This was used for the tents of the Israelites as well as being needed for Yahweh's dwelling.

These precious metals and materials were more than likely ones that the Israelites took from the Egyptians before they left Egypt.

Stop here and discuss what precious items are used to decorate places of worship in your culture. Pause this audio here.

The ram's skins dyed red could have gone through the process of being tanned. Often this is what gave them a reddish color. Tanning a skin involves making the skin of an animal into leather, so it would be usable as things like water or wine skins, bags, or sandals.

Stop here and look at a picture of tanned skin. Talk about different uses for skins and how they are prepared for those uses in your culture. Pause this audio here.

The skin of a sea cow could be the skin of a dolphin, which existed near the red sea, near Mount Sinai. Or it could be the skin of an animal that lives in the water, or sea, called a dugong, or a manatee. These also lived in the water near the Sinai Peninsula.

Stop here and look at a picture of a dolphin, as well as a picture of a manatee. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a map of the Sinai Peninsula and the seas around it. Pause this audio here.

The acacia tree grew plentiful in the Sinai Peninsula. It is a tree approximately 6 meters high and a little less than a meter around. The bark is tough and has a close grain and so is not often attacked by insects.

Stop here and look at a picture of an acacia tree. Pause this audio here.

People made the oil for the lamps from olives, the fruit of the olive tree, and used them in the ordinary clay lamps. People pressed these olives with a large stone until the oil was squeezed out of the olive fruit.

Stop here and look at a picture of an olive together as a group. Pause this audio here.

Spices for the anointing oil were used to make the oil smell good. These spices were types of plants that smelled good. The spices make the special oil for anointing the priests and different parts of the tabernacle. The word for "anoint" means to pour, sprinkle, or rub the oil on a person or on an object. This showed that the person was appointed for special service, or that the object was designated as holy and set apart for special use. The fragrant incense required a different list of spices used for burning. The Israelites valued spices for their smell rather than for food seasoning. The fragrant incense are grasses that smell good when burned.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture set something apart for special service or to designate it as for special use? Pause this audio here.

An ephod was an apron-like garment that would be worn by the high priest. The breastpiece was a special pocket that was fastened to the ephod and hung over the chest of the high priest. It was about 23 centimeters square. Both of these had very precious stones, some which were called onyx. Onyx is a dark stone that has some white streaks running through it.

Stop here and look at the drawing of the ephod and breastpiece of the high priest together as a group.

Stop and look at a picture of onyx as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about what religious leaders in your culture wear in order to distinguish that they are close to God, or their gods. Pause this audio here.

After Yahweh lists the items that the Israelites are to contribute, Yahweh tells Moses to have the Israelites construct a sanctuary, or a holy place also called a tabernacle, so that He can dwell or live among His people. Yahweh tells Moses to have them make the sanctuary, or tabernacle, and every piece of furniture in the tabernacle exactly as Yahweh tells them to.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about how your community feels about having God or gods live among you. What kinds of things do you do to prepare for God, or other gods, to live among you?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 25:1–9 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh tells Moses to instruct the Israelites to take up a contribution or offering to Yahweh. The Israelites are to give to this offering freely as their heart leads them. They are not under any obligation to give.

In the second scene: Yahweh gives a list of items for the offering. These items include gold, silver, bronze, materials dyed blue, purple, and scarlet, fine linen, goat's hair, ram's skins dyed red, the skin of sea cows, acacia wood, olive oil, spices, fragrant incense, onyx, and other precious stones.

In the third scene: Yahweh tells Moses to tell the Israelites to use those items to make a holy dwelling for Yahweh, so that Yahweh can live among the Israelites. Yahweh tells Moses to have them make it and all of the furniture for the dwelling, according to all of the plans that Yahweh will give to Moses.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- The rest of the Israelites

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: In the previous passage, remember that Yahweh had called Moses up into the cloud on Mount Sinai. There Yahweh speaks to Moses to give Moses instructions for the Israelites. Yahweh tells Moses to take up an offering from the Israelites. This offering is for Yahweh and will be used for His dwelling place. This offering is open to every Israelite. However not every Israelite has to

participate in the offering. Each Israelite could give as their heart was led to give. The heart was considered the place that emotions and decisions are made, and this was a way to talk about people giving willingly.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about how people give offerings to their gods in your culture. Tell a story about giving willingly and describe how you felt about giving. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about the place in the body that your culture uses to explain where emotions and decisions are made. Pause this audio here.

In the second scene, Yahweh gives a list of materials to be collected for the offering. Most of these materials were used for royalty of the time. Many of these items were collected from the Egyptians before the Israelites left Egypt.

In the third scene, Yahweh tells Moses that with these offerings, the Israelites will make a holy dwelling place for Yahweh to live in the middle of the Israelites. This is a major theme in God's covenant with the Israelites: that He will dwell with them and protect them. God is making plans to live up to His part of the covenant with the Israelites.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 25:1–9 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- The rest of the Israelites

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Yahweh and Moses are up in the cloud on top of Mount Sinai. Yahweh tells Moses to have the Israelites take up an offering to give to Yahweh. Yahweh says that this offering should come from those whose hearts are willing to give.

Pause the drama.

Yahweh gives Moses a list of items that the Israelites can contribute. These items include gold, silver, bronze, materials dyed blue, purple, and scarlet, fine linen, goat's hair, ram's skins dyed red, the skin of sea cows, acacia wood, olive oil, spices, fragrant incense, onyx, and other precious stones.

Pause the drama.

Yahweh then tells Moses that He wants the Israelites to make a sanctuary for Yahweh so that He can live among them. Yahweh tells Moses to give the exact instructions for the tabernacle and the furniture for it to the Israelites.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 25:1–9 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Yahweh spoke to Moses and told Moses to take up a **contribution**, or **offering**, from the people of Israel. Yahweh is the personal and proper name of God. A contribution or offering is a gift or sacrifice given to God. The Israelites are the descendants of Jacob. Use the same words for Yahweh, offering, and Israelites that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, offering, and Israelites, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh says to raise the contribution from everyone whose **heart** moves them to give to the contribution. The heart is the place where a person's feelings and decisions happen. Use the same word for heart that you have used in previous passages. For more information on heart refer to the Master Glossary. Be sure to use the part of the body in your culture that speaks to the place where emotions and decisions are made.

Moses is to receive these items for the contribution: the precious metals called gold, silver, and **bronze**; materials made of wool and yarn dyed blue, purple, and scarlet; fine linen; goat's hair; ram's skins dyed red, and the skin of sea cows; acacia wood; **oil for the lamps**, spices for the **anointing oil**, and spices for the fragrant incense; onyx and other precious stones for the **ephod and breastpiece**. Bronze is a brownish gold colored metal that is strong and easy to work with and doesn't easily deteriorate. Oil was made from the olive fruit. Anointing oil was poured over a person or object to show that they were set apart for a special task. An ephod was an apron-like garment that would be worn by the high priest. The breastpiece was a special pocket that was fastened to the ephod and hung over the chest of the high priest.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for bronze, oil, anointing oil, ephod, and breastpiece. Look up bronze and anoint in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

Then Yahweh tells Moses to let the Israelites make Yahweh a **sanctuary** so that He can dwell among them. Yahweh tells Moses to have them make the **tabernacle** exactly to the pattern that Yahweh shows Moses. A sanctuary is a holy place or a place set apart. The tabernacle became a tent that was the house of God that moved with the Israelites. Use the same word for sanctuary that you have used in previous passages. For more information on sanctuary refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for tabernacle. Look up tabernacle in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 25:1-9

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (2800805 KB)

- [FIA Step 2](#)
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- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

[mp3 zip](#) (4975345 KB)

- [FIA Step 2](#)
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Exodus 25:10-22

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 25:10-22 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 25:10-22 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.

6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 25:10–22 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Moses is still in the cloud on the top of Mount Sinai meeting with Yahweh. Yahweh is giving Moses instructions on how the Israelites will continue to be in relationship with Yahweh. Yahweh has already told Moses to have the Israelites bring an offering for Yahweh and to use it to make a tabernacle for Yahweh. In this passage, Yahweh gives the Israelites the instructions on how to build the ark, or box, where Yahweh's presence will remain. The box would also hold the flat stone tablets that had the "testimony," or the covenant law, written on them. These laws were a record of the covenant relationship between Yahweh and the people of Israel. They were called the "testimony" because they were a witness to God's sovereign rule over Israel and their agreement to submit to God. This box would be made of acacia wood and the top of the wood would be overlaid with gold that the Israelites had offered to Yahweh. Most likely Yahweh gave these instructions for the ark before any other part of the tabernacle, because this is how Yahweh fulfilled His part of the covenant with the Israelites. In that covenant, Yahweh had promised to be with the people of Israel and protect them as long as they obeyed the covenant. Yahweh's presence would rest or remain with the ark.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What types of items symbolize divine presence in your culture and community? Pause this audio here.

The length of the ark was to measure two and a half cubits. The width of the ark was to measure one and a half cubits. And its height was to measure one and a half cubits. A cubit was the distance from the tip of a man's middle finger to the end of his elbow when his hand was held flat and straight; about eighteen inches, or 45 centimeters. This means the ark was about 112 centimeters long, 67 centimeters wide, and 67 centimeters high.

The whole ark, including the carrying poles, was made of acacia wood. Acacia wood was the strong wood that was easy to shape, and that was abundant in the area of Mount Sinai.

Then the builders had to overlay gold on the inside and outside of the ark. This would have given the ark an impressive and elegant appearance. The molding around the ark is like a frame or border around the entire top of the ark. The ark was to have "feet," though we don't know their size. These feet would keep the main part of the ark off of the ground. These feet had rings attached to them, one ring protruding to the side from each of the feet so the Israelites could run a pole through the rings on each side. This would give the Israelites the ability to lift and move the ark by the poles. The Israelites were never to remove the poles from the ark so that it could be moved at any time and the ark itself would never be touched. The permanence of the rings would also keep the poles from wearing out quickly. By having the rings on the feet, the ark itself would be protected from any scratching, or bending, or disfiguring.

Stop here and look at the drawing of the ark together as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of acacia wood and of gold together as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture preserve special or religious items of great importance? Tell a story of a special or religious item that you have kept for many years. Pause this audio here.

The tablets were to be put in the ark. These tablets were a way to preserve in writing the terms of the covenant with God. God Himself would give Moses the tablets of the testimony, or covenant law.

The Israelites were to make the cover for the ark out of pure gold. The cover of the ark was to fit over the ark so it was the same length and width as the ark. It was called the atonement cover, or some translations call it the mercy seat. The cover was called this because it refers to the concept of atonement, or reconciliation—the process of causing people to be true friends, allies, or kin, and not to be distant, or hostile. The atonement cover represented the fact that their God, the only true God, had in His eternal kindness and love arranged for the Israelites to enjoy reconciliation with Him. The Israelites were not strangers or enemies to God; they were God's covenant family.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture try to be close to the one true God or the gods that they worship? Pause this audio here.

The Israelites were to make the atonement cover of pure gold, not a slab of wood overlaid with gold as the rest of the major surfaces of the ark were. At the ends were to be two pure "hammered gold" statues of cherubim. We do not know how tall these statues were. Cherubs, or cherubim, were some sort of intelligent, powerful angelic being. These angelic beings were pictured with wings. One faced the center of the atonement cover from one end, the other from the other end. Their wings were raised, so as to protect the atonement cover. The cover and the cherubim were all one solid piece of gold. The Israelites were to place the atonement cover on top of the ark and also place the stone tablets inside of the ark. Yahweh told Moses that He would meet with Moses from above the atonement cover, between the two cherubim. God would then deliver to Moses all God's commands for the Israelites.

Stop here and look at the drawing of the atonement cover along with the attached cherubim together as a group.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 25:10–22 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh tells Moses to build an ark out of acacia wood. Yahweh tells Moses that it will be about 112 centimeters long, 67 centimeters wide and 67 centimeters high. The Israelites are to put pure gold over the entire ark, inside and out. They also needed to make gold molding, or a border around the top of the ark. Then they are to make rings for the four feet of the ark. These rings are to come out from the side of the feet. Then they are to make poles of wood and also put gold over them. The poles are to slide through the rings and the Israelites are to use them to carry the ark. Then they are to put the tablets that God gives them into the ark.

In the second scene: Yahweh tells Moses to have the Israelites make a cover called an atonement cover, or mercy seat, for the ark. This cover is to be made out of pure gold. They are to hammer gold into the shape of two cherubim, or angelic beings, onto the cover. These cherubim are to be on either side of the cover, facing the center of the cover and have their wings outstretched over the center of the cover. Then they are to put the cover over the ark, and the tablets of testimony into the ark.

In the third scene: Yahweh tells Moses that Yahweh will meet with Moses from above the atonement cover, or mercy seat. Yahweh tells Moses that He will meet with Moses from between the cherubim. That is where Yahweh will give Moses all of the commands for the ways the Israelites should live.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- The Israelites
- And Moses

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: Remember that in this passage, Yahweh is still talking to Moses from the top of Mount Sinai. Moses is in the cloud with Yahweh. Moses is receiving instructions to be given to the Israelites after Moses returns to the bottom of Mount Sinai.

In the first scene, Yahweh gives Moses instructions and tells the Israelites to build an ark, or box, out of acacia wood that is 112 centimeters long, 67 centimeters high, and 67 centimeters tall. Then God tells Moses to overlay the inside and outside of the ark with gold. It is not likely that Moses is supposed to do the work all by himself, but God means for the Israelites to do it and Moses to oversee that it gets done. This ark will also have feet on the bottom to keep the ark from touching the ground. Each of the four feet will have attached to it a golden ring. Then the Israelites are to make long wooden poles, also overlaid with gold, to go through the rings. The ark is

to be carried by these poles. Then the Israelites are to put the tablets of the testimony into the ark. God is the one who will give them these tablets.

Stop here and discuss what types of wood and precious metals are used in your culture to make valuable items. Pause this audio here.

In the second scene, the Israelites are then to make a cover for the ark. They are to make the cover out of pure gold and it will be the same length and width as the ark. Then they are to hammer gold into the golden cover in the form of two cherubim, or angelic beings with wings. The cover and the cherubim will be one solid piece of gold. These cherubim are to be placed on each end of the cover, facing the center of the cover, with their wings outstretched over the cover. This cover is to go on top of the ark and the tablets of the testimony are to go inside of the ark.

Stop here and as a group use objects you have available to make a box the size of the ark. If possible attach two rings to each side and use two poles to carry the box around. See how much you can carry at one time using just the two poles. Pause this audio here.

In the third scene, Yahweh tells Moses that the atonement cover is where Yahweh will meet with Moses. Yahweh will meet with Moses between the two cherubs. When Yahweh will meet with Moses, Yahweh will give Moses all of the commands that Moses is to pass on to the Israelites.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 25:10–22 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- The Israelites
- And Moses

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Yahweh tells Moses to have the Israelites build an ark out of acacia wood. Yahweh tells Moses that it will be about 112 centimeters long, 67 centimeters wide, and 67 centimeters high. The Israelites are to put pure gold over the entire ark, inside and out.

Pause the drama.

Then Yahweh tells Moses to have the Israelites make rings for the four feet of the ark. These rings are to be attached to the side of the feet of the ark. Then they are to make poles of wood and also put gold over them. The

poles are to slide through the rings and the Israelites are to use them to carry the ark. Then they are to put the tablets that God gives them into the ark.

Yahweh tells Moses to have the Israelites make a cover, called an atonement cover, or mercy seat, for the ark. This cover is to be made out of pure gold.

Pause the drama.

The Israelites are to hammer gold into the shape of two cherubs, or angelic beings, onto the cover. These cherubim are to be on either side of the cover, facing the center of the cover and have their wings outstretched over the center of the cover. Then they are to put the tablets of testimony in the ark and then put the cover over the ark.

Yahweh tells Moses that Yahweh will meet with Moses from above the atonement cover, or mercy seat. Yahweh tells Moses that He will meet with Moses from between the cherubim. That is where Yahweh will give Moses all of the commands for the ways the Israelites should live.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 25:10–22 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Yahweh gives Moses instructions for the Israelites to make an **ark**, or box, out of **acacia** wood and tells Moses the exact dimensions which are 2 and a half **cubits**, by one and a half cubits, by one and a half cubits. An ark is a box that is decorated in an ornate way, which holds the tablets of testimony, and which is where God's presence meets with Moses, and with high priests later. The ark also is called the ark of the covenant. Acacia wood is a strong wood that was easy to work with. Use the same word for acacia wood that you have used in previous passages. A cubit is the length of a man's arm from his elbow to the tip of his finger if his hand is straight and flat. It is approximately 45 centimeters.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **ark**. Look up **ark of the covenant** in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **cubit**. Look up **cubit** in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

The Israelites are to overlay the inside and outside of the ark with gold and add a **molding**, or a border, made of gold to the outside edge. This ark will also have feet on the bottom to keep the ark from touching the ground. They will cast, or pour into a mold, four golden rings. The rings will then be attached to each of the outside of the feet. Then the Israelites are to make long wooden poles, also overlaid with gold, to go through the rings. The ark is to be carried by these poles. The poles are not to be removed from the rings. Then the Israelites are to put the tablets of the **testimony** into the ark. They were called the "testimony" because they were a witness to Yahweh's sovereign rule over Israel and their agreement to submit to Yahweh. Yahweh is the one who will give them these tablets. The testimony refers here to the written text that Yahweh gave. This text is an authoritative law. Use the same word for testimony as it refers to the covenant law that you have used in previous passages.

The Israelites are then to make an **atonement cover**, or **mercy seat**, for the ark. They are to make the cover out of pure gold and it will be the same length and width as the ark. The atonement cover, or mercy seat, is the place where God's presence will rest when He meets with Moses, and then the high priests. It is the place where atonement or forgiveness is given for the Israelites.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **atonement cover**, or **mercy seat**. Look up **atonement** and **mercy** in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

Then the Israelites are to hammer gold into the form of two **cherubim**, or angelic beings with wings. These cherubim are to be hammered out of the gold on each end of the cover so that the cover and the cherubim are all one piece of gold. The cherubim are to face the center of the cover, with their wings outstretched over the cover. This cover is to go on top of the ark and the tablets of the testimony are to go inside of the ark.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **cherubim**. Look up cherubim in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

Yahweh tells Moses that the atonement cover is where Yahweh will meet with Moses. Yahweh will meet with Moses between the two cherubs. When Yahweh will meet with Moses, Yahweh will give Moses all of the **commands** that Moses is to pass on to the **people of Israel**. The commands are the orders given by God that need to be followed. The people of Israel are the people who descended from Jacob and now the nation that God has made a covenant with. Use the same word you have used for commands or commandments, and people of Israel, in previous passages. For more information on commandments, and Israel, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 25:10-22

Audio Content

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Exodus 25:23–30

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 25:23–30 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 25:23–30 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about \God or Jesus? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 25:23–30 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Moses is still in the cloud on the top of Mount Sinai meeting with Yahweh. Yahweh is giving Moses instructions on how the Israelites will continue to be in relationship with Yahweh. Yahweh has already told Moses to have the Israelites bring an offering for Yahweh and to use it to make a tabernacle, or dwelling, for Yahweh. Yahweh will eventually dwell with the Israelites in their camp with them. Yahweh has also given Moses the instructions on how to build the ark that will house Yahweh's presence. Now Yahweh gives Moses instructions on another piece of furniture that will be kept in the front part of the tabernacle; the table.

Stop here and look at a drawing of the tabernacle and where the different pieces of furniture were located. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a map of Egypt and Mount Sinai together as a group if needed. Pause this audio here if needed.

Yahweh tells Moses to make the table. The table is to be made very similarly to the ark. The table is also to be made out of acacia wood and then overlaid with gold. The large amount of gold in the tabernacle represented the importance of the one who was to dwell there.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture show that someone important lives in a specific house? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses that the table will be two cubits long or 88 centimeters, a cubit wide or 45 centimeters, and a cubit and a half high, or 67 centimeters. Then they need to create a gold molding or border around the table. It is likely that this molding is a decorative border around the top part of the table. The table is also to have a

rim around it as well, which also has a gold molding around it. This rim is to be a handbreadth, or the width of a man's hand—approximately 10 centimeters. The passage does not say exactly where the rim and its molding go. One possibility is that it comes up from the top of the table, to keep the bread and dishes from falling off of the table. The other likely possibility is that it goes down from the table to make the table look deeper.

Stop here and look at a drawing of the table together as a group. Pause this audio here.

Then the Israelites are to make four rings and fasten them to the four corners of the table where the legs are. These rings are to be close to the rim so that, like the ark, the poles can go through the rings to carry the table. Having the rings close to the rim towards the top of the table would make it easy to carry the table when it needed to be moved. This was important since the Israelites would have to move the whole tabernacle as the Israelites moved.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture move things that are very heavy? How do people in your culture adjust heavy loads to make them easier to carry? Pause this audio here.

The poles were also made of acacia wood and covered in gold. These would be used, like the ones for the ark, to carry the table. However, these poles would not stay in the rings when the table was not being moved. This would make it easier for the priests to access the table.

This table was to have plates and dishes, as well as pitchers and bowls, that went along with it. These were all to be made of pure gold. The plates and dishes were to be used for incense, which is a spice that is burned to produce a sweet smell. The pitchers and bowls were to be used to pour out the different offerings and sacrifices that the Israelites would bring. The only food to be placed on the table was the bread of the presence. It is possible that this bread sat on the plates and dishes on the table. This bread was always to be in God's presence. These were twelve large round loaves of bread. These likely symbolized the twelve tribes of Israel, and more importantly God's constant provision for them. The Israelites brought the bread to the table as an act of thanksgiving for God's provision for them.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about how God has provided miraculously for you. How do people in your culture remember how God has provided for them? Pause this audio here.

Though it is not stated, the high priest probably replaced the twelve old loaves with the twelve new ones loaf by loaf rather than by clearing all the old loaves away and then putting down all the new ones. This way there was never an instant when the top of the table was entirely empty. All other offerings were periodic, being presented in various rituals at certain times of the day, week, month, or year. This offering was continual, representing the endless adoration, appreciation, and intercession of the Israelites day and night throughout the years and ages.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How often do people in your culture bring food to holy places? What does this food symbolize?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 25:23–30 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh tells Moses to make the table made of acacia wood 88 centimeters long, 45 centimeters wide, and 67 centimeters tall. Yahweh tells Moses to overlay it with pure gold and to put a border of pure gold around it. Then Yahweh tells Moses to put a rim around the table about 10 centimeters wide, with a gold border on that as well.

In the second scene: Yahweh tells Moses to make four gold rings for the table and to fasten them to the table where the legs are, near the rings. These rings are to hold the poles to carry the table. The poles also are to be made of acacia wood and overlaid with gold.

In the third scene: Yahweh tells Moses to make the dishes, bowls, and pitchers for the table out of pure gold. Then Yahweh tells Moses to put the bread of the presence on the table that will always be before Yahweh.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- And Moses

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: Yahweh is still giving Moses instructions while on Mount Sinai. Yahweh is speaking directly to Moses and telling Moses to build the table and all of the parts of the table. However, Yahweh does not mean for Moses to be the only one to build this. More than likely Yahweh is telling Moses to oversee the Israelites as they are building the table, to make sure it happens. Remember that Yahweh is giving Moses instructions and Moses will tell the Israelites all of the instructions when Moses comes down from Mount Sinai.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, what sort of situations would require someone to take instructions on behalf of someone else? Pause this audio here.

Remember that a cubit is about the length of a man's arm from his elbow to the tips of his fingers when his hand is stretched flat. This is approximately 45 centimeters. The table was to be 2 cubits long, by 1 cubit wide, by 1 and a half cubits high. Pure gold was gold that had no other minerals added to it. Also remember that the rim was about a handbreadth wide. This is about 10 centimeters.

In scenes two and three notice that there are little details about the rings, the poles, and the plates, dishes, pitchers, and bowls. We do not know what size each of these were. It is possible that there were standard sizes for each of these in that culture, or that it was left for the builder to decide.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: If there is time, go to a place of worship and discuss items found there and what their uses are. If this is not a Christian place of worship, ask whoever is in charge if they would explain the items and their uses to you. Pause this audio here.

In the third scene, the dishes and plates were used for the offering of incense. The pitchers and bowls were used for the drink offerings.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Look at the photo of dishes, plates, pitchers, and bowls. How will you describe the difference between dishes and plates, as well as pitchers and bowls? Pause this audio here.

The bread of the presence was called that because it was always in God's presence within the tabernacle.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 25:23–30 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Yahweh tells Moses to make the table made of acacia wood 88 centimeters long, 45 centimeters wide, and 67 centimeters tall. Yahweh tells Moses to overlay it with pure gold and to put a border of pure gold around it. Then Yahweh tells Moses to put a rim around the table about 10 centimeters wide, with a gold border on that as well.

Yahweh tells Moses to make four gold rings for the table and to fasten them to the table where the legs are, near the rings. These rings are to hold the poles to carry the table. The poles also are to be made of acacia wood and overlaid with gold.

Yahweh tells Moses to make the dishes, bowls, and pitchers for the table out of pure gold.

Pause the drama.

Then Yahweh tells Moses to put the bread of the presence on the table that will always be before Yahweh.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 25:23–30 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Yahweh tells Moses to make a table out of **acacia wood**. Acacia wood is a strong wood that was found in the area of Mount Sinai. This table is to be 2 **cubits** long by 1 cubit wide, by 1 and a half cubits tall. A cubit is about the length of a man's arm from his elbow to the tips of his fingers. This is approximately 45 centimeters long. Use the same descriptions for acacia wood and cubit you've used in previous passages. For more information on cubit refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses to overlay the table with **pure gold** and to put a golden molding around it. Pure gold is a precious metal that is very valuable and has no other metal mixed with it. Then there is to be a rim around the table that is a handbreadth, or 10 centimeters, around the table also with a pure gold molding around it. Use the same words for pure gold, molding, and rim that you have used in previous passages.

Four golden rings are to be placed on the corners of the table where the legs are, but close to the rim. These will hold the poles to carry the table. The poles are also to be made out of acacia wood and overlaid with gold.

The Israelites should make all of the plates, dishes, bowls, and pitchers out of pure gold. The plates were very shallow dishes, and the dishes were more like deeper cups. The people used the plates and dishes for incense. The bowls were smaller than the pitchers, but the people used both the bowls and pitchers to pour out the special drink offerings to Yahweh. The Israelites would give an **offering**, or a gift or sacrifice, to Yahweh to thank Him, to be purified, or to ask for forgiveness. Use the same word for offering that you have used in previous passages. For more information on offering, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and show a photo of the plates, dishes, bowls, and pitchers. Discuss what words you will use to describe these items. Pause the audio here.

The bread of the presence was to be put on the table and always kept in God's presence.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 25:23–30

Audio Content

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Exodus 25:31–40

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 25:31–40 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 25:31–40 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.

2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 25:31–40 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Moses is still in the cloud on the top of Mount Sinai meeting with Yahweh. Yahweh is giving Moses instructions on how the Israelites will continue to be in relationship with Yahweh. Yahweh has already told Moses to have the Israelites bring an offering for Yahweh and to use it to make a tabernacle, or dwelling, for Yahweh. Yahweh will eventually dwell with the Israelites in their camp with them. Yahweh has been giving Moses instructions for the furniture that will go in the tabernacle as well. This passage discusses the third piece of furniture in the tabernacle; the lampstand.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What kind of furniture or items are used to light your places of worship in your culture? What are their importance or significance? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh gives Moses instructions for the lampstand that was to be in the tabernacle.

Stop here and look at the drawing of the lampstand together as a group. Pause this audio here.

Again Yahweh is telling Moses to make the lampstand, but the instructions are for Moses to give to the Israelites. The Israelites are to make the lampstand of beaten or hammered solid gold. They are to use a single piece of gold to hammer out the base and the shaft or stem. The base gives the lampstand stability on the floor of the tabernacle and the shaft or stem rises vertically from the base. Off of the stem came decorated branches made to resemble tree branches. With three branches heading off to one side and three to the other side and including the main shaft, or center stem, there were a total of seven different supports for oil lamps. This lampstand was to resemble a tree. Both the tree and fire, or light, often symbolized life in the Jewish culture.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What type of materials are usually used for different kinds of lamps in your homes? Discuss the importance of the materials used and why they are used. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, what is the significance of trees, lights, and fire? Pause this audio here.

Cups supported the actual lamps that would hold the oil. The lamps were to sit cradled in each cup. The cups were to be made to resemble almond flowers, each one having a bud, or center, and the blossom, or flower petals. In this way the oil lamps would sit in a gold flower on a gold tree.

Stop here and look at a picture of almond flowers and the buds together as a group. Pause this audio here.

Since each branch had three flower-shaped cups and the stem had four cups, there were a total of twenty-two places where oil lamps could be placed. However, there were only seven specific places for oil lamps, with the other fifteen made to decorate the lampstand to look like a tree with many flowers. The buds on the stem were spaced so that they fitted nicely at different heights from the branches, with one bud probably near or at the top of the stem, and the other three below the pairs of branches successively.

The Israelites were to make the lampstand out of one piece which seems impossible. However, it is possible that they made the pieces separately and then joined them together seamlessly. Joining together the pieces of the lampstand was probably done by heating and beating the gold together. This was the traditional means of shaping and joining metal at the time.

Then the Israelites were to make the seven oil lamps. The lamps were oil bowls that they probably made out of gold with a pinched edge and a wick saturated in the oil, to cast the most light. The lamps described burned coarse olive oil or fat, and could stay alight for 2 to 4 hours. The Israelites were to place the lamps on the lampstand in such a way that the lamps would light the area in front of it. God wanted the lamps to light the

tabernacle for the benefit of the priests who ministered there. They were to make the lamp snuffers and the tray that held them, out of gold. These snuffers were used to cut off the burned end of the wick. The trays would hold the snuffers as well as the burned parts of the wick.

Stop here and look at a picture of the oil lamps together as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of snuffers, together as a group. Pause this audio here.

The Israelites were to make the lampstand and all that went with it from a full talent of gold, which was 75 pounds, or about 35 kilograms. God did not have in mind a delicate lampstand but a solid one that could endure travel and hold heavy lamps for generations. Yahweh tells Moses to be sure that the Israelites make the lampstand exactly to the description that He gave to Moses there on the mountain.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 25:31–40 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh tells Moses to make a lampstand with a base and a trunk, or stem, and all of the parts of the lampstand out of hammered gold. Yahweh tells Moses that the lampstand is to have 3 branches on each side of the trunk. Each branch and the trunk is to have golden cups in the shape of almond flowers. Each branch is to have 3 cups and the trunk is to have 4 cups, one on top and one underneath where the pair of branches meet on the trunk. The almond cups and branches are to be all one piece with the trunk and all should be made out of hammered gold.

In the second scene: Yahweh tells Moses to make the seven oil lamps to sit in the cups on top of each branch and the trunk. Moses needs to make sure the seven lamps sit in such a way that they light the area in front of the lampstand. The snuffers and trays for the snuffers must all be made out of pure gold.

In the third scene: The whole lampstand will be made out of 35 kilograms of gold and must be according to the directions given to Moses on the mountain.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: Yahweh is still giving Moses instructions while on Mount Sinai. Yahweh is speaking directly to Moses and telling Moses to build the lampstand and all of the parts of the lampstand. However, Yahweh does not mean for Moses to be the only one to build this. More than likely Yahweh is telling Moses to oversee the Israelites as they are building the lampstand, to make sure it happens. Remember that Yahweh is giving Moses instructions and Moses will tell the Israelites all of the instructions when Moses comes down from Mount Sinai.

Lampstand is literally a stand that holds lamps. In this passage the word lampstand is used to refer to the central stem, or shaft, of the lampstand. This lampstand is very decorative and made to look like a tree. The Israelites are to make this lampstand out of pure gold which means that it must be "clean," or without any impurities and not mixed with any other metal. The Israelites are to hammer or beat the gold into its design. The base refers to the bottom part that supports the shaft or center stem.

Its cups refers to the holders for the lamps, which were probably placed at the top of each of the branches as well as at the top of the stem. The cups were to be in the shape of almond flowers that had blossomed or had their petals open.

The branches were to go out from the sides of the central stem, three branches on each side.

Probably all six of them extended upward to support the seven lamps in a straight line. Each branch was to have three cups, but it is not clear where these cups were to be placed on the branches. The central stem needed

to have 4 cups shaped like almond flowers with their own buds and petals. One cup would sit directly under the place where each of the branches joined on the central stem. The branches and cups were to be made all of one piece of gold which more than likely means that they were not to be made separately from each other.

Stop here and look again at the drawing of the lampstand. Pause this audio here.

Then the Israelites were to make seven oil lamps. There is no indication whether these were also made of gold or made of clay. They are considered separate pieces from the lampstand itself. And the lamps shall be set up so that they shine toward the front of the lampstand.

This suggests that the lamps were to be mounted so that their wicks would point toward the front.

Stop here and if there is time, find a dark room and bring in small candles, or whatever you might use to burn a flame for light. Hold the candles in such a way that the most light points towards the front of the candles. Pause this audio here.

The priests would use snuffers or wick trimmers to remove the burned wick. Then they would place the burned wicks on the trays. They were also to make these out of gold.

The Israelites would need a whole talent of gold for the lampstand. A talent was a weight that was approximately 35 kilograms. Yahweh then tells Moses to be careful to make the lampstand in the way Yahweh is showing Moses there on the mountain.

Stop here and find a large rock, child, or item that is approximately 35 kilograms in weight. Discuss what you use and how you figured out the weight of your item. Pause this audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 25:31–40 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Yahweh tells Moses to make a lampstand with a base and a trunk, or stem, and all of the parts of the lampstand, including the cups to hold the lamps, out of hammered gold. Yahweh tells Moses that the lampstand is to have 3 branches on each side of the trunk. Each branch and the trunk is to have golden cups in the shape of almond flowers. Each branch is to have 3 cups and the trunk is to have 4 cups, one on top and one underneath where each pair of branches meet on the trunk. The almond cups and branches are to be all one piece with the trunk and all should be made out of hammered gold.

Pause the drama.

Yahweh tells Moses to make the seven oil lamps to sit in the cups on each branch and the trunk. Moses needs to make sure the seven lamps sit in such a way that they light the area in front of the lampstand. Moses must also make the snuffers and trays for the snuffers out of pure gold.

Pause the drama.

The whole lampstand will be made out of 35 kilograms of gold and must be according to the directions given to Moses on the mountain.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 25:31–40 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Yahweh tells Moses to make a **lampstand** with a base and a trunk, or stem, and all of the parts of the lampstand out of pure hammered **gold**. A lampstand in this case is a base and trunk of a stand that will hold several lamps.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **lampstand**. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

Pure gold is a precious metal that is very valuable and has no other metal mixed with it. Use the same word you've used for pure gold in previous passages.

Yahweh tells Moses that the lampstand is to have 3 **branches** on each side of the trunk. Each branch and the trunk is to have golden **cups** in the shape of almond flowers. Each branch is to have 3 cups and the trunk is to have 4 cups, one on top and one underneath where the pair of branches meet on the trunk. The almond cups and branches are to be all one piece with the trunk and all should be made out of hammered gold. Branches are the long sticks that extend from the trunk. Cups are the small bowls that will hold the oil lamps.

Yahweh tells Moses to make the seven **oil lamps** to sit in the cups on each branch and the trunk. Moses needs to make sure the seven lamps sit in such a way that they light the area in front of the lampstand. Oil lamps are small bowls that people filled with olive oil, usually made of clay, with a lip on one side that a wick for lighting extends out of. However, the craftsman probably made these oil lamps out of gold especially for the tabernacle.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **lamp**. Look up oil lamp in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

The Israelites will make the snuffers and trays for the snuffers out of pure gold. They will make the whole lampstand out of 35 kilograms of gold and must be according to the directions given to Moses on the mountain.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **snuffers**. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there.*

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 25:31-40

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (2830985 KB)

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Exodus 26:1-14

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 26:1-14 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 26:1-14 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.

4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 26:1–14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Moses is still up on the mountain in a thick cloud receiving instructions from God. Moses was on the mountains for 40 days and 40 nights. Moses receives these instructions from God during these 40 days on the mountain. God is giving these instructions directly to Moses. God tells it in such a way that it may sound like Moses is supposed to do everything himself. However, Moses will pass on these instructions to the Hebrew people and have skilled workers from among the people do the actual work.

God has been telling Moses to make a special place where God will live among his people. It will be a special tent, called the tabernacle, which will have items that will help the priests worship God. The word for tabernacle means dwelling place or house. The tabernacle was literally the house of God. Moses has just learned how to make the ark, table, and lampstand that will go inside the tabernacle. At the end of the last passage God reminded Moses to make sure that Moses makes everything exactly like the pattern that God is showing Moses.

Now Moses will learn how to make the tabernacle itself. The entire structure of the tabernacle is portable, probably similar to other tents in that time and culture.

This passage gives instructions for the four layers of curtains that make the walls, ceiling, and cover for the tabernacle. The four layers are made of different materials and are slightly different in size. Earlier, God told Moses to collect all the materials needed for the curtains from the Hebrew people as a sacred or holy offering. These materials come from Egypt. You will remember that God caused the Egyptians to give the Israelites gifts as the Israelites left Egypt.

Throughout God's instructions to Moses about the tabernacle, God gives instructions for the tabernacle beginning with the things on the inside. Then God moves outward in his descriptions. As we saw in previous passages, the instructions began with the items they will place inside the tabernacle. Now we are learning about the tabernacle itself from the inside curtain layer to the outside protective curtain layer. And later we learn about the outer courtyard that surrounds the tabernacle.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Have one person in the group give instructions for making or building something. Pay attention to the order of instructions. What comes first? What comes next? How does this help you understand what to do? Which materials or set of instructions are the most important? How does the person draw attention to these details? Pause this audio here.

The first set of instructions for the tabernacle is for the innermost layer of curtains.

God tells Moses to make the curtains out of ten pieces of the finest linen. Linen is a fabric or yarn made from the flax plant. God tells Moses that this linen cloth should be blue, purple, and scarlet in color. Perhaps people wove the cloth with blue, purple, and scarlet thread, or perhaps people dyed the cloth after they wove it. Blue, purple, and scarlet colors were the colors of royalty in that culture. Then God said that the people should decorate the cloth with images of cherubim, a type of spirit being. We do not know if people wove images of the cherubim into the cloth itself, or if people embroidered the cherubim into the cloth with blue, purple, and scarlet thread. In any case, only skilled artists could do this type of work.

Stop here and look at a picture of linen cloth and a picture of a flax plant. Pause this audio here.

Cherubim are winged creatures that guard sacred spaces and represent God's presence. We do not know for certain what the cherubim looked like because Scripture describes them in different ways. They could have been animals or part animal and part human beings with wings. We first heard of cherubim when God sent cherubim to guard the entrance to the garden where God first placed Adam and Eve. Recently we saw that cherubim are part of the cover of the ark of the covenant, where God's presence rests. Now this imagery is repeated on the curtains that surround the place where God's presence will be.

Stop here and look at a drawing of what a cherubim might look like as a group. Then discuss this question as a group: Think about your own home. How do you decorate it? What do the colors or images that you put on your walls or in your room mean? Pause this audio here.

God told Moses to make all ten curtains the same size, 28 cubits long by 4 cubits wide. A cubit is about 46 centimeters. So 28 cubits is 12.9 meters and 4 cubits is 1.8 meters. God told Moses to sew along the long side of the curtains to connect the first five curtains together to form one set, and then sew the other five curtains together to form the other set. The size of one set of five pieces is now 20 cubits, 9 meters, wide and 28 cubits, 12.9 meters, long. The craftsmen will join the two sets together with 50 blue loops and 50 gold clasps. Blue loops and gold clasps are colors of royalty. In this way, the inner curtain of the tabernacle is one whole unit or piece. The whole unit now measures 40 cubits, 18.4 meters, by 28 cubits, 12.9 meters.

Stop here and draw for yourself a diagram of the inner curtain. Make note of the size and where the loops and clasps are located. Pause this audio here.

God tells Moses to use the finest materials, most precious metals, and colors and images that represent royalty and God's presence. These things emphasize that this inner tabernacle is like a throne room as well as a holy space that is set apart only for the service and worship of God.

Next, God gives Moses instructions for the second layer of the tabernacle—the covering that goes over the inner curtain. God told Moses to make the second layer with eleven curtains of goat's hair cloth. All eleven curtains are the same size; 30 cubits, 13.8 meters, long by 4 cubits, 1.8 meters, wide.

God first tells Moses to sew together 5 curtains of goat's hair cloth along the long side to form one long curtain. Then sew together 6 curtains of goat's hair cloth to form a second long curtain. They will fold the extra length of cloth on the second set in half at the entrance of the tent. Then God tells Moses to again make fifty loops on the outer edge of each set of curtains and connect them with 50 bronze clasps. Bronze is a less valuable, but very strong metal. In this way the tent covering will be one whole unit, or piece, measuring 30 cubits, 13.8 meters, long by 44 cubits, 20.2 meters, wide.

Stop here and draw for yourself a diagram of the second layer of curtain. Make note of the size, location of the loops and clasps and where the fold is. Pause this audio here.

Goat's hair cloth and bronze are both less valuable materials than linen and gold, but are strong materials. They placed this curtain over the inner curtain as a covering, or protective layer.

The goat's hair curtain is both longer and wider than the inner linen curtain, so it hangs down to the ground on each side and even has an extra 2 cubits of cloth that lays down on the ground at the back of the tent. In this way, the protective layer completely covers the inner linen curtain.

Finally, God tells Moses to complete the tent covering with two more protective layers. God tells Moses to make the third layer with tanned ram skins. People tanned animal skins in order to preserve the skin so that they could use it in many different ways. In order to tan the skins, people washed the skins and removed all the fur, then they soaked the skins in things like plants, oils, and animal dung and finally stretched and dried the skins. This process made skins a reddish color, soft, easy to bend, thick, and strong; and they would last a long time. Tanned animal skins are called leather.

God told Moses to make the fourth layer of fine leather. This leather was most likely made from the skin of a sea animal, so it would be very thick and not let any water get through. This final layer is what people could see most of the time on the outside of the tabernacle. It is also the layer that protects the tabernacle from all kinds of weather such as the hot sun, sand, rain, and snow. It needed to be strong for all of the times they would take down and set up the tabernacle every time they moved from one place to another.

Stop here and look at a diagram of the tabernacle curtains and pictures of tanned ram skins and leather. Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 26:1–14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: God gives Moses instructions for the inner layer of the covering of the tabernacle, to be made of fine linen with beautiful decorations.

In the second scene: God gives instructions for the second layer of the tabernacle covering, made of goats' hair, to fully cover the tabernacle.

In the third scene: God gives instructions for the third and fourth layers of the tabernacle covering, made of red tanned ram skins and fine leather to protect the tabernacle.

The characters in this passage are:

- God
- Moses
- And the Hebrew people

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

God tells Moses to make the tabernacle out of ten curtains of finely woven or twisted linen. The "curtains" are ten pieces of cloth-the word for curtain refers to material used for making a tent. Usually they made tents from goat's hair, but God told Moses to make this innermost layer of the finest twisted linen. This probably means that someone twisted two linen threads together to make a stronger thread. God tells Moses to decorate these curtains with blue, purple, and scarlet colors and images of cherubim. It is not clear if Moses was supposed to dye the cloth these colors, or use colored thread to decorate the cloth.

Stop here and look at an image of fine linen decorated with blue, purple, and scarlet colors. You can also look again at the picture of a cherub. Pause this audio here.

A skilled worker should be the one to embroider or weave in the images of the cherubim. Embroider means to use needle and thread to "draw" images onto the linen cloth. It is also possible that a skilled worker wove in the images of cherubim as he made the linen cloth. In this passage, the focus is on the curtains, not on the person doing the embroidery or weaving. Although the original language clearly shows that God was speaking directly to Moses, it is clear that Moses himself does not need to do the work, but can have someone with this particular skill do it.

Each of the curtains, the ten pieces of linen cloth, is to be 28 cubits long by four cubits wide. A cubit is about the length of a forearm, or one yard, or 46 centimeters. This means that 28 cubits is about 42 feet, or 12.9 meters, and 4 cubits is about 6 feet, or 1.8 meters. All of the curtains are to be the same size.

The people are to sew five of the curtains together, one to another along the length of the curtain, to form one set. This one large curtain set is now 20 cubits (9 meters) wide and 28 cubits (12.9 meters) long. And the same is to be done with the second set of five curtains.

Next God tells Moses to make 50 blue loops and sew them along the outer edge of each set of curtains. The fifty loops on one curtain are to match the 50 loops on the second curtain. They should evenly space these loops along the length of the curtain, the side that is 28 cubits, 12.9 meters, long. God doesn't specify what kind of material to use for the loops, whether yarn or thread or cloth that is then sewn onto the curtain. The loops were likely a half round shape that was attached at each end to the curtain, making a hole just large enough for the gold clasp to go through. The gold clasp was likely shaped like two half circles put together at one point and facing opposite directions. The clasp connected the two opposite sets of loops together.

Stop here and look at a picture of a gold clasp. Pause this audio here.

Once all 50 loops are connected, the curtain is now one whole piece. The tabernacle is one whole or one unit. So now the full inner curtain measures 40 cubits (18.4 meters) by 28 cubits (12.9 meters).

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Have one member of the group describe in your language how to join together the pieces of cloth according to the pattern from the passage. Pay attention to the words and phrases you use to show which side to use and how each piece is to be connected to the other pieces. Pause this audio here.

Next God tells Moses to make a set of eleven curtains out of goat's hair to make a covering or a tent over the tabernacle. Here the word tabernacle refers to the first layer of linen curtains just described. People usually made tents out of goat's hair. This time, eleven curtains are needed. These pieces of cloth are also larger—they are 30 cubits, or 13.8m, long by 4 cubits, or 1.8m, wide. All eleven curtains are the same size.

Stop here and look at a picture of goat's hair cloth. Pause this audio here.

First connect 5 pieces of goat's hair cloth to form the first set. So this first set of curtains will now be 30 cubits long by 20 cubits wide. Then connect six pieces of goat's hair cloth to form the second set. Fold the sixth piece of cloth in half at the top of the entrance of the tabernacle. This second set of curtains is now 30 cubits long by 24 cubits wide, but it only takes up 22 cubits of space because the last section is folded back on itself.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group. Take turns describing how these pieces of cloth fit together and are folded. Pay attention to the words and phrases you use to describe the extra strip of cloth and how it is used. Pause this audio here.

Then make fifty loops on the outermost edge of each set of curtains. Again this is along the length, the side of the curtains that is 30 cubits. Here the color or material of the loops is not specified. They probably also made these loops with goat's hair. The fifty loops on one curtain are to match the 50 loops on the second curtain. This time the fifty loops are evenly spaced across 30 cubits of material.

Next make 50 clasps of bronze to connect each loop along the outer edges of the two curtains so that it forms one whole unit. Bronze is a less valuable material than gold but was very strong and a common metal people used. Metal workers make bronze by mixing copper and tin together.

Stop here and look at a picture of a bronze clasp. Pause this audio here.

Now we have one whole unit for the tent covering that is 30 cubits long by 44 cubits wide.

To understand the next set of instructions, it is helpful to imagine how the curtains will hang over the framework of the tent. We will see more detail about the framework in the next passage. For now, imagine that the tent is a box with the curtains laying across the top and down both sides and down the back, but leave the front of the box open. The first layer of linen curtains is shorter, so the curtain doesn't touch the ground on either side, but it does touch the ground at the back.

Now lay the second layer, the goat's hair covering, on top of the first layer. The second layer is wider, so it touches the ground on both sides. It is also a full curtain length longer, so the goat's hair curtain is folded over half a curtain length at the front, the side that is open, and then at the back it goes all the way to the ground and the extra half curtain length of curtain lays on the ground. This way the goat's hair curtain completely covers the inner linen curtain.

Stop here and look again at the diagram of the tabernacle and the curtains. Take turns describing what you see. Pay attention to the words and phrases you use to explain where the extra length of materials should be placed. Pause this audio here.

Finally God tells Moses to complete the tent covering with two more protective layers. The third layer is a layer of tanned ram skins. Some translations include the word red, since the process of tanning ram or goat skins made it the color red.

God tells Moses to make the fourth layer of fine leather. We don't know the exact meaning of the Hebrew word that says what kind of leather, so it is best to simply say "fine leather." Many people think that they made leather from an animal from the sea. Leather protects the tent from water and weather.

Stop here and look at pictures of tanned ram skins and leather. Pause this audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it. In order to get an idea of how the people draped the curtains, you may choose to use pieces of cloth to practice draping the curtains on the tabernacle frame.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 26:1-14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- God
- Moses
- And the Hebrew people

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

God told Moses to make the tabernacle from ten curtains of finely woven linen, decorated with blue and purple and scarlet colors and images of cherubim.

Pause the drama.

These curtains must all be the same size, 28 cubits long by 4 cubits wide. Join five of these curtains together to make one long curtain. Now join the other five curtains together to make a second long curtain. Put blue loops along the outer edge of each set of curtains. Then use gold clasps to connect the two curtains together, so the tabernacle will be made of one continuous piece.

Pause the drama.

Use goat hair to weave eleven sections of cloth, each of them 30 cubits by 4 cubits. These will be a cover for the sacred tent. Join together five sections of cloth to form one set. Then join together six sections of cloth to form a second set. Fold in half the extra section of cloth of the second set of curtains at the front of the tabernacle. Make fifty loops on the outer edge of each set of curtains. Then make fifty bronze clasps and connect the loops along each set of curtains with the clasps. In this way, the tent covering will be made of one continuous piece.

Pause the drama.

The additional curtain material, including the extra half curtain, shall hang down at the back of the tabernacle. The extra cubit of the goat's hair tent covering will hang down to the ground on each side of the tabernacle so that the inner linen tabernacle will be completely covered.

Pause the drama.

Complete the tent covering with a protective layer of tanned ram skins and another layer of fine leather.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 26:1-14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

God told Moses to make the **tabernacle** from ten curtains of finely woven linen. The tabernacle is a holy sanctuary where God can live among the people. Moses must build the tabernacle exactly according to the pattern that God showed Moses. The word tabernacle sometimes refers to the entire structure, including the surrounding courtyard, and sometimes it refers to just the innermost part of the tent. People understood the different meanings from what was being talked about at the time. In this passage the first use of the word refers to the whole structure, but later when it says a "covering for the tabernacle," it is referring to the inner linen layer of curtains. For more information on tabernacle, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for tabernacle as you used in previous passages.

The first layer of curtains are made with finely twisted linen.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use to describe the linen cloth. You may look again at the picture of linen cloth for reference. Pause this audio here.

God told Moses to decorate the curtains with blue, purple, and scarlet colors.

Stop here and discuss as a group what words or phrases you will use for each of the colors. You may look again at the pictures for reference. Pause this audio here.

And skillfully sew on with needle and thread images of cherubim on the linen curtains. **Cherubim** are winged creatures that guard the tabernacle and remind the people of God's presence. For more information on cherubim, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for cherubim as you used in previous passages.

The ten curtains must all be the same size; 28 cubits, or 12.9 meters, long and 4 cubits, or 1.8 meters, wide.

Stop here and discuss as a group which unit of measurement you will use to describe the size of the curtains throughout the passage. Pause this audio here.

God told Moses to sew together two sets of five **curtains** and then to connect those two sets of curtains with fifty blue loops and fifty gold clasps. In this way, the tabernacle is one whole unit.

Stop here and discuss as a group what words or phrases you will use to describe the loops and clasps. You may look again at the pictures for reference. Pause this audio here.

Curtains is a word used to describe both the initial strips of cloth, the sets of cloth sewn together, and the final large curtain made up of many parts that is now one whole unit.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase or if you will use different words or phrases to describe the different curtains throughout this passage. Pause this audio here.

The second layer of curtains are made with goat's hair and serve as a tent covering for the tabernacle.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use to describe the goat's hair cloth. You may look again at the picture of goat's hair cloth for reference. Pause this audio here.

Then make fifty loops along the outer edge of each set and connect them with bronze clasps.

Stop here and discuss what word or phrase you will use for bronze clasps. You may look again at the picture of a bronze clasp for reference. Pause this audio here.

Complete the tent covering with a protective layer of tanned ram skins and a layer of fine leather.

Stop here and discuss as a group what words or phrases you will use to describe tanned ram skins and fine leather. You may look at the pictures of tanned ram skins and fine leather again for reference. Pause this audio here.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage Exodus 26:1-14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 26:1-14

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (4663621 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Exodus 26:15-30

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 26:15-30 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 26:15-30 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 26:15–30 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Moses is still on Mount Sinai in a thick cloud receiving instructions from Yahweh on how to make the tabernacle. The tabernacle is where Yahweh will live among his chosen people and where they will worship Him. Moses has just learned how to make the curtains for the tabernacle. Now Moses will learn how to make the framework for the tabernacle for the curtains to hang on.

As you remember, the entire structure of the tabernacle will be portable, so the Israelites will be able to pack it and take it with them as they travel from place to place. It is hard to know for sure what the framework looked like because our understanding of the technical terms used here is limited. We do know the tabernacle was rectangular in shape. The Israelites always set the tabernacle up with the entrance facing east, the back facing west, and the two sides facing north and south.

Yahweh tells Moses to make wooden frames for the walls of the tabernacle. These frames, or standing supports, were probably not solid boards since they would be too heavy to move. Solid boards also wouldn't allow people to see the beautiful curtains hung on the outside. Most likely the walls were wooden poles, or beams, in the shape of 4.6 meters by about 66 centimeters, or 2.25 feet by 15 feet frames. Since a cubit was the standard unit of measurement at that time and it was around the length of a man's arm, this means the frames, or beams, were 10 cubits by 1.5 cubits.

Yahweh instructs Moses to make two tenons, or pegs, at the bottom of each frame to help connect it to the silver base. We don't exactly know what these pegs looked like, but they stuck out from the bottom of the frames and helped connect the frame to the base by slotting into the silver bases. There were two on each frame that matched, or were parallel, across from each other. Moses is to make all of the frames the same.

Stop here and look at a diagram of the wooden frames as a group. Pause this audio here.

Moses needs to make the frames out of acacia wood from Acacia, or shittah, trees. These trees were very common in the Sinai peninsula, where Moses and the people were at the time of receiving these instructions. The trees usually grew 20 feet, or 6 meters, tall and about 2 feet, or 61 centimeters, thick. This kind of wood was very hard and would last a long time.

Stop here and look at a picture of an acacia tree. Pause this audio here.

Then Yahweh tells Moses how to set up the frames for the tabernacle. There are to be 20 frames on the south side of the tent. Since the twenty frames are all 1.5 cubits, or 66 centimeters, wide, that means the full length of the south side would be 13.7 meters. The Israelites must always set up the tabernacle with the entrance facing the east, so the south side was on the right of the entrance. Moses also needs to make forty bases to go under the twenty frames. There will be two bases for each frame, one base for each of the "tenons," or "pegs," that stick out of the frame.

Moses will make the bases out of silver. Silver is a precious metal. People made the silver bases by making a hollow mold and then pouring hot liquid silver into the mold. Once the silver cooled down it became solid and took the shape of the mold.

Stop and look at a picture of the silver bases. Pause this audio here.

Just like the south side, Moses will need to make 20 frames and 40 silver bases for the north side of the tabernacle. Yahweh repeats his instructions of two bases for each frame. For the back, or the west side, of the tabernacle Yahweh tells Moses to make six frames as well as two frames for the corners; one corner frame for the southwest corner and one frame for the northwest corner. How the Israelites will make the corner frames is not clear. The words used for "separate" and "joined" could mean the same thing or opposites. So it could be that the Israelites will connect the frame from bottom to top, or it could mean that they will separate the frame at the bottom but connect it at the top. Either way, the purpose of the corner frames is to reinforce, or bring more stability to, the tabernacle's structure.

Yahweh says that the Israelites must attach the corner frames at the top by a ring. The first ring refers to the ring at the top which holds together the corner frames. There are other rings, which we will hear about later, that hold together the crossbars. In total, there will be eight frames and 16 bases, with two bases for each frame, at the back, or west side, of the tabernacle. Although Moses does not mention it here, the east entrance of the tabernacle will have no frames, or upright supports. This means that it will be completely open so that the priests can come and go from the entrance during worship.

Then Yahweh gives instructions for making the wooden crossbars of the tabernacle. These bars will hold the framework together. They are long, horizontal bars much larger than the poles made for carrying the ark and the table. There will be five crossbars for the north side and five crossbars for the south side. There will also be five crossbars for the back of the tabernacle.

The middle, or center, crossbar refers to the third of five crossbars for each of the three sides. This means that the north and south sides each had a middle bar thirty cubits, or 13.8 meters, long and the west, or back, side had a middle bar that was 10 cubits, or 4.6 meters, long. We are not sure of the length of the other crossbars for each side. The Israelites will insert the center bar through the golden rings on the frames and will run from one end to the other.

Stop here and look at a diagram of the assembled tabernacle framework as a group. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses to overlay the frames and crossbars with gold. To overlay with gold means to completely cover the wood on all sides with a light layer of gold. This made the frames look like solid gold, but because the Israelites will make them with wood inside, they are much lighter and easier to carry. Finally, Moses will make the rings that hold the crossbars out of gold.

Stop and discuss with your team: When you build an important structure in your culture, how do you ensure the structure will be strong? How do you show that a building is important? Pause this audio here.

For a third time, Yahweh reminds Moses to make the tabernacle according to Yahweh's plan, or exactly as Yahweh has shown him. We do not know if Moses saw visuals, or pictures, of what Yahweh described to him, but it is clear that Moses understood all the details and instructions for the framework and this enabled him to repeat those instructions to others later.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 26:15–30 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh tells Moses to build the frames of the tabernacle to support the curtains. Yahweh also tells Moses to build silver bases to support the frames, two for each frame. Moses will also need to make two corner frames to make the framework more stable.

In the second scene: Yahweh tells Moses to build the crossbars for the two sides and the rear of the tabernacle. Moses needs to build center posts and gold rings for the posts to go through. Yahweh tells Moses to overlay the frames and the crossbars with gold. Yahweh tells Moses to follow the plan for the tabernacle that Yahweh has shown him on the mountain.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Yahweh

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Yahweh continues to give specific instructions to Moses for building all the parts of the tabernacle.

It is important to remember that Yahweh just explained to Moses how to make the curtains of the tabernacle. Now Yahweh tells Moses to build the wooden frames that will hold the curtains.

All of the frames are identical. Twenty of the frames will hold the curtains on the south side of the tabernacle. This is on the right side of the tent. Yahweh tells Moses to build 40 silver bases to support these frames, two per frame.

Yahweh tells Moses to build another 20 frames and 40 bases for the north side of the tent. This will give the tabernacle a rectangular appearance.

Yahweh tells Moses to build six frames for the rear of the tabernacle that faces west. Yahweh tells Moses to reinforce the rear corners of the tabernacle by adding a frame to each corner. Those two extra frames on the corners will join with the frames on the sides to make a two-corner piece. Yahweh tells Moses to build eight frames in total for the rear of the tabernacle. Yahweh tells Moses to build 16 silver bases, two for each frame on the rear end.

It is important to notice that there is no difference between the frames and bases for the south and the north sides of the tabernacle.

It is important to remember that repetition is a way to emphasize the importance of the instructions.

It is important to notice that all of the frames will hold the curtains on the three sides of the tabernacle. The openness of the framework will allow people on the inside of the tabernacle to see the curtains.

Yahweh tells Moses to make five crossbars for each side. Yahweh tells Moses that the middle, or center, crossbar should attach in the middle of the frames. These middle crossbars will extend from one end of the tabernacle to the other side. These crossbars will fit into the golden rings that Moses mentions next.

It is important to notice that the length of the middle crossbars was the full length of the tabernacle. Yahweh tells Moses to make golden rings for the center bars to slide through on the three sides of the tabernacle.

Yahweh tells Moses to overlay the frames and the crossbars with gold. This means the Israelites will cover the wood with a thin layer of gold.

Yahweh tells Moses that he should make the tabernacle according to the plan that Yahweh has shown Moses on the mountain. This means Moses clearly understands the details of the framework and that he will later be able to share those details with others.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 26:15–30 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has two scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Act out Yahweh talking to Moses on Mount Sinai. Yahweh tells Moses to build the frames of the tabernacle to support the curtains. Yahweh tells Moses to build two silver bases to support each frame. There will be 20 frames on both the north and south sides of the tabernacle. Moses will need to make six frames and two corner frames for the back of the tabernacle.

Pause the drama.

Act out Yahweh telling Moses to build the crossbars for the two sides and the rear of the tabernacle. There will be five crossbars on each of the three sides. Moses needs to build center posts and gold rings for the posts to go through. Yahweh tells Moses to overlay the frames and the crossbars with gold. Yahweh tells Moses to follow the plan for the tabernacle that Yahweh has shown him on the mountain.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 26:15–30 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Yahweh gives Moses instructions for the framework of the tabernacle. The **tabernacle** refers to the large tent moved from place to place by the Israelites and to the dwelling place of Yahweh. This was the place where priests made sacrifices on behalf of the people before David's son built the temple. Use the same word or phrase for the tabernacle that you have used in previous passages. For more information on the tabernacle, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and look again at a diagram of the assembled tabernacle framework as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

The frames for the tabernacle are to be made out of **acacia wood**. Acacia wood is a strong wood that is easy to work with. Use the same word for acacia wood that you have used in previous passages.

Each frame is to be 10 **cubits** high and 1.5 cubits wide. A cubit is the length of a man's arm from his elbow to the tip of his finger if his hand is straight and flat. It is approximately 45 centimeters. So this means the frames were around 66 centimeters by 4.6 meters. Be sure to use the same word or phrase for cubit that you have used in previous passages. For more information, cubit is in the Master Glossary.

In total, the three support walls for the tabernacle will include 48 frames and 96 silver bases. Be sure to use the same word for bases that you have used in previous passages.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 26:15–30

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (2868634 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 3](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Exodus 26:31–37

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 26:31–37 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 26:31–37 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.

2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 26:31–37 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Moses is on Mount Sinai in a thick cloud receiving instructions from Yahweh on how to make the tabernacle. The tabernacle is where Yahweh will live among his chosen people and where they will worship Him. Moses has just learned how to make the framework for the tabernacle. Now Moses will learn how to make the special curtain that closed off the Most Holy Place and the entrance curtain to the tabernacle.

Yahweh instructs Moses how to make a special curtain, or veil, that will close off the Most Holy Place, or the Holy of Holies, from the front room of the tabernacle, the Holy Place. As you remember, Yahweh revealed the tabernacle to be a rectangular structure divided into two rooms. The larger room on the east side that was closest to the entrance was called the Holy Place. It was twice the size of the other room. The Holy Place will hold the golden table and lampstand. The west side, the smaller side of the tabernacle, is called the Most Holy Place. It will hold the ark of the covenant, where Yahweh's presence will dwell.

Stop here and look at a diagram of the two rooms of the tabernacle showing where the Israelites placed the veil as a group. Pause this audio here.

The special curtain, or veil, that Yahweh asks Moses to make is different from the other curtains. The main purpose of this curtain is to block, or bar, people from entering the Most Holy Place. It is not just for decoration or to hide something. Yahweh says this special curtain will match the interior curtains of the tabernacle in design. Moses will need to make the special curtain with blue, purple, and scarlet thread and he will need to weave, or embroider, with a needle cherubim figures into the fabric of the veil. As we know, cherubim are guardians of sacred places and are often symbols of Yahweh's presence. They have the body of a lion, the wings of a bird, and the face of a human. The cherubim on the special curtain remind people that sinful people cannot access the immediate presence of the Most Holy God. This curtain is the final barrier between Yahweh and humans.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, how are sacred places set apart, or cut off, from people? What barriers do you use to prohibit people from entering those sacred places? Pause this audio here.

Moses is to hang this special curtain from golden hooks attached to four wooden posts made from acacia wood. As you know, acacia wood was abundant in that area and was very durable. Just like the framework of the tabernacle, Moses will need to overlay the posts with a thin layer of gold and the posts will sit in silver bases. There will be one silver base for each post.

Yahweh tells Moses that the special curtain will hang under the clasps of the inner part of the tabernacle. We know from previous passages that all the interior curtains attach using clasps to make the curtains into one continuous piece. This most likely means the veil will hang from these same clasps from the top of the tabernacle. It will be one long, single curtain, not a divided curtain that people could easily open. To get past the curtain, one would have to move at least one of the poles at either side and go around it because, under normal circumstances, people were not meant to pass by it.

Yahweh tells Moses to place the ark of the covenant and its atonement cover, or mercy seat, in the room behind the veil, the Most Holy Place. The ark refers to a wooden box covered with gold that Yahweh asked Moses to make. It will contain the tablets given to Moses with the Law on them, a pot of manna, and Aaron's rod. Yahweh's presence will dwell directly above the ark and the ark will come to represent Yahweh's presence. The atonement cover for the ark was the same size as the ark but made of pure gold. The ark had two cherubim of hammered gold that faced each other over the ark and looked down at the atonement cover.

Stop here and look at a picture of the ark of the covenant and the atonement cover as a group. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses to place the table, which will hold the bread dedicated to Yahweh, outside the curtain in the Holy Place. The Israelites will place the table on the north side and they will place the golden lampstand across from the table on the south side. If a person is inside the tabernacle, facing the entrance to the east, this means the lampstand is on the right and the table is on the left.

Stop here and look at a picture of the table and the golden lampstand as a group. Pause this audio here.

Then Yahweh instructs Moses to make another curtain, this time for the entrance of the tabernacle. The entrance curtain will also match the design of the other curtains. Moses is to weave it from fine linen and embroider it with blue, purple, and scarlet thread. The five wooden posts overlaid with gold will hold the entrance curtain. Like the veil, Moses will hang the entrance curtain from golden hooks. Only the wooden posts for this curtain will have bronze bases instead of silver.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What artistic expressions do people consider extremely beautiful in your culture? Describe cultural works of art where you live that cause people to be in awe. Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 26:31–37 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh gives Moses the instructions for how to make the inside curtain. This curtain will have four posts that will hold the curtain. Moses is to make the base for each post out of silver.

In the second scene: Yahweh explains the positioning of the objects that Yahweh commanded Moses to build. Yahweh says the special curtain will separate the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. Yahweh explains that the ark of the covenant and the cover of the ark will be inside the Most Holy Place. Yahweh explains that the table and the lampstand will be outside of the Most Holy Place.

In the third scene: Yahweh tells Moses to make another curtain for the entrance of the tabernacle. Yahweh tells Moses to build five posts covered in gold to hold the curtain of the entrance to the tabernacle. Yahweh tells Moses to build five bases of bronze for these posts.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It is important to remember that Yahweh just told Moses how to build the outside structure of frames of the tabernacle. The Israelites will line the outside structure with curtains.

Yahweh tells Moses to make a special curtain of woven linen for the inside of the tabernacle and to decorate it with blue, purple, and scarlet thread and to embroider cherubim, or design them, on the curtain using a needle and thread. As you remember, this is the same material as the inner covering of the tabernacle.

It is important to note that the word used for curtain here is different from the other references to curtains. This special type of curtain, also referred to as a veil, has the purpose of acting as a barrier to prevent sinful people from entering into the presence of Yahweh.

It is important to remember that the outside curtains of the tabernacle are also blue, purple, and scarlet and embroidered with cherubim. In this way, the inside and outside curtains will look similar.

Yahweh tells Moses to make four posts of acacia wood, to overlay them with gold and set each of them on a silver base. Yahweh tells Moses to hang the curtain using gold hooks attached to the poles.

It is important to notice that Yahweh pauses the instructions for construction to tell Moses about the positions of the objects in the Most Holy Place.

Yahweh explained to Moses that Moses will put the ark of the covenant behind the inner curtain. Remember, this is the place where Yahweh's presence will dwell. The curtain will separate the Most Holy Place from the other room of the tabernacle. Yahweh tells Moses to place the ark's cover, also called the atonement cover, on top of the ark of the covenant.

Stop here and discuss with your team: Even though the order in this passage is to hang the special curtain and then place the ark of the covenant in the Most Holy Place, a later reference to assembling the tabernacle will reverse the order. Moses implies that he will first place the ark of the covenant in the Most Holy Place, then he will hang the special curtain. Discuss whether changing the order in this passage will be helpful to your team. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses to place the table outside of the Most Holy Place on the north side and the lampstand across the room on the south side. This means both the table and lampstand will be in the Holy Place, the room outside of the Most Holy Place.

It is important to notice that after Yahweh explains the set-up of the objects, He tells Moses to make another curtain. This curtain will be for the entrance of the tabernacle.

Yahweh tells Moses to make this curtain using woven linen. Yahweh tells Moses to make beautiful designs using a needle and thread. Yahweh tells Moses that the colors of the thread are blue, purple, and scarlet. This outside curtain for the entrance is the same material and colors as the inside curtain, but without the embroidered cherubim.

It is important to notice that Yahweh keeps the material and colors consistent for the curtains.

Yahweh tells Moses to make five posts from acacia wood and to overlay those posts with gold. Yahweh tells Moses to hang the curtain using golden hooks on the posts.

Yahweh tells Moses to make a bronze base for each of the five posts.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 26:31–37 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has three scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Act out Yahweh telling Moses to make a special curtain of woven linen for the inside of the tabernacle. Yahweh tells Moses to decorate it with blue, purple, and scarlet thread and to make cherubim designs using a needle and thread. Then Yahweh tells Moses to make four posts of acacia wood and overlay them with gold and set each of the posts on a silver base. Yahweh tells Moses to hang the special curtain using gold hooks attached to the poles.

Pause the drama.

Act out Yahweh explaining to Moses that Moses will put the ark of the covenant behind the inner curtain. The curtain separates the Most Holy Place from the other room inside of the tabernacle. Yahweh tells Moses to place the ark's cover on the top of the ark of the covenant.

Yahweh tells Moses to place the table outside of the Most Holy Place on the north side and the lampstand across the room on the south side.

Pause the drama.

Act out Yahweh telling Moses to make another curtain using woven linen. Yahweh tells Moses to make beautiful designs on the curtain using a needle and thread. Yahweh tells Moses that the colors of the thread are blue, purple, and scarlet. Yahweh tells Moses to make five posts from acacia wood and to overlay those posts with gold. Yahweh tells Moses to hang the curtain using golden hooks on the posts. Yahweh tells Moses to make a bronze base for each of the five posts.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 26:31–37 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Yahweh instructs Moses how to make the inside of the **tabernacle**, or the house of God. The tabernacle was a sacred tent set apart as the dwelling place of God. It was transported by the Israelites as they journeyed from place to place. It is the place where Yahweh dwelled among his people and where his people worshiped Him. Use the same word for tabernacle that you have used in previous passages. For more information on tabernacle refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses to embroider the special curtain with designs of **cherubim**. Cherubim are guardians of sacred places and are often symbols of Yahweh's presence. They have the body of a lion, the wings of a bird, and the face of a human. The cherubim on the special curtain reminds people that the way to the immediate presence of the Most Holy God is barred to sinful humans. Use the same word for cherubim that you have used in previous passages. For more information on cherubim, refer to the Master Glossary.

The four posts for the curtain are to be made of **acacia** wood. Acacia wood is a strong wood that is easy to work with. Use the same word for acacia wood that you have used in previous passages.

The **ark of the covenant** and its **atonement** cover are to be placed in the room behind the special curtain. The ark of the covenant refers to a box, which holds the tablets of testimony, and which is where God's presence meets with Moses. Use the same word for ark that you have used in previous passages. The atonement cover, or mercy seat, refers to the pure gold cover of the ark. It is the place where God's presence will rest when He meets with Moses, and later the high priests. It is also where God grants atonement, or forgiveness, to the Israelites. Use the same word or phrase for atonement cover or mercy seat that you used in previous passages. For more information, look up the ark of the covenant and atonement in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh says the special curtain, or veil, will separate the **Holy Place** from the **Most Holy Place**. Holy means that something is set apart and dedicated to God for his special purposes. The Holy Place refers to the outer room of the tabernacle closest to the entrance on the east side. This room will house the golden lampstand and table. It will be where the priests serve Yahweh and perform their duties. The Most Holy Place is the smaller of the two tabernacle rooms behind the special curtain on the west side of the tabernacle. It will contain the ark of the covenant where Yahweh's very presence will dwell. It is the most holy of all the holy places in the tabernacle and only Moses or the high priest could enter this room.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for the **Holy Place** and the **Most Holy Place**. Look up the **Holy Place** and the **Most Holy Place** in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

Yahweh then tells Moses to make the entrance curtain with the same materials, but no cherubim. It will have five support posts with bronze bases for each post. Be sure to use the same word for bases as you have used in previous passages.

Stop here and look at a diagram of the bases used for the curtain posts. Pause this audio here.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 26:31-37

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3237249 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Exodus 27:1–8

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 27:1–8 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 27:1–8 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 27:1–8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This passage is part of the larger passage of instructions about the tabernacle. These instructions for how to build the altar are near the end of the instructions. They are followed by instructions about making the courtyard.

It seems that Moses was on Mount Sinai when he received these instructions from God. Moses had gone up Mount Sinai with Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy elders of Israel. Then it seems that God called Moses to come farther up the mountain alone. Moses took Joshua with him as he left Aaron and the others behind, but at some point he probably continued on his own so that he was alone with God when he received all of these instructions.

In this passage, God gives Moses instructions for how to build the altar. The altar took up much of the space inside the courtyard, near the entrance to the tabernacle. God instructed Moses to place this altar between the entrance of the courtyard and the tabernacle so that worshippers could only approach God after offering a sacrifice to cover their sins. The word for altar comes from the word for "to slaughter" because the altar was used to make burnt offerings, or sacrifices, to God. God had taught the Israelites that in order to be saved from their sin, something that God considered a substitute must die for their sin in their place, so they could live. Because it was not safe to eat raw meat, God commanded them to cook the meat and gave instructions for how to build this altar where they could cook their sacrifices. The Israelites would enter the courtyard through its gate, bring the animal they had selected for their sacrifice to the priest to kill it and cook it on the altar, then eat it in God's presence as a symbol of sharing a meal with him. Each time they went through this process, it

reminded them that the cost of their sin was death. It also renewed their commitment to their covenant with Yahweh.

God tells Moses "You shall make the altar of acacia wood." He does not mean that Moses should personally make the altar but that those whom Moses appoints for this work should make the altar using wood from the tree called "acacia." The phrase "you shall make," or "make," is repeated many times in the passage. Each time God is commanding Moses to make something, but each time Moses understands that he should appoint men to make these things according to God's instructions.

Stop here and look at a picture of an acacia tree as a group. Pause this audio here.

God says to make the altar a square: 2.3 meters long and 2.3 meters wide and 1.5 meters high. It was unusual for people to make an altar of wood, but the Israelites needed to carry this altar as they moved from place to place, so using wood made it lighter. The size of the altar allowed for people to worship together, which was something that God highly valued.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Describe the structure on which people in your culture sacrifice animals. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of the altar inside the courtyard, between the entrance and the tabernacle as a group. Pause this audio here.

God tells Moses to make a horn at each of the four corners. In Jewish culture, horns were a symbol for power and help and a safe place. The horns probably looked like the pointed horns of an animal like a bull. God said to make the horns of one piece with the altar. They were not to make them separately and attach them to the frame but instead to carve them from the same piece of wood, pointing up from the corners. God told Moses to cover the wood of the whole altar with bronze, a metal that is a mixture of copper and tin so that none of the wood was uncovered.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What do horns represent in your culture? Is there an animal or a part of an animal that represents power? Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, what do you do to make a wooden item more special and beautiful? What would you cover wood with so that it wouldn't be burned by a fire? What kinds of items do you cover with metal and why do you do it? Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of the altar as a group. Pause this audio here.

God tells Moses to make all of the equipment for the altar out of bronze. He was to make pots with wide openings at the top for removing the greasy ashes left by the animal sacrifices. He was also to make shovels, or scrapers, for cleaning the altar, bowls for sprinkling liquids, forks with three long points for turning the meat on the altar, and firepans for carrying burning coals or hot ashes. The men Moses appointed had to make all of these equipment out of bronze.

Stop here and look at a picture of the equipment for the altar as a group: The pots, the shovels, the scrapers, the sprinkling bowls, the meat forks, and the firepans. Pause this audio here.

God tells Moses to make a bronze grating for the altar. This was probably narrow strips of bronze laid across each other to create a net which allowed fat to fall through and air to rise up from underneath so the fire would stay hot. God also told him to make a bronze ring for each corner of the grating that would stick out of the sides of the altar. God told Moses to place the grating underneath, below the ledge of the altar, halfway up the altar.

Stop here and look at a picture of the bronze grating as a group. Pause this audio here.

God told Moses to make poles from the wood of the tree called "acacia" and to cover the poles completely with bronze. The men whom Moses appointed were to place the poles into the rings of the altar so that there were two poles, one on each side of the altar, for carrying the altar. They probably only placed the poles in the rings when the Israelites were moving, but removed them when they stopped to camp somewhere. God told Moses to make the altar hollow, out of boards of wood. As mentioned earlier in the passage, they were to cover the hollow frame with bronze. By making a hollow wooden frame, the altar was lighter and easier to carry as they moved from place to place in the wilderness. God told Moses to make the altar exactly the way he showed Moses

to make it when Moses was on the mountain with God. God may be saying this after Moses comes down from the mountain.

Stop here and look at a picture of people lifting up the altar by its poles as a group. Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 27:1–8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 1 scene.

In the first scene: God gives Moses detailed instructions about how to build the altar for sacrificing burnt offerings, or animal sacrifices, to God.

The characters in this passage are:

- God the Father (his voice can be heard but he cannot be seen)
- And Moses

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

God is giving Moses instructions about how to build the altar. These instructions are part of a larger set of instructions for how to build the tabernacle and everything contained within the courtyard. Moses is probably alone with God further up the mountain of Sinai when he receives these instructions.

God tells Moses to build the altar from the wood of the tree called "acacia," which is a hard, strong wood. He tells Moses to make the altar hollow from boards of acacia wood. The altar should be a square that is 2.3 meters long and 2.3 meters wide and 1.5 meters high. It would take up a large space between the entrance of the courtyard and the tabernacle. The position of the altar shows the importance of worshippers making their sacrifices to God before they enter the tabernacle area.

Stop here and look at a picture of an acacia tree as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of the altar inside the courtyard, between the entrance and the tabernacle as a group. Pause this audio here.

God tells Moses to make four horns on each of the four corners of the top of the altar, all carved from one piece of wood, not made separately and attached to it. Moses was supposed to cover all the wood with bronze.

Stop here and look at a picture of the altar as a group. Pause this audio here.

Then God tells Moses to make all the equipment for the altar out of bronze: the pots, shovels, sprinkling bowls, meat forks, and firepans. Then he tells him to make a grating from bronze, sometimes called a bronze network, and to make four bronze rings and attach them to the four corners of the bronze grating. He tells Moses to place the grating inside the altar, under the ledge, halfway up the altar. It seems that the altar must have been made in such a way that the rings could stick out of the sides. Maybe the corners of the grating pierced the sides of the altar so the rings could be attached and stick out to the outside.

Stop here and look at a picture of the equipment for the altar as a group: the pots, the shovels, the scrapers, the sprinkling bowls, the meat forks, and the firepans. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of the bronze grating as a group. Pause this audio here.

Then God tells Moses to make poles from the wood of the acacia tree and cover them with bronze. The men are to place the poles through the rings on each side of the altar when they lift it and carry it from place to place as they follow God through the wilderness.

Stop here and look at a picture of people lifting up the altar by its poles as a group. Pause this audio here.

God tells Moses to make the altar hollow, out of acacia wood boards. This instruction seems out of place because God already told Moses to make the altar from the wood of the acacia tree at the beginning of this passage. This

instruction makes it clear that the altar would become a square hollow box, with the boards as sides, but the order of these instructions here is odd. Even though God already instructed Moses to cover all the wood of the altar with bronze, perhaps they would have waited until they placed the grating with the rings inside the altar before covering it all with bronze. The directions are somewhat confusing.

Then God tells Moses to make everything just as God showed him on the mountain. This is also a bit confusing because God gave these instructions to Moses on the mountain and this makes it sound like Moses has already come down the mountain so that he received the instructions in the past. It could be understood as God telling Moses to make it the way "that I have now shown you on the mountain."

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

As a group, try to make an altar using these instructions that God gave to Moses. If possible, make it the size God commanded, or mark off the size in some way, such as in the dirt or with branches on the ground.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 27:1–8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 1 scene.

The characters in this passage are:

- God the Father (his voice can be heard but he cannot be seen)
- Moses

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

God tells Moses to make the altar from the wood of the tree called "acacia" and to make it a square that is 2.3 meters long and 2.3 meters wide and 1.5 meters high. Then he tells him to make 4 horns, one at each corner, and all of the same piece of wood, not separate pieces that he attaches later.

Pause the drama.

God tells Moses to make all of the equipment of bronze: the pots, shovels, sprinkling bowls, meat forks, and fire pans.

Pause the drama.

God tells Moses to make a grating, or network, of bronze and place it under the ledge of the altar, about halfway up the altar. He also told him to make four rings for each of the four corners of the grating. The men Moses appoints are to place the grating inside the altar about halfway up.

Pause the drama.

God tells Moses to make two poles from acacia wood and cover them with bronze. The men are to place the poles through the rings whenever they lift and carry the altar as they travel through the wilderness.

Pause the drama.

God tells Moses to make the altar hollow, from boards of acacia wood. He is to make the altar just as God showed him on the mountain.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 27:1–8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

God says to Moses, "**You shall make.**" He uses this phrase many times in this passage. Each time he uses the word "you" for just one person, but in each case Moses knows that God does not mean that Moses himself must make everything. Moses must appoint men to make each item the way God instructs him to make it. Use the same word or phrase for "You shall make" each time it is used throughout this passage.

God tells Moses to make an **altar**. The word for altar here comes from the word for slaughter, because this altar is for burning animals as offerings, or sacrifices, to God. Use the same word for altar as you used in previous passages. Altar is in the Master Glossary.

God tells Moses to make the altar from the wood of the tree called **acacia**. The wood of the tree called acacia was hard and strong. Use the same word for acacia as you used in previous passages of the book of Exodus.

God told Moses to make the altar a square: five **cubits** long and five cubits wide and three cubits high. A cubit is a measurement about the length of the average adult man's forearm. One cubit is about 50 centimeters. Use the same word for cubit as you used previously in the book of Exodus. Cubit is in the Master Glossary.

God said to make four **horns**, one on each corner of the altar. This is the same word as that used for the hard, pointy parts on the head of animals like bulls and goats. In Jewish culture, horns were symbols of power and help and a safe place. Use the word for horn that your culture uses for the horns of an animal. If you do not have any animals with horns in your culture, you might want to borrow a word, because the instructions for the altar were very specific, so it's important that the word here refers to the horns of an animal.

God told Moses to completely cover all the wood of the altar with **bronze**. Bronze is a combination of copper and tin. If you do not have bronze in your culture, you might want to say "a metal called bronze." Bronze is used many times throughout the Bible. Bronze is in the Master Glossary.

God told Moses to make equipment for using with the altar. He was to make bronze pots with wide openings on top for removing the greasy ashes of the animal sacrifices; bronze shovels, or scrapers, for cleaning the altar; bronze bowls for sprinkling liquids; bronze forks with three long points for moving the pieces of meat; and bronze firepans, or buckets, or trays for carrying burning coals or hot ashes.

Stop here and look at an image of the items as a group. Discuss what you will call each item. Pause this audio here.

God also told Moses to make a bronze **grating**, or a mesh, or net, made by crossing thin pieces of bronze so that fat could fall through and air could come up.

Stop here and look at an image of bronze grating as a group. Discuss what you will call it. Pause this audio here.

God told Moses to make **poles** of acacia wood and cover them with bronze. They were supposed to place the poles into the bronze rings when they needed to carry the altar. They probably removed the poles when they stayed in one place for a while.

Stop here and look at a picture of men lifting the altar using the poles as a group. Pause this audio here.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 27:1–8

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3938236 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Exodus 27:9–21

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 27:9–21 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 27:9–21 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.

2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 27:9–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This passage is part of the larger passage of instructions about the tabernacle, which God gave to Moses on Mount Sinai. God gave these instructions to Moses, but Moses could assign the work of making the courtyard to other men. The tabernacle was going to be the place where God lived among the Israelites, so it was a holy place, set apart from the rest of the community. The courtyard created a boundary so the Israelites would not accidentally enter the holy area without first making the proper sacrifice for their sins. The courtyard was a rectangular shape, twice as long as it was wide and 5 cubits, or 2.3 meters, high. The height of the courtyard was half the height of the tabernacle, so they could see the tabernacle from outside the courtyard.

Stop and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, how do you set aside certain areas for special use? Describe a situation where you might create a boundary around an area? How would you create that boundary? Pause this audio here.

On the south side, God told Moses to make the courtyard 100 cubits, or 46 meters, long from curtains of finely twisted linen threads. The material used for these curtains was not as special as the material used for the tabernacle, because the courtyard was farther from God's presence, so it wasn't as holy. Moses was to make twenty posts and set them into twenty bronze bases with silver hooks and bands on the posts. Since the courtyard was not as holy as the tabernacle, they used silver and bronze for the metals rather than gold. The instructions here do not specify that the posts should be made of wood, but they probably were, because the posts for the tabernacle were made of wood. The tabernacle posts were then covered with gold but the courtyard posts were not covered with gold. The silver hooks probably held the curtains up, but the instructions do not say how they did that.

Stop and discuss this question as a group: Describe how you build a home, a school, and a place for worship. In what ways do you make your place of worship different than other buildings? Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of the courtyard as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of fine twisted linen as a group. Pause this audio here.

God's instructions throughout this passage repeat many of the same details several times. The north side, like the south side, was to be 100 cubits, or 46 meters, long, made of curtains. It was also to have twenty posts set in twenty bronze bases, and the posts were to have silver hooks and bands on the posts.

Stop here and look at a picture of silver hooks and bands. Pause this audio here.

God told Moses to make the west end of the courtyard half the length of the north and south sides. It was to be 50 cubits, or 23 meters, long, with ten posts placed in ten bronze bases. He does not mention silver hooks and bands for the posts here, but they probably had them just like the posts on the north and south sides.

They were to make the east end of the courtyard, the side where the sun rises, 50 cubits, or 23 meters, long like the west side, but it had the entrance to the courtyard in the center of it, so the instructions are a little different on the east side. Just as the entrance to the tabernacle was on the east side, so the entrance to the courtyard was on the east side. The men Moses appointed were to make three curtains on each side of the entrance for a total of six curtains. They were to make each curtain 15 cubits, or 6.9 meters, long. They were to place three posts in three bases on each side of the entrance for a total of six posts and six bases.

For the entrance of the courtyard, the men were to make a curtain, also called a screen or a veil in some translations. They were to make it 20 cubits, or 9.2 meters, long using blue and purple and scarlet yarn and

finely twined, or twisted, linen. An embroiderer was supposed to make this special curtain. The description of the courtyard entrance is just like the description of the tabernacle entrance. For the tabernacle, the embroiderer was supposed to weave images of cherubim into the curtain, but there is no description of what they should embroider into the curtain of the courtyard entrance. They were to make four posts and set them into four bases for the curtain at the entrance to the courtyard.

Stop here and look at a picture of blue and purple and scarlet yarn as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of the curtain at the entrance to the tabernacle. Pause this audio here.

God repeats some of the general instructions to Moses. They were to make all the posts around the courtyard with silver bands and silver hooks and bronze bases. They were to make it 100 cubits, or 46 meters, long, 50 cubits, or 23 meters, wide, with curtains of finely twisted linen 5 cubits, or 2.3 meters, high and with bronze bases.

Then God said they were to make all of the other articles for use in the tabernacle, whatever they used them for, including the tent pegs for the tabernacle and the courtyard, out of bronze. This refers to all the metal items except those inside the tabernacle which God had already told them to make from gold.

Stop here and look at a picture of gold and silver and bronze as a group. Pause this audio here.

In the next brief section, God gives instructions about the lampstand inside the tabernacle. He tells Moses to command the Israelites to bring him the clear oil of beaten olives. This was the highest quality olive oil and it produced bright light with less smoke. To get beaten oil, they would beat the olives by hand using a mortar and pestle rather than a press. The Israelites were to bring the oil so the priests could keep the lamps of the lampstand burning. They were to place the lampstand inside the tent of meeting, or the tabernacle, in front of the inner curtain that shielded the ark of the testimony. God commanded Aaron and his sons to light the lamps and keep them burning in front of Yahweh all night, from evening until morning, every day. God gave this command for the Israelites and their descendants to keep for generations to come.

Stop here and look at a picture of olives as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of a mortar and pestle as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of the lampstand as a group.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 27:9–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

In the first scene: Moses is on Mount Sinai and God is giving him instructions. In this scene, he tells Moses how to build the courtyard. He tells him what materials to use and the lengths of each side of the courtyard. The entrance for the courtyard is on the east side, and God gives special instructions for the entrance curtain. The metals used in the courtyard are always silver or bronze, never gold.

In the second scene: God gives Moses instructions about the oil to use for lighting the lampstand inside the tabernacle. He also tells him to have Aaron and his sons light the lamps and keep them lit from evening to morning every day for generations to come.

The characters in this passage are:

- God the Father, his voice is heard but he is not seen
- And Moses

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

God tells Moses to make a courtyard for the temple. Even though God is giving these instructions to Moses, he does not expect Moses to make the courtyard by himself. He expects Moses to appoint some of the Israelite men to create the courtyard according to his instructions.

The courtyard is to be a rectangular shaped enclosure around the temple, created by hanging curtains on posts set in bronze bases all around the perimeter. The long ends of the courtyard are the north and south sides, and the short ends are the east and west sides. The entrance to the courtyard, like the entrance to the tabernacle, is on the east side. The long sides of the courtyard are 100 cubits, or 46 meters, long and the short sides are 50 cubits, or 23 meters, long. The height of the curtains is half the height of the tabernacle, so they block the view of what is happening in the courtyard while still allowing people to see the tabernacle from outside the courtyard.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, how do you measure things? For example, cubits were about the length of a man's arm from the elbow to the wrist. Discuss whether you would like to use Biblical measurements in your translation, metric units, or some other unit of measurement. Pause this audio here.

God begins his instructions with the south side. He tells Moses to make it 100 cubits, or 46 meters long, out of curtains made of finely twisted linen threads, with twenty posts set in twenty bronze bases. The posts were to have silver hooks and silver bands, or rings, on the posts. The posts were probably made of wood and covered with bronze, like the tabernacle posts which were made of wood and covered with gold. The metals used in the courtyard are silver and bronze, not gold, because the courtyard area was not as holy as the tabernacle. God's instructions for the north side are very similar to the south side. God said to make the north side 100 cubits, or 46 meters, long out of curtains with twenty posts and twenty bronze bases and with silver hooks and bands on the posts.

Stop here and look at a picture of the courtyard as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of fine twisted linen as a group. Pause this audio here.

Then God gives instructions for the west side. It was to be half the length of the north and south sides, so 50 cubits, or 23 meters, long, with half the posts and bases, so ten posts and ten bases. On the east side, facing the sunrise, the courtyard was to be the same length as the west side, 50 cubits, or 23 meters. The center of the east side had a special entrance curtain, but on each side of the entrance they were to make curtains like the rest of the courtyard that were 15 cubits, or 6.9 meters, wide with three posts and three bases. They were to make these curtains with three posts and three bases on either side of the entrance curtain.

For the entrance curtain, God uses the same word that he used to describe the entrance to the tabernacle. They were to make this curtain different than the other curtains of the courtyard. They were to make it 20 cubits, or 9.2 meters, wide using blue and purple and scarlet, or red, yard and finely twisted linen threads. An embroiderer was supposed to make this curtain, and it was to have four posts and four bases.

Stop here and look at a picture of blue and purple and scarlet yarn as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of the curtain at the entrance to the tabernacle. Pause this audio here.

All the posts around the courtyard were to have silver bands and hooks and bronze bases. The instructions do not specify, but the hooks on these posts were probably used to hang the curtains. God repeats the general instructions about the courtyard: They were to make it 100 cubits long and 50 cubits wide with curtains of finely twisted linen 5 cubits high, with bronze bases. God says they should make all of the articles used in service of the tabernacle, whatever they used them for, including all the tent pegs for the tabernacle and the courtyard, out of bronze. He is referring to all of the metal items outside the tabernacle. He had already told them before this to make the metal items inside the tabernacle out of gold.

Stop here and look at a picture of gold and silver and bronze as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop and try to create a model of the courtyard according to the instructions in this passage. Pause this audio here.

Then God gives Moses instructions about the lampstand in the tabernacle. He tells him to command the Israelites to bring him the clear oil of beaten olives for the light so the priests could keep the lamps burning. When the Israelites beat olives by hand in a mortar and pestle, they made the best oil. It created brighter light with less smoke when it burned. They were supposed to place the lampstand inside the tent of meeting, or

tabernacle, before the curtain that shields the ark of the testimony. Aaron and his sons were to light the lamps and keep them burning from evening until morning every day for the generations to come.

Stop here and look at a picture of olives as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of a mortar and pestle as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of the lampstand as a group.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 27:9–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- God the Father, his voice can be heard but he cannot be seen
- And Moses

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

God tells Moses to make a courtyard for the temple that is 46 cubits long using curtains made of finely twisted linen threads, with twenty posts set in twenty bronze bases with silver hooks and silver bands on the posts. He told Moses to make the north side like the south side.

Pause the drama.

God tells Moses to make the west side half as long as the north and south side, also using curtains and ten posts and ten bases. He should make the east side the same length but it will be different than the west side because it will have a special entrance curtain in the center made of the same materials as the curtain at the entrance of the tabernacle.

Pause the drama.

God gives Moses instructions about the lampstand. He tells him to command the Israelites to bring him clear olive oil from beaten olives. He says Aaron and his sons were to light the lamps and keep them burning in front of Yahweh all night, from evening until morning, every day for generations to come.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 27:9–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

God told Moses to make a courtyard for the **tabernacle**. The word tabernacle sometimes refers to the tent where Yahweh lived among his people, the Israelites, before the temple was built. Tabernacle can also refer to the entire area of the tabernacle, including the courtyard and everything within it. For more information about the tabernacle, refer to the Master Glossary.

God told Moses to make the courtyard 100 **cubits** long on the south and north sides. One cubit is about the length of the average adult man's forearm, or almost 50 centimeters long. One hundred cubits would be about 50 meters long. Use the same word or phrase for cubit, or any other unit of measurement that you are using, as you used in previous passages. For more information about a cubit, refer to the Master Glossary.

God commanded Moses to make the curtains of the courtyard out of **fine twined linen**. Some translations say twisted or woven linen. These would be fine, or thin, threads of linen twisted together to make a larger thread. Use the same word for "fine twined linen" as you used in previous passages.

Stop here and look at a picture of fine twined linen as a group. Pause this audio here.

God told Moses to make **bronze bases** for the posts. The **bases** were metal blocks with a place carved into the center to hold the posts in place. **Bronze** was a combination of copper and tin. Use the same word for bronze as you used in previous passages. For more information about bronze, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and look at a picture of a bronze base as a group. Pause this audio here.

God told Moses to make hooks and **bands**, or rings, of **silver** and bronze. Silver and bronze were types of metal that were not as costly as gold. Use the same words for silver and bronze as you used in previous passages. The bands, or rings, were probably strips of metal that encircled the posts. The silver hooks for holding the curtains might have been attached to these silver bands.

God told Moses to have the men make a **curtain** for the entrance of the courtyard. Some translations call it a veil or a screen. This is the same word that was used for the curtain at the entrance of the tabernacle. Use the same word or phrase for curtain here as you used in the passage about the entrance of the tabernacle.

God instructed Moses to have the Israelites bring oil of **beaten olives** for the lampstand. Oil from beaten olives was different than oil from pressed olives. The Israelites would remove the oil from the olives by hand, using a mortal and pestle rather than using a wine press. This oil was the best quality oil, because it provided bright light with less smoke.

Stop here and look at an image of olives and a mortar and pestle as a group. Pause this audio here.

God told Moses to place the lampstand in the **tent of meeting**. This was what they called the tent where Moses used to meet with God before the Israelites built the tabernacle. Here it refers to the tabernacle.

God said to place the lampstand before the curtain that shielded the **ark of the testimony**, which some translations call the **ark of the covenant**. The ark of the testimony was the box that held the stone tablets of the law. Everything in the ark of the testimony testified, or gave evidence, that God had been faithful to his covenant with the Israelites. For more information on the ark of the covenant refer to the Master Glossary. If you translate this as the ark of the testimony, use the same words for ark and testimony as you used previously. For more information on testimony, refer to the Master Glossary.

God said to burn the lamps from evening to morning in front of **Yahweh**. God uses his personal name Yahweh here. Use the same name for Yahweh that you have in previous passages, and see the Master Glossary for more information on Yahweh.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 27:9-21

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (4235092 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 4](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (7178961 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Exodus 28:1-14

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 28:1-14 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 28:1-14 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.

4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 28:1-14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this passage, Yahweh is talking to Moses on Mount Sinai. The rest of the Israelites, the people of Israel, are waiting at the bottom of Mount Sinai. Aaron, the brother of Moses, is with the Israelites and is the leader of the Israelites while Moses is away. Yahweh continues to give instructions to Moses about how the Israelites should worship him. In the previous passages, Yahweh has instructed Moses on the making of the tabernacle and its furnishings. In this passage, Yahweh gives information to Moses on who should serve God in the tabernacle and their special clothes.

Yahweh tells Moses to bring Aaron, the older brother of Moses, and Aaron's sons to be his priests. Priests are people that Yahweh sets apart for special work in the tabernacle. The priests serve Yahweh by doing Yahweh's commands in the tabernacle. Yahweh is pleased by his priests serving him correctly. The priests also represent the people of Israel to Yahweh to remind Yahweh of all the people of Israel. Aaron's sons are named Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. This shows that Yahweh has planned that the priesthood be inherited, passed down from generation to generation, from father to son. Yahweh names Aaron's male children, his sons, which shows that priests in the tabernacle are always male.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What roles are there in your community which people inherit from one generation to another? Are there different roles passed from fathers to sons compared to mothers to daughters? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh gives instructions to Moses about the clothes that the priests will wear. Aaron's special clothes are holy, or set apart, for when he serves Yahweh. The clothes give glory, or honour, and beauty to Aaron and show Aaron's special job as high priest. Israel is a group of people led by Yahweh, and Aaron is Yahweh's high priest. This means that Aaron is made a leader of the people of Israel. Aaron is a special representative of Yahweh to the people. Yahweh shows this importance when he gives Aaron these special clothes.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What special clothes do your leaders wear to show their position in your society? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh wants the Israelite craftsmen to make the special clothes. Yahweh gives wisdom, or skill, to the skilled workers by his spirit. Yahweh gives a list of six items of clothing for the role of high priest. The six items are a breastpiece, an ephod, a robe, a patterned tunic, a turban, and a sash, or cloth belt. Over the top of linen undergarments, the high priest wears the patterned tunic, then the robe, then the ephod, and then the breastpiece. The high priest wrapped a cloth belt around himself to hold these clothes in place. The high priest wears the turban on his head. Yahweh explains each item in more detail after the list. The clothes cover the body, legs, arms, and head. Yahweh does not include footwear in the list of clothes. It might be that Yahweh's priests served him with bare feet. This reminds us of when Yahweh told Moses to remove his sandals as he came near to the presence of Yahweh in the burning bush on Mount Sinai, before he returned to Egypt to free the Israelites.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What do you think about bare feet in your culture? Tell a story about how people accepted someone else based on what they were wearing on their feet. Pause this audio here.

The skilled workers made the clothes for Aaron's sons while they served Yahweh in the tabernacle. The skilled workers used special materials which were expensive and high quality. Yahweh wants the skilled workers to use the same cloth and thread for making the priests clothes as the inner curtains of the tabernacle. Patterns are sewn onto the fabric of the clothes or woven into the piece of cloth with gold thread and blue, purple, and bright red, or scarlet, thread. Fine linen is a type of cloth which is softer and finer in feel compared to everyday clothing of the time. You will remember that the Israelites have gold, precious stones, fine cloth, and thread from when they took valuable items from the Egyptians as they left Egypt.

Stop here and look at a picture of gold thread. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of blue thread. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of purple thread. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of bright red, or scarlet thread. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at fine linen cloth. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of a high priest in his special clothes. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh gave Moses directions for making the high priest's ephod. An ephod is a piece of clothing which was common at the time, but could be very plain or highly decorative. The high priest's ephod is highly decorated and very impressive to look at. The material for the ephod is woven or decorated on the surface with gold, blue, purple, and bright red thread. The main material is fine linen. We don't exactly know what an ephod was like but we know that it covered the body from the shoulders down to the thigh. The skilled workers possibly made the ephod from two pieces of material on the front and two on the back. Another possibility is that they made the ephod from two pieces of material, one on the front of the body and one on the back of the body. The front of the ephod is joined to the back of the ephod using shoulder pieces, or straps. The ephod is held on to the body with a cloth belt sometimes called a waistband, or sash. The cloth belt looks like part of the ephod because it is made with the same thread and material.

Stop here and look at a picture of possible designs for a high priest's ephod. Pause this audio here.

Although the Israelites were slaves in Egypt, they did a variety of skilled work. This meant that the Israelites did fine work in weaving, embroidery, precious metal work, and shaping of semi-precious stones. The skilled workers were able to produce the clothing for the tabernacle priests.

The stone on the shoulder straps was probably onyx. Onyx is often a mixture of colours, but the stone might also be red carnelian. Craftsmen carved the valuable stones into shapes to be set onto the shoulder straps. There are many colours of onyx including pale cream, white, brown, red, and black. We don't know the colour of the stone used for the ephod.

Stop here and look at a picture of onyx stone in various colours. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses to engrave the names of the "sons of Israel" on the stones on the shoulder straps. The "sons of Israel" are the twelve sons of Jacob who entered Egypt. These sons became the ancestors of the twelve tribes of Israel. The skilled workers will carve six of the names on one stone and six of the names on the other stone. They will engrave the names in the order that the sons were born.

The craftsmen will attach the stones onto the shoulder pieces, or straps, of the ephod using gold which they made into fine wire and shaped or wove into a pattern. This technique is known as gold filigree work. The craftsmen place gold wire around the edge of the stones and attach each stone with the gold wire to the shoulder strap so the stones do not fall off the shoulder strap.

Stop here and look at gold wire filigree work around a precious stone. Pause this audio here.

When Aaron is wearing the ephod in the tabernacle, the stones may be to remind Yahweh of the people of Israel or they might remind Aaron of the people of Israel. The final decoration on the ephod are gold chains which are attached to shoulder straps. They may be attached to the straps separately or to the fine gold wire settings around the stones. Craftsmen probably twisted gold wires together like a thin rope or cord. The craftsmen may have made the twisted gold rope into chains or used the thin cord on the shoulder straps.

Stop here and look at a picture of gold wire twisted together into a cord. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of gold wire made into a chain.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 28:1-14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh gives instructions to Moses about making priests to serve in the tabernacle. The priests are Moses' brother Aaron and his sons: Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.

In the second scene: Yahweh gives instructions to Moses about skilled workers making special clothes for the priests.

In the third scene: Yahweh gives detailed information about the decoration of the ephod for the high priest.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron and his sons: Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar
- Skilled workers

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Moses is on Mount Sinai. He is alone with Yahweh and remains with Yahweh for forty days and forty nights. Yahweh gives Moses these instructions at some time during these forty days and nights. The Israelites cannot see Moses on Mount Sinai.

Yahweh focuses on who will be his priests. Being a priest will pass down from father to son. Priests are responsible for serving Yahweh and leading the Israelites. Though Yahweh tells Moses to bring Aaron and his sons near to him, this does not happen immediately. These are instructions for later. Yahweh wants Moses to call Aaron and his sons to be with Moses when Moses returns to the Israelites. Moses separated out Aaron and his sons from the rest of the Israelites to set them apart to be priests. Moses might have used a special ceremony to set them apart, or consecrate them, and make them priests.

Yahweh wants Moses to talk to the skilled workers who will make the clothes after Moses returns to the Israelites. Yahweh also wants Moses to tell the skilled workers why they are making the clothes for Aaron. They are making these clothes because the clothes help set Aaron apart, or consecrate him, for this special task of serving Yahweh as his priest.

Yahweh lists all of the clothes that the skilled workers will make for the high priest. Yahweh says that they are to make beautiful clothes that will give glory, or dignity, to the high priest. There are six items of clothing for the high priest but no footwear. The clothes cover his body, legs, arms, and head. The skilled workers will make the clothes from special, fine materials. The clothes are a breastpiece, an ephod, a robe, a patterned tunic, a turban, and a cloth belt. The high priest wears the clothing in layers on his body in this order: the patterned sleeveless tunic closest to the skin, then the robe, then the ephod, and finally the breastpiece. Note that the order of putting items on is different to the order of the list in the passage. The turban is a piece of cloth wrapped around the top part of the head to cover it. The cloth belt is a long piece of fabric used to hold the clothes in tight at the waist of the body.

Stop and do this activity as a group: Gather items of cloth or clothing to represent the clothing for the high priest. Ask one volunteer to be the high priest. On your volunteer, place or wrap around items of clothing to represent the different items of clothing that a high priest needed to wear before serving Yahweh in the tabernacle. Think about how the priest might feel wearing all the special clothing and how it might change how they hold their body or move around compared to lighter, everyday clothing. Pause this audio here.

Then Yahweh describes the ephod in detail. There is no general explanation of an ephod as this was a common piece of clothing that goes over the top of the robe and coat. The cloth belt holds the ephod close to the body. The skilled workers use gold thread and blue, purple, and bright red thread to decorate the ephod.

The skilled workers decorate the shoulder straps of the ephod with special semi-precious stones. The skilled workers carve the names of the sons of Israel onto the stones. They carve six names on one stone and six names onto the other stone. The workers attach the stones onto the shoulder straps of the ephod with settings made from gold wire. Two ropes of gold wire are attached to the gold wire settings on the shoulders of the ephod.

Stop and do this activity as a group: Use what you have around you to make shoulder decorations for the ephod. You might be able to use pieces of stone, rope, or wire to make the decorations. Talk about the weight of these decorations if made from stone and gold. How might this affect the person wearing them? Pause this audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 28:1-14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron and his sons: Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar
- Skilled workers

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

During the drama, have the priests and skilled workers act out the instructions that Yahweh gives to Moses.

Moses is on Mount Sinai in the presence of Yahweh. Yahweh is giving more instructions on how the Israelites should honour him.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Yahweh is the only God that we need," or "How can we serve Yahweh?" or "I am worried that the Israelites will not know what to do while I am away with Yahweh." [!end] Continue the drama.

Yahweh gives instructions to Moses about who should be priests in the tabernacle. Yahweh wants Aaron and his sons to be the priests.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Aaron and his sons, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "My life is going to change completely," or "I am honoured to be Yahweh's high priest." [!end] Continue the drama.

Yahweh tells Moses to get skilled workers to make special clothes for the priests. The Israelites who make the clothes are able to do so by the skills and abilities that Yahweh has given them. These clothes help set Aaron apart, or consecrate him, to be a priest to serve Yahweh. The skilled Israelites will make clothes out of special thread, material, precious metal, and semi-precious stones.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Everyone will see that Yahweh has set apart the priests," or "Aaron and his sons will be worthy to serve Yahweh in such fine clothes."

Ask the person playing the skilled workers, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I am honoured to make these beautiful clothes," or "I love to work with gold thread," or "My skills come from Yahweh and I use them to praise him." [!end] Continue the drama.

Yahweh describes the ephod for the high priest. The high priest wears the ephod over the robe and tunic and a cloth belt around his waist. The skilled workers use fine material and special threads to make the ephod. Gold wire settings hold special stones onto the shoulder straps. The skilled workers will carve the special stones with names of the sons of Israel. Cords, or chains, of gold hang from the shoulder straps as well.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the skilled workers, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "This is a really special ephod," or "I am honoured to carve the names of the sons of Israel on the stones," or "The gold settings will shine on the shoulder straps."

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking? The person might answer things like, "My high priest will understand that he is part of my special place of worship," or "The stones will remind Aaron that he represents the people of Israel when he serves me." [!end] Continue the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 28:1-14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Yahweh gives instructions to Moses. **Yahweh** is the personal name for God. In this passage, God is called Yahweh. Be sure to translate Yahweh in the same way as you have in previous passages, and remember that Yahweh is in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses to call Aaron and his sons to serve him as **priests**. Priests are people whom Yahweh has set apart from the rest of the Israelites in order to serve God. Use the same word or phrase for priest or priests as you used in previous passages. For more information on priests, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses to get skilled workers to make **holy**, or sacred, clothes for Aaron. These are special clothes used only by the high priest. These clothes glorify, or **bring glory** or honour, to the high priest. The craftsmen make the clothes to consecrate, or set apart and make holy, Aaron and his sons. Use the same word or phrase for holy as you used in previous passages. For more information on holy and glorify, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh gave the skilled craftsmen the **spirit**, or heart, of wisdom. This means that Yahweh gave the craftsmen the ability, or wisdom, to do the work well. In this case, spirit refers to the inner part of a person. This gift of wisdom in the craftsmen comes from Yahweh. Translate spirit in the same way you have in previous passages, or you can simply say "those to whom I have given ability or wisdom to do the work well." Spirit is in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh instructs Moses that the Israelites are to make six items of special clothing. The first is a **breastpiece**, or chestpiece. This is an item of clothing that covers the front upper body of a person. People make breastpieces with different shapes, decoration, and from different materials. The term breastpiece is a general word that covers all different types. Use the same word or phrase for breastpiece as you used in previous passages.

The second piece of clothing is an **ephod**. This item of clothing covers the body from shoulder to thigh. A person wears several pieces of cloth using straps at the shoulders to attach them together. Use the same word or phrase for ephod as you used in previous passages. For more information on an ephod, refer to the Master Glossary.

The third piece of clothing is a **robe**. This item of clothing covered the body from shoulders to lower legs and had a hole for the head and neck. It did not have sleeves.

Stop here and look at a picture of a robe as a group.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for robe. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Look up robe in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

The fourth piece of clothing is a patterned **tunic**. The tunic is worn under all the other items of clothing on the body and covers the body from shoulders to below the knee or lower. The tunic has sleeves.

*Stop here and look at a picture of a **tunic** as a group.*

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **tunic**. Look up tunic in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

The fifth piece of clothing is a **turban**. A turban is a head covering made from a piece of cloth wrapped around the head.

*Stop here and look at a picture of a **turban** as a group.*

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **turban**. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

The sixth piece of clothing is a **sash**, or cloth belt. The skilled workers make the cloth belt from the same material as the ephod. The priest used the cloth belt to hold the ephod and other clothing into the body at the waist.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **sash**. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

The Israelites are to make the clothing from gold, blue, purple, and bright red **yarn**. Yarn is finely twisted thread used to weave linen cloth or embroider on top of cloth.

Stop here and look at a picture of gold thread.

Stop here and look at a picture of blue, or violet, thread.

Stop here and look at a picture of purple thread.

Stop here and look at a picture of bright red, or scarlet, thread.

The coloured yarn was probably used to weave the cloth and the gold yarn was probably used to embroider the cloth. Use the same word or phrase for yarn as you used in previous passages.

The skilled workers use **blue** yarn. The blue colour is a blue purple. Use the same word or phrase for blue as you used in previous passages.

The clothing is made from **fine twined or twisted linen**. This is linen cloth made from the blue, purple, and bright red linen yarn or thread that has been made very thin. Linen thread is made from the flax or hemp plant. The threads are woven into linen cloth which is soft and high quality. Use the same word or phrase for fine twined or twisted linen as you used in previous passages.

Stop here and look at a picture of fine linen fabric as a group. Pause this audio here.

The ephod has shoulder straps joining the front and back pieces. Each shoulder strap has a precious stone set onto it. The stone is probably **onyx** but could be a different stone.

Stop here and look at a picture of onyx stones in varying colours as a group.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **onyx**. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

The onyx stones are **engraved** with the names of the sons of Israel. Engraving is the process of cutting into a stone or other hard substance with a sharp tool to make a picture, pattern, or word.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **engrave**. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

The onyx stones are held onto the shoulder straps with fine gold wire settings called **gold filigree**.

Stop here and look at a picture of gold wire filigree work around a precious stone.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **gold filigree**. Pause this audio here.

Gold chains twisted like cords are also attached to the shoulder straps. Cords are formed by twisting multiple threads around each other to form a cord, or rope.

Stop here and look at a picture of gold wire twisted together into a cord.

Stop here and look at a picture of gold wire made into a chain.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **gold chains twisted like cord**.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 28:1-14

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Exodus 28:15–30

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 28:15–30 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 28:15–30 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 28:15–30 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this passage, Yahweh is talking to Moses on Mount Sinai. The rest of the Israelites, the people of Israel, are waiting at the bottom of Mount Sinai. Yahweh continues to give instructions to Moses about how the Israelites should worship him. In the previous passages, Yahweh has instructed Moses on the making of special clothes for the high priest, Aaron. In this passage, Yahweh continues to instruct Moses on the high priest's clothing and gives him information on the making of the breastpiece.

Yahweh gives instructions to Moses for the skilled workers in the Israelites to make a breastpiece. They will make the breastpiece out of cloth. The breastpiece is different to a breast plate which is hard and worn into battle for protection. The breastpiece is a ceremonial piece of clothing that covers the front upper body of a person.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about different items of clothing that cover the upper part of the body which are common in your society. What items only cover the front of the body? Pause this audio here.

Although Yahweh tells Moses to make the breastpiece, Yahweh does not expect Moses to actually make the breastpiece himself. Yahweh wants the Israelite craftsmen to make the breastpiece. The high priest, Aaron, Moses' elder brother, will wear the breastpiece.

You will remember from the previous passage that the craftsmen will make six items of clothing for the high priest. The breastpiece is part of the clothing for the high priest. Yahweh calls it the breastpiece of judgment to indicate that the high priest will use the breastpiece to seek a decision from God. The original language refers to judgment as to make a decision or a judgment for a particular situation needing an answer. It is not the type

of judgment which brings punishment. This indicates that Yahweh is giving the high priest the responsibility of bringing questions before Yahweh to ask for an answer. The high priest does this for the people of Israel, and at their request, when a decision cannot be made by the people involved. Yahweh first gives Moses instructions for making the breastpiece, and then tells him how the high priest will use it to seek decisions from Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do leaders in your community make decisions for the community? What special items, rules, or forms of words are used to reach a decision? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses to make the breastpiece to be similar to the ephod. Yahweh wants the skilled workers to use the same cloth and thread for making the priests clothes as the inner curtains of the tabernacle. The breastpiece is a square-shaped pocket. The workers probably folded a single piece of cloth in half to make a pocket or pouch. The priest uses the pocket to hold special objects. Yahweh gives measurements for the breastpiece of one span long and one span wide. The Israelites used spans as one way to measure length. A span is the distance between the tip of the thumb and the tip of the small finger when the fingers are stretched wide. A span is approximately 9 inches or 22 centimetres in modern units.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your community measure the length of cloth? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses to set twelve precious stones on to the front of the material of the breastpiece. The craftsmen will attach the stones using gold which has been made into fine wire and shaped or woven into a pattern. This technique is known as gold filigree work and was also used by the craftsmen to attach the two precious stones onto the shoulder straps of the ephod.

Stop here and look at a picture of gold filigree surrounding a precious stone. Pause this audio here.

The craftsmen will arrange the precious stones in four rows of three stones. We don't exactly know which stones the craftsmen use on the breastpiece and the names of the stones in the original language are translated in a variety of ways in different bible translations.

On the first row, the first stone is possibly a carnelian or a sardius. Some translations call it a ruby but people cannot engrave a ruby. This stone is bright red in colour and possibly transparent. The second stone is possibly a chrysolite or a topaz. This stone is probably yellow/green and possibly translucent. The third stone is a stone that sparkles or reflects the light well. This stone is often given the name emerald but was probably a stone more easy for people to engrave, possibly a beryl. This stone is possibly green or red.

Stop here and look at a picture of a red carnelian, a sardius and a ruby as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of yellow/green chrysolite and a yellow topaz as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of an emerald and a green beryl as a group. Pause this audio here.

On the second row, the first stone is possibly a turquoise or a garnet but some translations call it a sapphire or an emerald. Sapphires and emeralds are too hard for people to engrave. This stone is possibly red, blue, or green. The second stone is probably a lapis lazuli but some translations call it a sapphire. However, it is unlikely to be a sapphire as sapphires are too hard for people to engrave. This stone is blue. The third stone is a precious stone. Translations give the stone different names, including diamond, moonstone, and emerald. It is probably white. It is unlikely to be a diamond or an emerald as these stones are too hard for people to engrave.

Stop here and look at a picture of a turquoise, a garnet, a sapphire and an emerald as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of a lapis lazuli and a sapphire as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of a diamond, a moonstone and an emerald as a group. Pause this audio here.

On the third row, the first stone is a gemstone. It is possibly an orange jacinth or a blue turquoise. The second stone is probably an agate, a striped stone. The third stone is probably an amethyst, a clear purple stone.

Stop here and look at a picture of an orange jacinth and a blue turquoise as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of a striped agate as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of a purple amethyst as a group. Pause this audio here.

On the fourth row, the first stone is bright and shining. This stone is probably an aquamarine with a clear blue/green colour but might be a beryl. The second stone is the same stone used on the shoulder straps of the high priest's ephod. This stone is probably an onyx which is often a mixture of colours. This stone could also be a red carnelian. The third stone is probably a jasper. This stone is probably green or red.

Stop here and look at a picture of blue/green aquamarine and a beryl as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of onyx in varying colours and a red carnelian as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of a green jasper and a red jasper as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What semi-precious stones do your leaders have in their ceremonial clothing? What meaning, if any, do these stones have? If you don't use stones for decorations, what other objects are used to decorate ceremonial clothing? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses to engrave a name of a son of Israel, son of Jacob, on each stone on the breastpiece. Engrave means to cut into a surface with something sharp to make a pattern, picture, or words. The craftsmen engrave the stones on the breastpiece in the same way as the stones on the shoulder straps of the ephod. This time, the craftsmen engrave only one name on each stone. The craftsmen engraved six names on each stone on the shoulder straps of the ephod. The high priest carried the name of each son to Yahweh when he was serving. This was a reminder to Yahweh of his people descended from Israel and a reminder to the high priest of the people he represented.

Stop here and look at an illustration of the high priest wearing a breastpiece, showing several different possible examples of the breastpiece. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses to make items out of gold to attach the breastpiece to the ephod. The items are gold wire twisted around each other to make gold cords like rope, and gold rings. The first two gold rings are attached to the breastpiece with one on each side, probably at the top of the breastpiece. The craftsmen make the gold cords the same way as the cords on the shoulder straps of the ephod. We don't know if the cords referred to in this passage are the same ones made for the ephod or in addition to them. However, the next part of the passage refers to the gold cords attaching to gold filigree settings on the shoulder pieces of the ephod. It is likely that Yahweh is describing the same cords for both the ephod and the breastpiece. The two ends of the gold cords are attached to the rings at the top of the breastpiece to hold the top of the breastpiece to the ephod. We don't know how the craftsmen attach the cords from the breastpiece to the ephod. The craftsmen might attach both ends of the cord to the gold filigree setting on the ephod. Alternatively, the craftsmen might attach one end of the cord to the breastpiece and one end to the ephod. The cords might pass through the rings or be tied to the rings.

Yahweh instructs Moses to make two more gold rings. The gold rings are attached to the end or edge or corner of the breastpiece. The rings help to hold the breastpiece to the ephod. Yahweh instructs Moses to make two more gold rings. The craftsmen attach the gold rings on the front of the ephod at the lower part of the shoulder straps, possibly where the straps meet the material of the ephod above the cloth belt that goes around the ephod. The craftsmen will attach the gold rings of the ephod to the gold rings of the breastpiece with a blue/purple thread twisted together to make a fine cord. The breastpiece is held against the ephod so that it does not swing out from the body of the high priest. The high priest wears the engraved stones on the front of the breastpiece over his heart when he enters the Holy Place, the centre of the tabernacle, where Yahweh is present. Aaron wears the breastpiece with the names of the sons of Israel and represents the people of Israel as he worships Yahweh.

Yahweh directs Moses to put two items into the pocket of the breastpiece. The items are called Urim and Thummim. The names of the items probably refer to the ideas of light, the Urim, and dark, the Thummim. The high priest will use these items to find out the will of God. We don't know how the high priest used them to determine God's will. Yahweh gives no directions to make the Urim and Thummim which means that they already existed and the Israelites were possibly already using them. In the countries surrounding the Israelites at Mount Sinai, people often used items to help make a decision. Yahweh approved the Urim and Thummim for decision-making. The high priest used the Urim and Thummim in the presence of Yahweh. Yahweh sometimes chose to reveal his will in this way and the Bible shows this in other passages.

When the Urim and Thummim are in the pouch of the breastpiece they will sit in front of Aaron's heart. When Aaron is in the presence of Yahweh, he always has the way in which Yahweh can make decisions for his people. The heart is a symbolic place for the Israelites and central to a person's identity. Yahweh shows that he values his covenant promise to Israel by requiring that the high priest wear the breastpiece with the Urim and Thummim over his heart.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Where do you keep important and significant items on your body? Does where they are on the body link to their purpose?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 28:15–30 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh is speaking to Moses and directing Moses how to make the breastpiece of decision for the high priest.

In the second scene: Yahweh describes how to attach the breastpiece to the High Priest's ephod using gold cord and rings.

In the third scene: Yahweh gives instructions to Moses about how to make the breastpiece represent Israel. Yahweh instructs Moses to keep the Urim and Thummim in the pouch or pocket of the breastpiece.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Skilled workers
- Aaron

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Yahweh starts by giving the purpose of the breastpiece. The breastpiece is a reminder of God's covenant promise with the Israelites. It is also a container for items to determine Yahweh's decisions for the Israelites. The skilled workers will make the breastpiece using the same fabric and thread as the ephod. The breastpiece is a pocket, square in shape and made to contain items. It is completely visible and sits on top of the rest of the clothing of the high priest.

Stop here and do this activity as a group: Get a rectangle of material which is two times longer than the width. Ask a volunteer to fold the fabric over to make the material into a square shape while describing what they are doing. Pay attention to the words used to describe the changes to the shape in the material. Pause this audio here.

Skilled workers decorated the breastpiece with semi-precious stones engraved with the names of the sons of Israel. They engraved each stone with a single name and attached them to the breastpiece using fine gold wire. The skilled workers arranged the stones in four rows with three stones in each row. The stones are all different to each other and all different colours. We don't know exactly which stones the skilled workers used on the breastpiece. If you don't have names for the stones you can simply call them by their colour or another description. There are 12 precious stones. In the first row, there is a bright red stone, a yellow stone and a sparkling green or red stone. In the second row, there is a red, blue, or green stone, a blue stone and a precious stone which is possibly white. In the third row, there is an orange or blue gemstone, a striped stone and a purple stone. In the fourth row, there is a bright stone which is probably blue/green, a stone of many colours and a possibly green or red stone. Aaron carries the names of the sons of Israel over his heart on the engraved stones. This reminds Yahweh and the Israelites of their special relationship when Aaron is in Yahweh's presence in the tabernacle.

Stop here and look at an illustration of the high priest wearing a breastpiece, showing several different possible examples of the breastpiece. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at an illustration of the high priest wearing his special clothing. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a map of the tabernacle. Pause this audio here.

The breastpiece is a separate piece of clothing to the ephod. The skilled workers attached the breastpiece closely to the ephod by gold cord and gold rings at the top, and gold rings and blue/purple twisted thread at the bottom. The cords and rings hold the breastpiece close to the body. The position of the gold rings holds the breastpiece above the cloth belt which the high priest wears over the ephod.

Stop here and do this activity as a group: Make the breastpiece and attachments for the ephod using materials you have available to you. If possible, ask a volunteer to wear it. Notice where it sits on the body of the volunteer. Alternatively, draw a square shape on the ground and arrange 12 stones in the square in the same pattern as Yahweh instructs Moses. Pause this audio here.

The breastpiece is a pouch for the Urim and Thummim. This shows that they are important. The high priest has them over his heart when he goes to meet with Yahweh in the tabernacle.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 28:15–30 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Skilled workers
- Aaron

During the drama, have Aaron and the skilled workers act out the instructions that Yahweh gives to Moses.

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Yahweh tells Moses to make a breastpiece for decision-making.

Pause the drama.

Yahweh tells Moses to make the breastpiece out of the same material and thread as the high priest's ephod and the inner curtains of the tabernacle. It is made into a square pocket to cover Aaron's chest. It is on top of the high priest's clothing. The skilled workers decorated the front of the breastpiece with semi-precious stones. The skilled workers engraved each stone with a name of a son of Israel.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Each name is a reminder of my special relationship with the Israelites," or "These precious stones will help to show how important my relationship is with the Israelites."

Ask the person playing skilled workers, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I will use my skills to honour Yahweh," or "Each stone will remind Yahweh of a group of our people." [!end] Continue the drama.

Yahweh tells Moses how to attach the breastpiece to the high priest's ephod. Yahweh wants the breastpiece to be held close to the ephod and rest on the body above the cloth belt. The skilled workers use gold and high quality coloured thread to attach the breastpiece to the ephod.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Aaron, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I will wear the breastpiece over my chest," or "The gold attachments will shine beautifully." [!end] Continue the drama.

Yahweh tells Moses that the breastpiece is important for carrying the names of the Sons of Israel into his presence.

Pause the drama.

Yahweh tells Moses to put the Urim and Thummim into the pocket of the breastpiece. The breastpiece holds the Urim and Thummim in an important position on the body and carries them into Yahweh's presence in the tabernacle.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I will use the Urim and Thummim to show my people what to do," or "The Urim and Thummim are part of the way I will lead my people," or "The breastpiece shows my people that I will rule over them and make decisions for them." [!end] Continue the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 28:15–30 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Yahweh gives instructions to Moses. **Yahweh** is the personal name for God. In this passage, God is called Yahweh. Be sure to translate Yahweh in the same way as you have in previous passages, and remember that Yahweh is in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh gives instructions to make a **breastpiece** of judgement. This is an item of clothing that covers the front upper body of a person. Use the same word or phrase for breastpiece as you used in previous passages.

The breastpiece of **judgement** is important for seeking a decision from God. Remember that in this passage, judgement refers to making a decision-judging what the best thing to do is in a situation. This judgement is not about judging someone in order to punish them.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **judgement**. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

Make the breastpiece like the **ephod**. Use the same word or phrase for ephod as you used in previous passages. Look up ephod in the Master Glossary for more information.

Make the breastpiece from gold, **blue**, purple, and bright red **yarn** and **fine twisted linen**. Use the same words or phrases for blue, yarn, and fine twisted linen as you used in previous passages.

The breastpiece is a **span** in length and a span in width. The Israelites used spans as one way to measure length. A span is the distance between the tip of the thumb and the tip of the small finger when the fingers are stretched wide. A span is approximately 9 inches or 22 centimetres in modern units.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **span**. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

The skilled workers decorated the breastpiece with twelve semi-precious stones. The stones are all different. We don't know exactly which stones the skilled workers used on the breastpiece. If you don't have names for the stones you can simply call them by their colour or another description. On the first row, the first stone is possibly a **carnelian** and is probably red. Some translations call it a ruby but people cannot engrave a ruby.

Stop here and look at a picture of a red carnelian and a sardius and a ruby as a group.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **carnelian**. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

On the first row, the second stone is possibly a **chrysolite** and is probably yellow/green. It may also be a topaz.

Stop here and look at a picture of yellow/green chrysolite and a yellow topaz as a group.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **chrysolite**. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

On the first row, the third stone sparkles or reflects the light well. Some translations call the stone an **emerald** but it was probably a stone more easy for people to engrave, possibly a beryl. It might be green or red.

Stop here and look at a picture of an emerald and a green beryl as a group.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for the **emerald**. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

On the second row, the first stone is possibly a **turquoise** or a garnet but some translations also call it a sapphire and an emerald. Sapphires and emeralds are too hard for people to engrave. This stone is possibly red, blue, or green.

Stop here and look at a picture of a turquoise, a garnet, a sapphire, and an emerald as a group.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for the **turquoise**. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

On the second row, the second stone is probably a **lapis lazuli** and is probably blue. Some translations call it a sapphire but people cannot engrave a sapphire.

Stop here and look at a picture of a lapis lazuli and a sapphire as a group.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for a **lapis lazuli**. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

On the second row, the third stone is a precious stone often called a diamond and is probably white. Some translations call it a moonstone or an emerald. It is unlikely to be a diamond or an emerald as people cannot engrave diamonds or emeralds.

Stop here and look at a picture of a diamond, a moonstone, and an emerald as a group.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for the **diamond**. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

On the third row, the first stone is a gemstone and is probably an orange **jacinth** or a blue turquoise.

Stop here and look at a picture of orange jacinth or blue turquoise as a group.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **jacinth**. Pause this audio here.

On the third row, the second stone is probably an **agate**, a striped stone.

Stop and look at a picture of agate as a group.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **agate**. Pause this audio here.

On the third row, the third stone is probably a purple **amethyst**.

Stop here and look at a picture of an amethyst as a group.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **amethyst**. Pause this audio here.

On the fourth row, the first stone is bright and sparkles. It might be an **aquamarine** or a beryl.

Stop here and look at a picture of an aquamarine and a beryl as a group.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **aquamarine**. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

On the fourth row, the second stone is probably an **onyx**. This stone could also be a red carnelian. Use the same word or phrase for onyx as you used in previous passages.

Stop here and look at a picture of onyx in various colours and a red carnelian as a group. Pause this audio here.

On the fourth row, the third stone is probably a **jasper** and might be green or red.

Stop here and look at a picture of a green jasper and a red jasper as a group.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **jasper**. Pause this audio here.

The skilled workers **engraved** the stones with the names of the sons of Israel and attached them onto the breastpiece with settings made from **gold filigree**. Use the same word or phrase for engraved and gold filigree as you used in previous passages.

The skilled workers attached the breastpiece to the shoulder straps of the ephod with **gold chains twisted like cords**. Use the same word or phrase for gold chains twisted like cords as you used in previous passages.

The bottom part of the breastpiece is held to the ephod using gold rings and blue **cord**. The cord is thin, often used for clothing and can be tied. Craftsmen make fine cord from animal hair or plant fibres woven or spun together.

Stop here and look at a picture of gold wire twisted together into a cord.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **cord**. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

Aaron carries the names of the sons of Israel on the breastpiece into the Holy Place. The Holy Place is a part of the tabernacle where Yahweh is present. Use the same word or phrase for Holy Place as you used in previous passages.

The **Urim and Thummim** are put in the pocket of the breastpiece. Yahweh sometimes uses the Urim and Thummim to decide questions and guide the Israelites.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **Urim and Thummim**. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there.*

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 28:15–30

Audio Content

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Exodus 28:31–43

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 28:31–43 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 28:31–43 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 28:31–43 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this passage, Yahweh is talking to Moses on Mount Sinai. The rest of the Israelites, the people of Israel, are waiting at the bottom of Mount Sinai. Yahweh continues to give instructions to Moses about how the Israelites should worship him. In the previous passages, Yahweh has instructed Moses on the making of special clothes for the high priest, Aaron. In this passage, Yahweh continues to instruct Moses on the high priest's clothing and gives him information on the making of the robe, tunic, and the turban. Yahweh also instructs Moses on the clothing for Aaron's sons, the other priests.

Yahweh gives instructions to Moses for the skilled workers in the Israelites to make a robe to wear under the ephod. The skilled workers will make the robe out of blue cloth. The blue is a blue/purple colour. The skilled workers will use the same cloth to make the robe as they used to make the loops to hang the curtains of the tabernacle. The workers make the cloth from goat or sheep hair made into thread, dyed blue/purple.

Stop here and look at a picture of a robe as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of blue/purple wool cloth. Pause this audio here.

The skilled workers will make the robe from one piece of cloth with a hole in the middle for the head. The workers will strengthen the edge of the opening for the head with special sewing or a binding so that the cloth will not tear. The workers will strengthen the edge of the robe in the same way that they strengthen the edge of another item of clothing. Some translations do not include the item of clothing that the workers used the same method of strengthening on. We don't know what this other item of clothing was like, but some translations describe it as a coat of mail. A soldier wears a coat of mail for protection and it is a strong, heavy garment. We don't know what the item of clothing was made from, but workers can make protective battle garments from hardened leather or metal or both together. There are no sleeves on the robe. We don't know if the makers sewed the sides together or if they were left open.

Stop here and do this activity together as a group: If possible, find cloth made from plant fibres such as cotton or linen and different cloth which is made from woven animal hair. Discuss the difference in the weight of each kind of cloth. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh instructs Moses to have the skilled workers make special decorations for the bottom edge, or the lower hem, of the robe. The skilled workers will make decorative representations of a pomegranate fruit out of blue, purple, and bright red yarn. We don't know if the workers used all three colours for one decoration or if the workers used one colour in turn for each pomegranate decoration. Pomegranates are a common fruit in the region. Yahweh and other people in the Bible use pomegranates to represent Yahweh's generous providing for his people.

Stop here and look at a picture of a pomegranate fruit as a group. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh wants the skilled workers to decorate the hem of the robe alternately with pomegranates and gold bells. We don't know if the pomegranate decorations hung down from the hem between the bells or if the workers embroidered them onto the hem as a flat picture. As Aaron wears the robe to serve Yahweh, the gold bells will ring with his movement. The bells ringing on the robe remind Aaron to perform his duties correctly for Yahweh and signal to other people that the High Priest is in the Holy of Holies. The bells identify Aaron as

the high priest and enable Aaron to come close to Yahweh safely and not be killed by Yahweh. The bells announce Aaron coming to Yahweh as a sign of respect to Yahweh in the place where Yahweh stays.

Stop here and look at a map of the tabernacle as a group and note the different areas within the tabernacle including the Holy of Holies. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your community enter another person's home or property in a respectful way? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh gives instructions to Moses for the skilled workers to make a special medallion or flat, possibly flower-shaped gold decoration for the turban. The makers probably made this item in a flat shape similar to a flower so that they could engrave it. Yahweh wants the skilled workers to engrave the medallion with words meaning holy or set apart for Yahweh. Engrave means to cut into a surface with something sharp to make a pattern, picture, or words. The skilled workers used fine blue cord to attach the medallion to the front of the turban. This was probably the same blue cord that the workers attached the breastpiece to the ephod with. The medallion on the turban will sit on Aaron's forehead. The forehead is the front part of the head on a person's face, above the eyes and below where a person's hair starts to grow. The medallion is an important symbol for Aaron when he represents the people of Israel during the process of making offerings or sacrifices to Yahweh for the forgiveness of their sins. Aaron stands before Yahweh ensuring that their sacrifices were acceptable to Yahweh. The people of Israel made offerings according to Yahweh's regulations. Aaron carries any guilt or blame that the people of Israel have made when they bring their offering to Yahweh. However, Yahweh makes sure that he will always accept the offerings by requiring that Aaron always wears the special clothing that shows that Aaron is set apart or made holy. The medallion and engraved words on it symbolise the meaning of Aaron's actions for the people as he serves the people of Israel.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What items of clothing or ornaments or jewellery are worn by your leaders to show their special role as leaders? How do these items show this? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh directs Moses to have skilled workers weave a patterned tunic from fine linen cloth. The workers probably wove the pattern into the garment using the same coloured, linen yarns as for the other items of clothing for the high priest. The high priest will wear the patterned tunic under the robe.

Stop here and look at a picture of a tunic as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of cloth woven from different colours as a group. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh wants the skilled workers to make the turban out of the same fine linen cloth. We don't know whether Yahweh is referring to the same patterned cloth as the tunic or just the quality of the cloth. Yahweh wants the workers to make a sash or cloth belt for the high priest. This is the same cloth belt that Yahweh describes in earlier passages. Yahweh directs the skilled workers to embroider or sew on top of the cloth belt with colourful yarn. The use of embroidery to decorate the cloth belt reminds us of Yahweh giving instructions to decorate the inner curtains of the tabernacle.

Stop here and look at a picture of cloth embroidered with different colours as a group. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh gives instructions to Moses about the clothes for Aaron's sons who will be priests working with Aaron. Aaron's sons will have less items of clothing than the high priest. They are to have tunics, cloth belts and head coverings. The head coverings for the priests are different to the turban for the high priest. The priests' head coverings were probably taller and a different shape to the turban but still made from a length of fine linen cloth wound around the head. The priests' clothes give glory, or honour, and beauty to Aaron's sons.

Stop here and look at a picture of the priests in their special clothes as a group. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh directs Moses to give the special clothes to Aaron and his sons. Yahweh also directs Moses to anoint or spread special oil on the heads of Aaron and his sons. This is part of the special ceremony when Moses gives authority to, or ordains, Aaron and his sons and consecrates them or sets them apart as priests. The ceremony had three important parts to it: Moses clothing Aaron and his sons in special clothes, Moses anointing Aaron and his sons and Moses giving Aaron and his sons the authority to be priests. Moses, by these three actions, consecrates, or sets apart, Aaron and Aaron's sons as priests.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What ceremony or ceremonies do you use to give authority to your leaders? What special words or items do you use during this time? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh directs Moses to have skilled workers make clothing or undergarments to cover the priest's genitals. The workers will make the undergarments from linen cloth. This is not the same fine linen used for the outer clothing of the priests and high priest. The Israelites would probably use this linen to make ordinary clothing. The undergarments cover the priests' bodies from their hips to their thighs and pass underneath the body between the legs. You may remember from an earlier passage that Yahweh forbids the exposure of genitals in areas of his presence. Yahweh states that Aaron and his sons must wear the undergarments in the tent of meeting, meaning the tent of the tabernacle, when they serve Yahweh. The priests must also wear the undergarments when using the altar in the Holy Place inside the tabernacle. Yahweh describes this altar in more detail in a later passage. The priests will receive the results of disobeying Yahweh if they do not cover their genitals in Yahweh's presence. If the priests do not wear undergarments in the tabernacle, they will be guilty of disobeying Yahweh and that will result in death. Yahweh tells Moses that the special requirements for priests' clothing are for Aaron, his sons and all of the future priests to come from their family.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What clothing do you use, if any, to cover any part of your body which is considered private? How is this clothing different, if it is, for special ceremonies?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 28:31–43 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 5 scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh gives instructions to Moses to make a robe that the high priest wears under the ephod. Yahweh gives instructions for the colour and decoration of the robe.

In the second scene: Yahweh gives instructions to Moses to make a medallion for the front of the turban for the high priest. Yahweh explains the importance of the medallion when the Israelites make their offerings to Yahweh. Yahweh also gives instructions to make a tunic and turban for the high priest.

In the third scene: Yahweh gives instructions to Moses about the clothing for Aaron's sons who will serve as priests alongside Aaron.

In the fourth scene: Yahweh tells Moses to clothe Aaron and his sons, then anoint them with oil and give them authority to be priests. This will set them apart as priests for Yahweh.

In the fifth scene: Yahweh gives instructions for undergarments that the priests must wear. This is to stop the priests disobeying Yahweh's command to cover genitals in Yahweh's presence. Yahweh states that his rules on clothing apply to all of his priests, not just Aaron and Aaron's sons.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Yahweh
- Aaron
- Aaron's sons
- Skilled workers

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Moses is on Mount Sinai. He is alone with Yahweh and remains with Yahweh for forty days and forty nights. Yahweh gives Moses these instructions at some time during these forty days and nights. The Israelites cannot see Moses on Mount Sinai.

Yahweh gives instructions to Moses about the high priest's robe. The robe is part of the high priest's clothing. However, the workers will only use purple/blue cloth made from animal hair to make the robe. This is different from the ephod and breastpiece which the skilled workers made from fine linen cloth. Yahweh directs the skilled workers to make a hole in the middle of the cloth for the head to pass through.

Stop here and do this activity as a group: Get a rectangle of paper and fold it in half with the short length making the centrefold. Tear a small semi-circle in the centre of the fold to make a round hole in the paper. Imagine a finger or stick is a person and place the rectangle over the finger or a wooden stick, passing the finger or stick up through the hole in the paper. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh knows that the robe will be heavy, put on and taken off regularly and bear the weight of the ephod and the breastpiece. Yahweh directs the workers to strengthen the edge of the neck hole of the robe so the robe will not tear with use. We don't know how the workers strengthened the neck hole or opening. The workers might have used extra sewing or added a special strong piece of fabric around the edge. The original language compares this strong neck hole to some sort of heavy garment like the body armour or coat of mail that a soldier might wear. Some translations of the Bible leave out the comparison to the heavy garment, and just say that it is a strong neck hole, so that it is not confusing. You might like to do the same, particularly if the item of clothing is not present in your culture. The high priest's robe is a long piece of clothing and covers the high priest from neck and shoulder down to below the knees.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people who make clothing in your community stop edges of clothing from tearing? If possible, look at a piece of clothing and discuss the type of work the makers used on the neck hole to stop it from tearing. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh wants the skilled workers to make gold bells for the bottom of the robe. The gold bells will hang from the robe but not reach the floor. The bells hang freely and ring to signal Aaron's presence to Yahweh. The workers make decorative pomegranate shapes which may hang from the hem in between the bells or they embroidered the design onto the hem.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What sound do small bells make? If you have any small bells near you, try ringing them. If you have any bells on clothes, listen to the sound of the bells as you move or wear the clothing. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh directs Moses to have the skilled workers make a gold, flat, possibly flower-shaped decoration or medallion to attach to the front of the high priest's turban. The skilled workers engrave the medallion with words meaning "set apart for Yahweh." The skilled workers make blue cords to attach the medallion to the front of the turban. These cords are the same as the cords the skilled workers made to attach the breastpiece to the ephod in an earlier passage.

Stop here and do this activity as a group: Draw an outline of the high priest's turban on the ground. Draw the medallion onto the outline of the turban and make marks to show where the skilled workers engrave the words. Draw the cords which attach the medallion to the turban. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh gives instructions for the last items of clothing for the high priest. The tunic for the high priest goes under the robe. The tunic is a long piece of clothing which covers the body, arms, and the legs down to the ankles. The skilled workers make the cloth in a pattern using different colour linen thread. You may remember from an earlier passage that the clothing is made from blue/purple, purple, and bright red linen thread. We don't know what pattern the workers wove into the cloth of the tunic. Some translations say checkered which means small squares of different colours are woven into the cloth in a repeating pattern. The workers made a turban from the same linen cloth as the tunic. We don't know if the workers made the turban cloth with a pattern in the same way as the tunic. The workers made a sash or cloth belt to hold the ephod, robe, and tunic into the waist of the high priest. The workers decorated the cloth belt with embroidery. Embroidery is sewing a pattern, words, or picture with thread on top of cloth. The workers probably used the same blue/purple, purple, and bright red linen thread to embroider the cloth belt.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Find some clothes or cloth with various patterns. Talk about the designs and techniques the makers used to make these clothes or cloth. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh wants Aaron's sons, who will be priests serving alongside Aaron, to have special clothing as well. The priests will have more simple clothing than the high priest. The priests only have tunics, the long garment that

covers the body, arms, and legs down to just above the ankles, and sashes or cloth belts to hold the tunic in at the waist. The priests also have head coverings, but the original language uses a word which is different to that for the high priest's turban. The head covering for the priests is probably taller than the turban. The workers used the same fine quality cloth to make the clothing for the priests as well as the high priest. The clothing sets the priests apart for their service to Yahweh.

Yahweh directs Moses to have a special time to set Aaron and his sons apart as priests. Yahweh describes the three parts to the process of Moses making Aaron and his sons priests. The first thing Yahweh tells Moses to do is to clothe Aaron and his sons in the special clothes that the Israelites made for them. The second thing that Yahweh tells Moses to do is to anoint, or smear, special oil on them. The third thing that Yahweh tells Moses to do is to ordain them, or give them authority, as priests. We don't know if Moses did this by a special action or words or by the giving of an item.

Yahweh wants Moses to tell the skilled workers to make linen undergarments for all of the priests. These under clothes will reach from the waist to the thigh and cover the genitals of the priests. The high priest, the priests, and their sons who become priests will all wear these special clothes and be set apart for Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss this as a group: Discuss how you will refer to the undergarments and the covering of the genitalia. Will the words you use be different in different groups or settings? You may wish to consider words such as covering from waist to thigh, or to cover their nakedness, or so they will not expose themselves, or so they will not appear shameful. Pause this audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 28:31–43 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 5 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Yahweh
- Aaron
- Aaron's sons
- Skilled workers

During the drama, have Aaron, Aaron's sons, and the skilled workers act out the instructions that Yahweh gives to Moses.

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Yahweh instructs Moses to have the skilled workers make a blue/purple robe to wear under the ephod. The workers should make a hole for the head in the middle of the cloth and strengthen the neck hole. The skilled workers will make a special decoration for the hem out of gold bells and pomegranates made from coloured yarn. When Aaron wears the robe inside the tabernacle, the bells will ring.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Aaron, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "The pomegranates remind me of Yahweh's many gifts to us and the promise of a fertile land," or "The bells will protect me as I enter Yahweh's presence." [!end] Continue the drama.

Yahweh instructs Moses to have the skilled workers make a flat, flower-shaped gold medallion to attach to the front of the turban. The skilled workers will engrave words meaning set apart for Yahweh on the medallion. Aaron will wear the medallion on the turban. When Aaron wears the medallion, it is a reminder that Aaron bears the guilt for any of the Israelites' sacrifices that they did not make correctly.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "This medallion will make it clear to the Israelites that Aaron belongs to Yahweh," or "Aaron will be responsible for our sacrifices to be pleasing to Yahweh." [!end] Continue the drama.

Yahweh instructs Moses to have the skilled workers make a patterned tunic and turban out of fine linen cloth and an embroidered cloth belt for the high priest. The skilled workers will also make clothes for Aaron's sons.

Pause the drama.

Yahweh tells Moses to clothe Aaron and his sons, then anoint them with oil and give them authority to be priests. This will set them apart as priests for Yahweh.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Aaron, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "This ceremony will change my life forever," or "I will always belong to Yahweh after Moses makes me High Priest."

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "By these three things, Aaron and his sons will become my priests for their whole lives," or "I will have priests set apart to serve me and to serve their people, the Israelites." [!end] Continue the drama.

Yahweh gives instructions for undergarments to be made for all of the priests. This is to stop the priests disobeying Yahweh's command to cover genitals in Yahweh's presence. Yahweh states that his rules on clothing apply to all of his priests, not just Aaron and Aaron's sons.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 28:31–43 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Yahweh gives instructions to Moses. **Yahweh** is the personal name for God. In this passage, God is called Yahweh. Be sure to translate Yahweh in the same way as you have in previous passages, and remember that Yahweh is in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh gives instructions to make a **robe** to wear under the ephod. Use the same word or phrase for a robe as you used in previous passages.

Stop here and look at a picture of a robe as a group. Pause this audio here.

Aaron will wear the robe under the **ephod**. Use the same word or phrase for ephod as you used in previous passages. For more information on an ephod, refer to the Master Glossary.

The skilled workers will make the robe out of **blue** cloth. The blue colour is a blue/purple. Use the same word or phrase for blue as you used in previous passages.

The skilled workers will make the robe out of blue, woven **animal hair cloth**. Use the same word or phrase for animal hair cloth as you used in previous passages.

Stop here and look at a picture of blue/purple wool cloth. Pause this audio here.

The robe has an opening in the centre of the cloth for the head. The skilled workers strengthen the hole for the head with a **woven** binding or strong sewing around the edge of the cloth.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for a **woven binding**. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

The woven binding around the opening is like the neck opening in a heavy battle garment that soldiers might wear for protection. It is sometimes referred to as a coat of mail.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **coat of mail** or if you will decide to leave the comparison to the coat of mail out of the translation. Pause this audio here.*

The skilled workers decorate the **lower edge or hem of the robe**.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for the lower edge or hem of the robe. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same words that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

The workers decorate the lower edge of the robe with **pomegranates** made from coloured yarn.

Stop here and look at a picture of pomegranate fruit. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for pomegranates. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same words that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

The skilled workers will make a **flat, possibly flower-shaped medallion** out of gold to attach to the front of the turban.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for flat, possibly flower-shaped medallion. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

The workers will **engrave** words on the medallion. Use the same word or phrase for engrave as you used in previous passages.

The high priest will attach the medallion to the turban with blue/purple **cord**. Use the same word or phrase for cord as you used in previous passages.

The High Priest will carry the **guilt** from the Israelites' offerings. Guilt is the state of having done something wrong against Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for guilt. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same words that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

The Israelites **consecrate** their sacred offerings to Yahweh. Use the same word or phrase for consecrate as you used in previous passages. For more information on consecrate, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Israelites give **sacred** offerings to Yahweh. Sacred means something that is holy or set apart for God. Use the same word or phrase for sacred as you used in previous passages.

The workers will make a **patterned** or checkered tunic. Use the same word or phrase for patterned as you used in previous passages.

Stop here and look at a picture of cloth woven from different colours as a group. Pause this audio here.

The high priest will wear a **tunic**.

Stop here and look at a picture of a tunic as a group. Use the same word or phrase for tunic as you used in previous passages. For more information on a tunic, refer to the Master Glossary.

The high priest will wear a **turban** and **sash, or cloth belt**. Use the same words or phrases for turban and sash, or cloth belt, as you used in previous passages.

The skilled workers will **embroider** the cloth belt. Use the same word or phrase for embroider as you used in previous passages.

The skilled workers will make tunics, cloth belts and special **head coverings** for the priests.

Stop here and look at a picture of the priests in their special clothes as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for head coverings. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

Moses will clothe and **anoint** Aaron and his sons. Use the same word or phrase for anoint as you used in previous passages. For more information on anoint, refer to the Master Glossary.

The skilled workers will make linen **undergarments** for the High Priest and priests.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for undergarments. Pause this audio here.

Aaron and his sons must wear undergarments in the **tent of meeting**.

Use the same word or phrase for the tent of meeting as you used in previous passages. For more information on the tent of meeting or the tabernacle, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and look at a map of the tabernacle as a group. Pause this audio here.

Aaron and his sons must wear undergarments when they approach the **altar** in the Holy Place. Use the same word or phrase for altar as you used in previous passages. For more information on altar, refer to the Master Glossary.

Aaron and his sons will minister to, or serve, Yahweh in the **Holy Place**.

Use the same word or phrase for Holy Place as you used in previous passages. For more information on Holy Place, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and look at a map of the tabernacle as a group.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 28:31–43

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Exodus 29:1–9

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 29:1–9 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 29:1–9 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Then, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage?
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage?
3. What does this passage tell us about God?
4. What does this passage tell us about people?
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives?
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 29:1–9 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

God has been giving Moses instructions on how to serve God in a way that is good and right. In the previous sections, God described the preparations for the clothes of the priests who will serve him in the tabernacle.

Now God tells Moses how to consecrate or dedicate the priests to serve God. This passage has the first three steps of God's instructions.

The passage begins with God saying, "Now this is what you shall do." This shows that this section is a change from the preparation of clothes for the priests in the last section. God is speaking to Moses, so these are actions that Moses should do. Moses is to consecrate the first priests, which will be Moses's brother Aaron and his four sons. The priests were to be set apart from the people of Israel because God is holy, or set apart. These instructions were not only for these first priests. The high priests would continue to do these steps for the new priests in the future.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a time when people chose someone to do an important and good task, like speaking to someone important on behalf of a group. Listen for words that showed that this person was set apart. Pause this audio here.

First, Moses is to find two kinds of animals: one young bull, which is good for eating, not old and tough, as well as two rams, which are valuable animals and good for breeding. All three animals are to be without blemish or defect, which means they would be good and healthy animals and a good gift.

Stop here and look at the pictures of a bull and a ram as a group. Pause this audio here.

Moses provided the animals for the sacrifice. Aaron and his sons did not buy the job of priest. Instead, God chose Aaron, his sons, and their descendants to serve him as priests.

Then God says that Moses should get three kinds of bread. It is possible Moses made them or that he had someone else make them. God said to make all three breads with fine wheat flour, which means it was smoothly ground and the best flour. The bread should be unleavened or without yeast, which makes the bread rise. The first bread would be round loaves without any oil. The second bread would be thicker, like cakes, with olive oil to make it rich. The third bread would be wafers, meaning it was thin and brushed or covered in olive oil. God does not specify how many loaves of each bread, but there was more than one of each.

Stop here and look at a picture of the three kinds of unleavened bread as a group. Pause this audio here.

God says for Moses to put the bread in a basket, which would be woven from reeds and big enough to hold at least two of each of the breads. God commands Moses to bring the basket of bread and the three animals and present them. This means to place them at the entrance of the tent of meeting, which is another name for the tabernacle. This will be where people should bring offerings to God.

Stop here and look at a picture of the tabernacle layout as a group. Pause this audio here.

Then Moses should bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance of the tent of meeting. Aaron's sons were grown men, not boys, and likely 30 years or older. God tells Moses to wash Aaron and his sons with water. The word for wash most likely means pouring water over the men. Cleanliness and purity were associated with holiness. Washing was often necessary both before and after touching holy things. They washed before they touched the holy things because God told them to wash. Also, it was important to show respect for the priestly clothes and holy things in the tabernacle by being clean when they touched them.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: When would you wash yourself or make yourself clean for a specific purpose? What kinds of activities do you do to become clean? How do you show you are clean? Pause this audio here.

Next, Moses should put the priestly clothes on Aaron and his sons. He will start with Aaron, who will be the high priest or the chief of all the priests. These are the clothes God described in the last section. God does not command Moses to dress the men in the undergarments that were also described in the last passage. So Aaron and his sons were likely wearing undergarments and were not naked during the washing.

First, Moses should put the tunic, or ankle length coat with long sleeves, on Aaron. Then Moses should dress Aaron in the robe of the ephod, which was made of blue cloth and had no sleeves. Next is the ephod, an apron-like skirt with shoulder straps, then the breastpiece, which is a square shaped pouch worn over the chest and fastened to the ephod. God tells Moses to gird, or fasten, the ephod by tying the woven waistband that is attached to the ephod. Next, Moses should put the turban on Aaron, which is a linen cloth wrapped around the head, and attach the medallion, or plate of gold, on top.

Stop here and look at a picture of the high priest's clothes as a group. Pause this audio here.

God tells Moses to take the anointing oil and anoint Aaron. Anointing oil is a special mix of olive oil mixed with precious and fragrant spices. When God commands people to pour some of it on things or people, this act of "anointing" showed that those things or people were now holy. Moses would either pour the oil on Aaron's head before he put the turban on Aaron, or Moses would pour the oil over the turban as well.

God commands Moses to dress Aaron's sons next. They will be the assisting priests and their clothes are not as fancy. Moses dresses them in tunics and caps, which were headdresses tied to the head and could be tall. Then Moses should tie sashes on them as well as on Aaron.

Stop here and look at a picture of the priest's clothes as a group. Pause this audio here.

God then says that the priesthood belongs to Aaron and his sons as a lasting ordinance. This means that the right to serve God as his priests will belong to Aaron's descendants by law forever. The passage ends with "Thus," or "So you shall ordain Aaron and his sons." Ordain means to make someone a priest. This phrase means that both the actions that God has just commanded as well as the ones that he is about to give is how this happens.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 29:1-9 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has two scenes.

In the first scene: God describes what Moses should gather to dedicate the priests: the bread and the animals.

In the second scene: God describes how Moses should begin the ceremony of dedicating the priests. Moses should wash Aaron and his sons then dress them in front of the entrance to the tent of meeting.

The characters in this passage are:

- God
- Moses
- Aaron
- Aaron's four sons
- The people of Israel who are watching

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

This section is in a series of commands that God gives to Moses on Mount Sinai. God begins by telling Moses that, "This is what you are to do." This shows that a new set of commands is beginning. When God is finished giving all of the instructions, Moses should do all of them.

Stop and discuss: How do you signal when a person is giving a set of commands or actions in your language, such as when a parent tells a child how they should do a task? Listen for how they describe that while the action isn't happening now, it should happen in a certain way. Pause the audio here.

In the first scene, God describes what Moses needs to gather for the ceremony. First, God tells Moses to take a young bull and two rams. This means that Moses is to find these three animals, which would be in the camp and would not be hard to find. They could come from Moses's own animals or from the other Israelites as a gift to God. Since these animals would be a gift, God says that they should not have defects, which means the animals should be good, healthy, and have no problems.

God also tells Moses to make three kinds of bread. While this command is given to Moses, he may have had help making the bread. All three breads would be easy to make in the camp. God does not say how many pieces of each bread to make, but there are at least two of each. The bread would have taken some time to make, but not

likely longer than a day, as the bread did not have any yeast and did not need to be set aside to rise. Moses should then put the bread in a basket, which would be easier to carry.

Once Moses has gathered the animals and prepared the bread, he should bring these items and present them, or bring them near to the tent of meeting. The animals and bread would now be nearby and ready for Moses to use as he completes the next steps.

Stop here and look at a picture of the front of the tabernacle, or the tent of meeting, as a group. Pause this audio here.

Since God gives Moses all of the instructions before Moses begins to follow them, Moses would probably also gather the water, the clothes, the anointing oil, and anything else which would be needed in the next steps. The water was maybe from the bronze tub which God commanded that the people should put in the tabernacle courtyard.

In the next scene God describes what should happen in front of the entrance to the tent of meeting. This tent was in a courtyard which separated the tent from the camp by curtains. We know from another passage about this event that Moses also brought together the people of Israel. However, Moses does not mention this fact in this passage. Moses should bring Aaron and his four sons to the entrance and wash them with water. These men likely had undergarments on and were not entirely naked. In the original language, the word for washing is not the same as the one used for scrubbing clothes. While the men would have some dirt on them, they probably did not come to the ceremony covered in a lot of dirt and badly needing a bath. This washing with water symbolized the removal of sin. Moses probably poured water over the exposed parts of Aaron and his sons as a way to wash off the real dirt, and as a way to show that they were clean, or pure, before God.

Once Moses is finished washing the men, Moses is supposed to dress them, starting with Aaron. Aaron is first as he would be the high priest, or the head priest, who would have special duties. Moses should put the clothes on Aaron in a certain order. All of these clothes should already be made according to the instructions God has given. Moses starts with the tunic, then the robe of ephod, the ephod, and the breastplate. Then he should fasten, or tie, the waistband of the ephod around Aaron. Moses may have to wrap the turban around Aaron's head or he could have already wrapped it then placed it on Aaron's head. Next he should attach the emblem, or plate of gold, to the turban.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story about when someone was getting ready for an important event, such as a wedding. What preparations do they make to show this is a special occasion? How do they get dressed and who helps them? Pause the audio here.

Once Moses has fully dressed Aaron, God says to anoint Aaron. To anoint means to pour a small amount of a special oil on someone's head to show that they will be set apart for a purpose. Since Aaron is already wearing the turban, it is possible that the turban was removed while the oil was poured or that Moses poured the oil over the turban.

Aaron's four sons would be waiting nearby while Moses dressed Aaron. Now Moses should bring them forward and put clothes on them. They have fewer and less fancy clothes than Aaron. Moses would put the tunics on all four, then the caps. Moses would finish dressing them by tying a sash around each of the five priests. God finishes these first steps by saying that this priesthood, or right to be priests, belongs to Aaron and his descendants forever. God says that this is how Moses dedicates them, referring to both the actions God has already described and the ones he will describe next.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 29:1-9 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has two scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- God
- Moses
- Aaron
- Aaron's four sons
- The people of Israel who are watching

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

God is giving Moses instructions for dedicating the priests. God says to Moses, "This is what you are to do to dedicate Aaron and his sons, as well as his descendants, so that they may serve me as priests. Find a young bull and two rams. Only pick animals that are good and whole. Next, take the best wheat flour and make three kinds of dough without yeast. Make the first dough without olive oil and bake it into loaves. Make the second dough with olive oil and bake it into cakes. Bake the last dough into thin wafers and then smear olive oil on top of them."

Pause the drama.

"Put the bread in a basket," God says, "and bring the basket of bread and the three animals to the tent of meeting. Then bring Aaron and his four sons to the entrance of the tent of meeting. Wash them by pouring water over them. Put the special clothes, which I have already commanded you to make, onto Aaron. First put the tunic, then the robe of the ephod, then the ephod and the breastplate. Then tie the ephod around Aaron by its well-woven waistband. Next, put the turban on his head and attach the special plate of gold to it."

"Now that you have finished dressing Aaron, pour the special anointing oil on his head. Then bring Aaron's sons forward and put the tunics and caps on them. Finally, tie sashes around all five of the men. The duties of serving me as priests are to be their descendants' duty forever by law. This process is how you dedicate Aaron and his sons."

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing Aaron and his sons, "What are you feeling or thinking?" They might answer things like, "I am honored that God chose us to serve him as priests," or "I know this is an important job, since God is so holy, and I hope I do it right," or "I am excited to have this special task."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 29:1–9 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

God tells Moses, "This is what you are to do to **consecrate** the **priests**." Consecrate means to make or dedicate something or someone as holy, set apart for God. Use the same word or phrase for consecrate as you used in previous passages.

Priests served God and connected the people with God by making sacrifices for them to God, educating the people, and taking care of God's temple. God is the one who chose who would be priests, not rulers or the

people. For more information on priests, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for priests as you used in previous passages.

God tells Moses to find a young bull and two rams without defect. A **defect** is a flaw or problem.

God tells Moses to make bread without yeast. **Yeast** is a food ingredient that causes foods like bread to rise and become puffy. Yeast often symbolized sin, and during certain festivals, the Israelites were not to eat any of it as a reminder. Use the same word or phrase for yeast as you used in previous passages.

After he gathers everything for the ceremony, Moses should bring it all to the entrance of the tent of meeting, or the **tabernacle**. This was a large tent that was moved from place to place where the Jewish ancestors worshiped God. The tent had a courtyard with cloth curtains separating it from the camp. For more information on the tabernacle, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for tabernacle as you used in previous passages.

Stop here and look at a picture of the tabernacle as a group. Pause this audio here.

When Moses is putting clothes on Aaron and his sons, Moses dresses Aaron in a **tunic**, the **robe of the ephod**, the **ephod**, the **breastpiece**, the **turban** with a sacred **emblem**, and a **sash**. Moses dressed Aaron's sons in tunics, **caps**, and sashes. These were garments made specifically as God described in the previous sections.

The **tunic** is an item of clothing worn closest to the skin. It was ankle length with long sleeves. For more information on tunics, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for tunic as you used in previous passages.

The **robe of the ephod** is a sleeveless garment that high priests wore under the ephod. Use the same word or phrase for the robe of the ephod as you used in previous passages.

The **ephod** is an apron-like skirt with shoulder straps. It has a waistband and decorative stones and embroidery. Use the same word or phrase for the ephod as you used in previous passages.

The **breastpiece** is a small, square-shaped pouch worn over the chest and fastened to the ephod. Use the same word or phrase for the breastpiece as you used in previous passages.

The **turban** is a piece of cloth that people wrap around the head as a headdress. The one Moses placed on Aaron is a special one that had a plate of gold, also called an **emblem**, or **medallion**, fastened to it. Use the same word or phrase for the turban, as well as emblem, as you used in previous passages.

The **sashes** were pieces of embroidered cloth which people tied around the torso. Use the same word or phrase for sash as you used in previous passages.

The **caps** are different than Aaron's turban. They were probably tall and tied to the head. Use the same word or phrase for cap as you used in previous passages.

Stop here and look at the pictures of the high priest and the other priests' clothes as a group. Pause this audio here.

God tells Moses to **anoint** Aaron with **anointing oil**. To anoint was to pour or rub a little bit of oil on the head. This showed that God was appointing someone to a special place, service, or function in the purpose of God. For more information on anoint, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for anoint as you used in previous passages.

Anointing oil was a special blend of olive oil and precious and fragrant spices.

God says that this is how Moses is to ordain the priests. **Ordain** means to officially make someone a priest. Use the same word or phrase for ordain as you used in previous passages.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 29:1-9

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3138764 KB)

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Exodus 29:10-18

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart (Exodus 29:10-18)

In this step, hear Exodus 29:10-18 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 29:10-18 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 29:10–18 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

God has been giving Moses instructions on how to serve God in a way that is good and right. God has given instructions to make a place of worship holy, or set apart, in a visible way. For the priests to serve there, they must also be set apart. In the previous section, God told Moses the beginning steps to consecrate, or dedicate, the priests to serve God. This passage has the next steps, which are for two kinds of offerings. These are sacrifices offered in a ritual to God. God is going to tell Moses the whole process before Moses should follow the instructions.

God has already said that Moses should find a young bull and two rams. All three animals should be good and healthy. Now, God tells Moses that he should bring the bull to the front of the tent of meeting. Aaron and his sons should lay their hands on the bull's head. When someone lays their hands on an animal for sacrifice, they show that the animal is a symbol for that person. Here, the bull is a symbol for Aaron and his sons' sin. They cannot get rid of their sin themselves. Something must die to pay for sin so that the people may live and serve God. With this sacrifice, the men are asking God to forgive their sins. This animal will die instead of the men. This sacrifice is part of the just system which God has set up.

Stop here and look at a picture of a bull as a group. Pause this audio here.

While Aaron and his sons have their hands on the bull, Moses is supposed to kill the bull by cutting its throat. This happens "In Yahweh's presence," which means they are all still at the entrance of the tabernacle, or the tent of meeting. God uses his unique name, Yahweh. He is clarifying that this is where he meets with Israel. This is not a place for any other nation's false gods. This spot is where the leaders of Israel and the priests would go to meet with God. Here, God gives them authority and guidance. Because Moses will be making the offering to God, it was important to be in the space where God said he would meet them.

Stop here and look at a picture of the tabernacle, or the tent of meeting, as a group. Pause this audio here.

Next, God tells Moses to take some of the bull's blood and put it on the horns of the altar with his finger. Then Moses should pour the rest of the blood at the base of the altar. The altar is where people would bring offerings, like animal sacrifices, to God. By following God's instructions and putting the blood on the altar, Moses would be making it ready for the offerings. This will be one of the first times the people will use the new altar.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture show that an item is set apart for a special purpose? How do you show something is holy? How do people make it holy? Pause this audio here.

God says that Moses should then take certain portions of the bull's insides to be God's portion. First, Moses should gather the fat off of the entrails, which are the internal organs like the intestines. He should also get the lobe of the liver, which is the best part of the liver. Finally, he is to get both kidneys with the fat on them. Moses should take all of these good pieces and burn them on the altar. This is how Moses symbolically gives them to God.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: These pieces of the animal were considered the best parts of the animal in the Israelites' culture. What parts of the animal are considered the most valuable, or the best to eat, in your culture? Pause this audio here.

Then Moses should burn every part of the rest of the bull outside the camp away from everyone. This includes the meat, the skin, the insides, and even the waste. No person is to enjoy eating this bull. God says clearly that

this bull is a sin offering, to ask that God would forgive the sins of the priests. People's sin keeps them away from God. The meat, the skin, the insides, and the waste of the bull symbolize sin. They should be far away from God's presence and the people. This separation is a reminder that sinful people cannot approach or be near the holy God. The total destruction is a reminder that sin brings death and destruction.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about when a child was disobedient to their parents and was not sorry. How did the parents respond to the child? How did the interactions in the family change? Pause this audio here.

Now Aaron and his sons should put their hands on one of the rams. Again, they are symbolically showing they are like the ram. This time, it means they are completely dedicated to God, like the ram is completely dedicated to God. While their hands are on the ram's head, Moses cuts the throat of the ram to kill it. God says to splash or fling the blood of the ram on all four sides of the altar. This is another step in the preparation of the altar to prepare for offerings.

Stop here and look at a picture of a ram as a group. Pause this audio here.

God says to cut the ram into pieces then wash the organs and the legs. Moses should wash off any blood or dirt, so that the pieces are clean. Then God says to put the organs and the legs on the rest of the ram and burn the entire ram on the altar. This is a burnt offering to Yahweh. When people gave burnt offerings to Yahweh, they were showing that they were dedicated to Yahweh. Yahweh says this is a pleasing aroma, a food offering to Yahweh. This does not mean that Yahweh is actually inhaling the good smell or that it was food for Yahweh if he was hungry. The rising smoke of the burning offering rose to the sky and was symbolically given to Yahweh and no one else. Yahweh says the smell is good like a pleasing aroma. The pleasing smell symbolizes that Yahweh is happy that the people are doing what he asked them to do. Again, God uses his unique name Yahweh, clarifying that it is an offering to him alone.

These offerings took away the guilt of the sin that Aaron and his sons did. This means they are doing something right to make up for the wrong they have done by sinning. The right action is following God's instructions. These men had to complete these steps in order to become priests.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a person who realized they did something bad and caused problems or hurt for someone else. What did the first person do to apologize or fix the problem? What needed to be done so that they could be at peace together?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 29:10–18 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

In the first scene: God gives instructions to Moses on how to sacrifice the bull as a sin offering.

In the second scene: God gives instructions to Moses on how to sacrifice one of the two rams as a burnt offering.

The characters in this passage are:

- God, whose personal name is Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- Aaron's four sons
- The people of Israel who are watching

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

This section is in a series of commands that God gives to Moses on Mount Sinai. Here, God is giving the instructions to dedicate the priests to serve God. There are two different offerings that Moses must make, and God describes the different steps for both. God uses words that show that each of the steps should be done in a specific order. These offerings will happen on the same day as the rest of the instructions. Moses will not begin to do the steps until God has finished telling him all of them.

Stop and discuss the following: Give instructions for a task, like a recipe or building instructions. What would happen if the steps were done out of order? How would it change the result? Pay attention to the words you use to connect the steps and show you what order to do the steps in. Pause the audio here.

The first scene God describes is the sacrifice of the bull. God tells Moses how to properly sacrifice the bull as a sin offering. This sacrifice will happen at the entrance to the tent of meeting, which is also called the tabernacle. Since this is the second part of the dedication ceremony, Moses, Aaron, and Aaron's sons would already be gathered at the tent of meeting. We know from another passage about this event that Moses also brought together the people of Israel. However, Moses does not mention this fact in this passage. The bull and the rams would also be nearby, along with the proper tools to make the sacrifice. God tells Moses that he should bring the bull to the front of the tent of meeting, which probably means bring it close to where Aaron and his sons are standing.

Stop here and look at the picture of the tabernacle, or tent of meeting, as a group. Look at the location of the altar and the entrance of the tent of meeting. Pause the audio here.

Aaron and his sons should lay their hands on the bull. It is not clear whether each priest put one or two hands on the animal, but they probably placed both hands on the animal. While the priests' hands are on the bull, Moses should cut the bull's neck with a knife to kill it. It is possible that people helped Moses to hold the bull still. God says to kill the bull in Yahweh's presence, which means in the spot where he comes to meet the Israelites. This spot is in front of the tent of meeting. God repeats this instruction as the location is important, since this spot is where God gives authority to those he chooses. He uses his unique name, Yahweh, to clarify that it is where he alone meets with the people of Israel.

Stop and discuss the following: Tell a story about a person who began a job in an important position, such as a king or a president. What kind of ceremony happened when they started the position? Where did the ceremony happen? Why did the ceremony happen in that place? Pause the audio here.

The blood would run out of the cut on the bull's neck and Moses should gather it in a container. God says for Moses to put some blood on the horns of the altar using a finger. The altar had four bronze horns on its four corners. The altar was also in front of the entrance to the tent of meeting where they would be standing. Moses should then pour the rest of the bull's blood out at the base, or the bottom, of the altar. The blood would be on the base of the altar and spread onto the ground.

Stop here and look at a picture of the altar as a group. Pause this audio here.

God then tells Moses to take the fat on the bull's internal organs, the lobe of the liver, and the kidneys with their fat and burn them on the altar. Moses will have to cut open the bull to do this, but God does not tell Moses he has to cut it in a specific way. These pieces which Moses gathers are the portion dedicated to God. Moses will show this by burning them on the altar in the tabernacle, which is a holy place. This place is holy because Moses and the people prepared it in the special way God told them to. The rest of the dead bull represents the priests' sin and is not holy. Moses will burn all of it, even its waste, outside of the camp away from the tabernacle, the priests, and the Israelites. It is possible Moses himself takes the dead bull outside the camp, or it is possible someone will help him. Aaron and his sons would not go to burn the bull outside the camp. They will stay in the tabernacle courtyard. God finishes this section by saying that this is a offering that takes away the sins of the priests.

The second scene God describes is the sacrifice of the ram. God says to take one of the two rams that Moses had gathered. This ram will be the burnt offering. Again, Aaron and his sons should place their hands on the ram while Moses cuts the ram's throat with a knife to kill it. Again the blood is gathered, but this time, God says to splash, or throw, the blood on all four sides of the square altar. Now the base, the horns, and the sides of the altar have blood on them, which is another step to prepare the altar for later offerings.

This time, God specifically tells Moses to cut the ram into pieces. Moses should cut off the legs, the head, and cut the rest of the body into multiple pieces. Moses should pull out the internal organs and wash them, along with the legs. This washing would take off any blood or dirt. Moses would probably already have water nearby in a large container as several items in this ceremony would need washing. Moses should then put the internal organs and the legs on top of the rest of the dead ram on the altar and burn it all. The smoke would rise up towards the sky, symbolizing that this portion is God's. God says it is a burnt offering to Yahweh, a pleasing aroma, a food offering to Yahweh. He is clarifying what this offering means. God declares it a good portion by saying it is a "pleasing aroma." God specifically uses his unique name, Yahweh, twice, showing that this offering is to him alone, not to anyone else.

Stop and discuss the following: Tell a story about a time you received a good gift. How did you express that it was good? Listen for phrases that showed the person was pleased by the gift. Pause the audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 29:10–18 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has two scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- God, whose personal name is Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- Aaron's four sons
- The people of Israel who are watching

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

God says to Moses, "These are the next steps to dedicate the priests to serve me. Bring the bull to the front of the tent of meeting. Aaron and his sons should lay their hands on the head of the bull. While their hands are on its head, you should cut its throat with a knife to kill it. Do this in the place where I come to meet with you in front of the tent of meeting. Gather up the blood from the bull and spread some of it on the four horns of the altar with your finger. Then pour the rest of the blood out at the bottom of the altar. Now take the fat on the internal organs, the covering on the liver, and both of the kidneys with their fat and burn them on the altar. But take all of the rest of the dead bull—the skin, the meat, and anything else inside the animal, including the dung—and burn it outside the camp away from everyone. This whole process is a sin offering."

Pause the drama.

Then God says, "Bring one of the rams forward. Aaron and his sons should lay their hands on the ram's head. While their hands are on its head, you should cut its throat with a knife to kill it. Gather up the blood from the

ram and splash it on all four sides of the altar. Then cut the ram into pieces. Take the internal organs and the legs and wash them by pouring water over them. Next, put the internal organs and legs on the head and the rest of the sheep and burn the entire ram on the altar. This is a burnt offering to Yahweh. The smoke will rise to me like a pleasing aroma from food and I will see that it is good."

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing Aaron and his sons, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like, "I am sad that our sin means something must die," or "I understand that being a priest will be an important job, since we have to prepare so carefully."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 29:10-18 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

God tells Moses to bring the bull to the front of the tent of meeting, or the **tabernacle**. This was a large tent that was moved from place to place where the Jewish ancestors worshiped God. For more information on the tabernacle, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for tabernacle as you used in previous passages.

Stop here and look at a picture of the tabernacle as a group. Pause this audio here.

God tells Moses to **slaughter** the bull. This means to kill the bull, which Moses would do by cutting the bull's throat.

God specifically says that these offerings are done in **Yahweh's** presence and they are for Yahweh. Yahweh is God's proper name. Yahweh is a unique name-no other religion in the region around Israel used a name like this for their god. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for Yahweh as you used in previous passages.

God tells Moses to put some of the bull's **blood** on the horns of the **altar**. An altar is a place where people present gifts like animals and burn them as an offering to God. This altar was the special one God commanded the people make for the tabernacle. It was a square box shape made out of wood covered with bronze and had four horns on the corners. For more information on the altar, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for altar as you used in previous passages.

People used blood to consecrate something, or make it holy. For more information on blood, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses should pull out certain parts of the bull's organs to burn. The first is the fat on the **entrails**, which means the internal organs. God also tells him to get the **lobe** of the liver, which is an extra part of the liver which certain animals have and humans do not. This is the best part of the animal's liver, and you may simply say "the best part of the liver" in your translation. These, along with the two kidneys, would be good portions of the animal.

The bull is a **sin offering**. This is a certain kind of sacrifice, or offering, that God instructed the people to do when they are asking forgiveness for their sins. Some translations simply say, "It is an offering to take away the sins of the priests." Instead of the people dying as punishment for their sins, the bull would die. Some of the bull would burn on the altar and the rest of the bull will burn in a fire outside the camp. **Sin** refers to an act of disobedience to God. For more information on sin, refer to the Master Glossary.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **sin offering**. Look up **sin offering** in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

God says that the ram will be a **burnt offering**. Burnt offerings were when people sacrificed animals to God by burning them completely on the altar. These were offerings that showed dedication to God and here showed the commitment of the priests. God also calls it a food offering and says that it is a pleasing **aroma**. Aroma means a good smell. This does not mean that this offering is food for God to eat. The smoke of the burning sacrifice rose to the sky and symbolically showed that the people were giving the gift to God and no one else.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for burnt offering. Look up burnt offering in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 29:10-18

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3425884 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Exodus 29:19–28

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart (Exodus 29:19–28)

In this step, hear Exodus 29:19–28 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 29:19–28 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 29:19–28 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

God has been giving Moses instructions on how to serve God in a way that is good and right. God has given Moses instructions to make a place of worship holy, or set apart, in a visible way. For the priests to serve there, they must also be set apart. In the previous sections, God told Moses the first steps to dedicate the priests to serve God. Now God is describing the next steps in the process. God will tell Moses the whole process before Moses should follow the instructions.

God tells Moses to take the second ram. The ram is already near the entrance to the tabernacle, or tent of meeting, where Moses, Aaron, and his sons are standing. Like they did for the first offerings, Aaron and his sons should put their hands on this second ram. When someone lays their hands on an animal for sacrifice, they show that the animal is a symbol for that person. This ram will be a wave offering, or an elevation offering. This offering is a gift that people would dedicate to God. Like they dedicate the ram, Moses will dedicate the priests to serve God.

Stop here and look at a picture of a ram as a group. Pause this audio here.

Then, while the priests' hands are on the ram, Moses should cut the throat of the ram with a knife to kill it. God says that Moses should take a small amount of the ram's blood and put it on Aaron in three places. Moses should put it on Aaron's right ear lobe, the thumb on his right hand, and the big toe on his right foot. Then Moses is to do the same to each of Aaron's sons. God tells people to use blood to show that something is holy. Moses puts blood on parts of the body which the priests will use to serve God. Moses puts blood on the ears because that is where the priests hear God's words. Moses puts it on the priests' thumbs because they use their hands to make offerings to make peace between the people and God. Moses puts it on the priests' feet because their walk, or the way they live, must be a good example to the people. Moses puts the blood on the top, middle, and bottom of the body, so that the entire body is symbolically covered in blood.

Stop here and discuss the following as a group: Tell a story about when a person takes a job where they should be a good leader or role model, like a teacher. What did they do to prepare for the job? How do they act differently with this job? What do they do that shows that they are a good example? Pause this audio here.

Next, God says to throw the rest of the ram's blood on the sides of the altar. Then Moses should use his finger to wipe a little of the blood off of the altar and mix it with the anointing oil. Moses should sprinkle this mixture first on Aaron and his clothes, then on Aaron's sons and their clothes. God says that now Aaron and his clothes, and Aaron's sons and their clothes are consecrated, or dedicated as holy. This means that Moses has prepared

the priests and their clothes to serve God. God often told people to use blood to consecrate things, which means to set things apart for special service to Yahweh. Blood from sacrifices symbolizes forgiveness while the oil symbolizes cleanliness. Moses consecrates the entire priest by putting oil and blood on the priests and their clothes.

Stop here and discuss the following as a group: Talk about what it means to touch blood in your culture. List some times when it would be alright to touch blood, like when helping someone who is bleeding. List some times when it would be not good to touch blood, like touching the blood of a very sick animal. List times when blood is important in ceremonies or life events. Pause the audio here.

Now God tells Moses to gather certain parts of the ram. Moses should cut all the fat from the ram. He should cut off the heavy broad tail, which is a tasty part of the ram. He should also gather the fat on the internal organs, the lobe of the liver, both kidneys with their fat, and the right thigh. These are all good pieces of meat in the Israelite culture at this time. Moses will give these pieces to God. God pauses his instructions and says that this is the ram for the ordination. Some of these steps are similar to another kind of offering that the Israelite people should give to God. God is clarifying that this offering is different. This offering is how Moses will ordain, or officially prepare, the priests.

Then Moses should take three pieces of bread from the basket which Moses has already prepared. This is the same basket of bread from the previous passages. He will get one loaf, one cake, and one wafer.

Stop here and look at a picture of the three kinds of bread as a group. Pause this audio here.

Moses should put these breads and the pieces of meat into the hands of Aaron and his sons. Aaron and his sons should wave them before Yahweh as a wave offering. This means to raise and lower them several times to show that these pieces are dedicated to Yahweh. God tells them to dedicate these pieces to Yahweh, using his unique name to clarify that it is an offering to him alone.

God says that Moses should then put the bread and the meat he gathered on the altar. Moses should burn them along with the burnt offering from the last steps. God says this is a pleasing aroma, a food offering to Yahweh. This does not mean that God is actually inhaling the good smell or that it was food for God if he was hungry. The smoke of the burning offering rises to the sky and symbolically goes to God and no one else. God says the smell is good like a pleasing aroma. The pleasing smell symbolizes that God is happy that the people are doing what he asked them to do. Again, God uses his unique name, Yahweh, clarifying that this is an offering for him alone.

Next Moses should cut off the breast of the ram and wave, or raise and lower it, before Yahweh. God says that "it will be your share." This could mean that the meat is for whoever consecrates the priests. That would be Moses here and other priests in the future. Or it will belong to the priests, as God says it will in future ceremonies.

God says that the priests should always consecrate two parts of the ordination ram. These two pieces will always belong to Aaron and his sons: the breast that the priests wave and the thigh that the priests dedicate to Yahweh. In the ordination ceremony, the priest raises and lowers the breast several times, and the thigh he sets aside, or dedicates, to God. God gives these dedicated pieces to the priests. These pieces will belong to Aaron, his four sons, and all the future priests to eat in a certain manner. It is possible in this ceremony that Moses removed the right thigh from the meat portion and did not burn it on the altar. If so, he would set the right thigh aside right after Aaron and his sons waved it before Yahweh. Or this first ceremony was different and the priests would not receive the thigh in this ceremony, but in future ceremonies.

God says that these pieces will also belong to the priests whenever an Israelite brings a fellowship offering. The Israelites will bring several different types of offerings to God. They will be bringing fellowship, or peace, offerings to God to show that they want to fellowship with God and celebrate their relationship with him. In these peace offerings, the people dedicate their offering to God and God gives the breast and the thigh from the offering to the priests who are serving him.

Stop here and discuss the following as a group: How does your culture support people who have jobs, or roles, that serve the community, such as a mother or a teacher? What kind of gifts or help do you give them? Why do you give these specific things to these people?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 29:19–28 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has two scenes.

In the first scene: God tells Moses how to use the second ram's blood to finish consecrating Aaron, his sons, and their clothes.

In the second scene: God tells Moses how to present the second ram and the bread as a wave offering.

The characters in this passage are:

- God, whose personal name is Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- Aaron's four sons
- And the people of Israel who are watching

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

This section is in a series of commands that God gives to Moses on Mount Sinai. Here, God is giving the instructions to dedicate the priests to serve God. In the previous passage, God has told Moses what to do with the first ram. Now God is describing how Moses should sacrifice the second ram. God uses words that show that each of the steps should be done in a specific order. Moses should do them on the same day as the rest of the instructions. Moses will not begin to do these steps until God has finished telling him all of them.

Stop here and discuss the following as a group: Give a set of instructions for something that only has a few steps, like brushing teeth. Then give a set of instructions for something that has a lot of steps, like a recipe. Listen for words that show specific order and for phrases that show how each step helps the next step. Pay attention to phrases that remind the listener of earlier steps. Pause the audio here.

Since this is the third part of the dedication ceremony, Moses, Aaron, and Aaron's sons would already be at the tabernacle, or the tent of meeting. We know from another passage about this event that Moses also brought together the people of Israel. However, Moses does not mention this fact in this passage. The second ram will also be there, along with the bread, and the proper tools to make the sacrifice.

Stop here and look at a picture of the tabernacle as a group. Pause this audio here.

God tells Moses that Aaron and his sons should place their hands on the ram while Moses cuts the ram's throat with a knife to kill it. Like before, Moses would collect the blood into a container. Other people may have helped Moses hold the animal and gather the blood. Moses should take a little of the blood, probably with his finger, and put it on Aaron's right earlobe, the thumb on his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot. Then he should do the same for Aaron's sons. Moses is not making the priests very bloody, but just putting a small amount, so that the blood is on the top, middle, and bottom of the priest.

Then Moses should take the rest of the blood and splash it on the sides of the altar, like he did with the first ram's blood. Using his finger, Moses should wipe off a little bit of blood from the side of the altar and mix it with the anointing oil. Moses would only get a few drops of blood. The mixture will have much more oil than blood. Moses should then sprinkle the oil and blood mixture over Aaron and his clothes first, then over Aaron's sons and their clothes. The priests' clothes would not be wet or soaked. Moses would just put some drops on the priests. God says that now Aaron, his sons, and their clothes are consecrated.

Stop here and discuss the following as a group: Talk about ceremonies in your culture where people must sprinkle or pour a liquid over someone or something. Which liquids do you use? Why do people use those liquids? What does it mean when someone pours the liquid? What is the importance of the amount of liquid? If possible, get a glass of

water and pour it out in various amounts. Pour just a few drops, or dip your finger in the water to sprinkle the water. Quickly pour the rest against the side of something, like an outdoor wall, to splash it. Discuss the different words you would use for those actions. Pause the audio here.

The priests' dedication ceremony is not over yet. In the second scene, God describes the next steps for the second ram and the bread. Moses should cut open the ram to take out all the fat-including the fat on the internal organs-the fat tail, the lobe on the liver, both kidneys with the fat on them, and the right thigh. The right thigh is the upper part of the right hind leg, between the upper joint and the hip. These are all good pieces of the animal. Moses should also gather up three pieces of bread. Moses had already prepared the bread and brought it nearby in a basket. Moses should take one loaf, one cake, and one wafer from the basket. None of the bread has yeast, so they are all mostly flat breads in slightly different shapes. These are the breads which God told Moses to make and put in a basket in a previous passage.

Stop here and discuss the following as a group: Talk about the best or most expensive kinds of food in your culture, especially meats. What makes them the best? How difficult are these foods for people to make or get? Who usually has these good foods? Pause the audio here.

Moses should put these breads and the meat he had gathered onto the hands of Aaron and his sons. Aaron and his sons were probably standing with their hands stretched out in front of them, palms facing up. God tells Moses to make the priests wave the food before Yahweh as a wave offering. The priests would raise and lower the items, maybe several times. This shows that the priests have dedicated these pieces to Yahweh as a special gift.

Moses should take the meat and bread from the priests' hands and put the items on the altar. If Moses is not burning the thigh at this time, he may have removed it from the pile of meat. God says that Moses should burn the meat and bread along with the ram burnt offering. This can mean that Moses should burn these items like the burnt offering. Or it means that the first ram is still burning and that Moses should put the pieces of meat from the second ram and the bread on top. God says again that this is a pleasing aroma to Yahweh, a food offering to Yahweh.

Stop here and look at a picture of the altar as a group. Pause this audio here.

Then Moses should take the breast of the second ram and wave it before Yahweh. This portion will belong either to Moses or the priests. God does not say that anyone should eat it immediately, so Moses probably sets the meat aside for later.

God says whenever the Israelites have ordination ceremonies that they should always consecrate the breast and the thigh. These pieces will belong to Aaron and his sons. To consecrate the pieces, priests should wave the breast before God and set aside, or dedicate, the thigh to God. Then the priests can have these pieces. The priests should do the same thing with the breast and thigh when the Israelites bring fellowship offerings. These offerings show that the Israelites want to fellowship with God and celebrate their relationship with him. The people will dedicate an animal to Yahweh and God gives the breast and the thigh to the priests.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 29:19–28 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has two scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- God, whose personal name is Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- Aaron's four sons
- The people of Israel who are watching

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

God is describing the next steps to prepare the priests to serve God. God says to Moses, "This is what you should do with the second ram. Aaron and his sons should lay their hands on the head of the ram. While their hands are on its head, you should cut its throat with a knife to kill it. Gather the blood from the ram. Put a little bit of the blood on Aaron's right ear lobe, his right thumb, and his big toe on his right foot. Do the same for each of his sons. Splash the rest of the blood on the sides of the altar. Now take a little of the blood from the altar and mix it with the anointing oil. Sprinkle this mixture over Aaron and his clothes. Do the same for his sons and their clothes. In this way you will dedicate Aaron, his sons, and their clothes to me."

Pause the drama.

God says, "Cut away all the fat from the ram, including the fat from the internal organs. Also cut away the fatty tail, the covering on the liver, both kidneys with their fat, and the right thigh. Gather these pieces up. These are all from the ram that you must use when you dedicate the priests to serve me. Also take one piece of each kind of bread from the basket that you placed at the entrance to the tabernacle. You will get one loaf, one cake, and one wafer. Put the three pieces of bread and the meat you gathered on the hands of Aaron and his sons. Tell them to lift it all up to show that they are dedicating it to me, Yahweh. Then take the bread and the meat from the priests' hands and put it on the altar. Burn it on the already burning offering on the altar. The smoke will rise to me like a pleasing aroma from food and I will see that it is good."

Pause the drama.

"Now cut off the second ram's breast," God says, "and you wave it before me. This will be your share of the animal."

Pause the drama.

"When a priest is ordained in the future," God says, "you shall make holy the two parts of the ram that are offered to me. These are the breast that the priest raises up and the thigh that he sets aside, or dedicates, to me. In the future, when any Israelite offers the breast and the thigh of a ram to me, either to ordain a priest or to restore fellowship with other people, the meat is dedicated to me and the priests are to eat it. This law will never change."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 29:19–28 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

God tells Moses to **slaughter** the ram. This means to kill the ram, which Moses would do by cutting the ram's throat. Use the same word or phrase for slaughter as you used in previous passages.

After Moses kills the ram, God says to put some of the **blood** on Aaron's right ear **lobe**. A lobe is a round flattish part of something. Aaron's ear lobe is the bottom part of his ear. Later, God asks Moses to gather the lobe of the liver. This is the round fatty part of the liver, which is the best part of the liver. You may simply say "the best part of the liver" in your translation.

People used blood to consecrate something, or make it holy. For more information on blood, refer to the Master Glossary.

God tells Moses to put some of the ram's blood on the sides of the **altar**. An altar is a place where people present gifts like animals and burn them as an offering to God. For more information on the altar, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for altar as you used in previous passages.

Stop here and look at a picture of the altar again as a group. Pause this audio here.

God tells Moses to mix some blood with the **anointing oil**. Anointing oil is a special blend of olive oil and precious and fragrant spices. Use the same word or phrase for anointing oil as you used in previous passages.

God says that by sprinkling the oil and blood mixture over the priests, Moses will **consecrate** the priests and their clothes. Consecrate means to make or dedicate something or someone as holy and set apart for God. For more information on consecrate, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for consecrate as you used in previous passages.

As God is giving the next steps, God clarifies that this ram is for the **ordination**. Ordination is the process of **ordaining**, which means to officially make someone a priest. Use the same word or phrase for ordination as you used in previous passages.

God tells Moses to gather one of each kind of **bread**. God has already told Moses that he should make three kinds of bread without yeast, so they would be flatbreads. Moses made round loaves without any oil, cakes with olive oil to make them rich, and thin wafers brushed, or covered, in olive oil. Use the same word or phrase for each kind of bread as you used in previous passages.

Moses should present certain pieces of the ram and the bread as a **wave offering** to **Yahweh**. A wave offering, or an elevation offering, is a gift that people would raise and lower to show that it was dedicated to God.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for wave offering. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

God specifically uses his unique name, **Yahweh**, several times. Yahweh is God's proper name. Yahweh is a unique name-no other religion in the land around Israel used a name like this for their god. God says that the bread is in Yahweh's presence, which means it is at the front of the tent of meeting. God also says that Moses and the people should make the wave offerings to Yahweh specifically, and that these offerings are pleasing to Yahweh. The priests' portions come from the gifts to Yahweh. God is emphasizing that all these actions are done for God specifically. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for Yahweh as you used in previous passages.

God says to burn the wave offering like the **burnt offering**. People made burnt offerings by sacrificing animals to God and burning them completely on the altar. For more information on burnt offerings, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for burnt offering as you used in previous passages.

God says that the wave offering is also a food offering and says that it is a pleasing **aroma**. Aroma means a good smell. This does not mean that this offering is food for God to eat. The smoke of the burning sacrifice rose to the sky and symbolically showed that the people were giving the gift to God and no one else.

God says that the breast and the thigh from a **fellowship offering** will always belong to the priests. A fellowship offering, also called a peace offering, is an offering that people brought to God to restore peace with someone else. For more information on offerings, fellowship, or peace, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for fellowship offering as you used in previous passages.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 29:19–28

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3727726 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Exodus 29:29–37

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart (Exodus 29:29–37)

In this step, hear Exodus 29:29–37 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 29:29–37 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God or Jesus? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 29:29–37 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

God has been giving Moses instructions on how to serve God in a way that is good and right. God has given Moses instructions to make a place of worship holy, or set apart, in a visible way. For the priests to serve there, they must also be set apart. In the previous sections, God told Moses the first steps to dedicate the priests to serve God. Now God is describing the next steps in the process as well as what to do in the future. God will tell Moses the whole process before Moses should follow the instructions.

God says that Aaron's sacred, or holy, clothes will belong to his descendants. A person's descendants are his children, grandchildren, and all future generations from the same family line. The priests will be male, so this is for Aaron's male descendants. God has already given instructions on how to make these clothes and how to make the clothes holy, or set apart. When Aaron's son becomes high priest after Aaron's death, Aaron's son will wear Aaron's clothes. Then Aaron's grandson will do the same. Only one descendant at a time will be high priest and wear these clothes. They will wear the clothes during the ordination ceremony. Another priest will anoint Aaron's descendant by pouring oil on him and ordain him by following the instructions God has given.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What items do you pass down from person to person in your society, such as a crown for a ruler or jewelry from mother to daughter? Why do you give them to the next person? Why is it important in your culture to continue to use the same items? Pause this audio here.

God clarifies that this is the son or the descendant who will minister, or serve God, by performing his priestly duties in the Holy Place. The holy place of the tabernacle in this passage probably refers to any place where the priests might be performing their duties to God. Sometimes people call the tabernacle the "tent of meeting." To be ready to serve God in the holy place, the descendant must be holy. He becomes holy by following God's instructions and wearing Aaron's holy clothes for all seven days of the ordination ceremony.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about times when you must wear special clothes to be in a location or an event. What kind of clothes do you wear? Why is it important that you wear certain clothes? What would happen if you wore the wrong clothes? Pause the audio here.

Next, God returns to the instructions for the ordination ceremony. God says to take the ram for the ordination, which Moses has already cut up and removed some pieces from. Moses should cook the meat by boiling it, probably in a large pot, in a sacred, or holy, place. God does not say which pieces of meat to cook. Moses could be cooking the right thigh, which is the piece that normally belongs to the priests from fellowship offerings. Or, if Moses has already burned the right thigh, it could be the breast or another piece of meat. Moses has already

dedicated the ram to God, who has given it to the priests to eat. Because the meat is holy, Moses should cook it in a holy place. This probably was in the tabernacle courtyard which is the open area around the tabernacle tent. It was separated from the Israelite camp by a cloth wall. This place was holy because the people prepared it in the special way that God told them.

Stop here and look at a picture of the tabernacle as a group. Pause this audio here.

God says that Aaron and his sons should eat this meat and the bread from the basket at the entrance to the tent of meeting. This is also a holy place, because it is where God comes to meet with the people of Israel. God has already told Moses to make bread and put it in a basket in previous passages. God says clearly that Aaron and his sons should eat food from the offerings which Moses made. Moses has burned some of the bread and the meat on an altar to symbolically give it to Yahweh. Moses gave these offerings for atonement, or to ask Yahweh to forgive the priests' sin, as well as to ordain and consecrate the priests. The idea of atonement is that God "covers over" the things that separate us from himself. God reconciles, or restores, our relationship with him through the act of atonement.

Stop here and look at a picture of the bread in the basket as a group. Pause this audio here.

No one else may eat this food, because the food is holy, or set apart. Only the priests may eat it because they are holy. God says that if the priests do not eat all of the food by the morning, the priests should burn the rest of the food. Because this food is holy, the priests cannot treat it like non-holy food. They cannot keep the food to use as a snack or leftovers when they want to use it. They must eat it in the place and time God has chosen.

Now God commands that Moses should do everything God has instructed for a full week. On each day, Moses will follow all of the instructions God has given in the last few passages about how to consecrate and ordain the priests. Moses will do the whole process seven times.

While Moses is ordaining the priests, he will also be preparing the altar. On each day of this week, Moses should sacrifice a bull. This could be the same bull that Moses would sacrifice to consecrate the priests. Or this is a second bull to purify the altar. This bull should be healthy and a good gift. This sacrifice will be a sin offering, which is an offering that people give to God to ask him to remove their sins. And this sin offering will be for atonement, which is the process of repairing a relationship broken by sin. Moses will either sacrifice another bull, or the bull for the priests' ordination will also be a sacrifice that makes atonement for the altar, to purify the altar. All things that priests use in the tabernacle must be pure, or fit for service to God. The altar has not sinned, but perhaps it has become unclean, or unfit to serve God, because something unclean has touched it. This atonement, or purification sacrifice, will purify the altar so that priests can use it for God.

Stop here and look at a picture of the altar as a group. Pause this audio here.

God says that Moses should also anoint the altar to consecrate it, or make it holy. Moses should pour some of the anointing oil over the altar. On each of the seven days, Moses should sacrifice a bull and pour the oil on the altar. Then, at the end of the seven days, the altar will be completely holy. God says whatever touches it will be holy. This can mean that the priests should make sure that whatever will touch the altar should already be holy. Or it means that the altar is so holy that the altar will make whatever touches it to be holy.

Stop and discuss this question as a group: Talk about items that are prepared and set aside for a very special purpose, such as clean doctor's tools or wedding clothes. How do you prepare these items for the special task? Once they are ready, how do you treat them or keep them ready?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 29:29–37 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has three scenes.

In the first scene: God explains how Aaron's holy clothes will be passed down to his descendants.

In the second scene: God gives instructions for the meal which the priests will eat.

In the third scene: God gives instructions for the seven day process of ordaining the priests and purifying the altar.

The characters in this passage are:

- God, whose personal name is Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- Aaron's four sons
- And the people of Israel who are watching

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

This section in Exodus is in a series of commands that God gives to Moses on Mount Sinai. Here, God is giving instructions to dedicate the priests to serve God. God has already given instructions on how to offer the animals to Yahweh. Now God will describe events that will happen at three different times. God explains what the priests should do with Aaron's clothes in the future. Then God describes what Moses should do next in the ceremony. Finally, God says what steps Moses should do each day for seven days. God uses words that show that each of the steps should be done in specific orders and at different times. Moses will not begin to do these steps until God has finished telling him all of them.

In the first scene, God tells Moses what the priests should do to Aaron's holy clothes in the future. These are the high priest's clothes that Aaron is currently wearing for the ceremony. Aaron will wear them when he is serving God in the Holy Place. God says they will also belong to Aaron's descendants, which are Aaron's sons and their sons and future sons. When Aaron dies, one of his sons will wear the clothes during the seven day ceremony when another priest ordains and anoints this son to make him the next high priest. This process will repeat each time the high priest dies. Only one descendant at a time will be the high priest and wear Aaron's clothes. The descendant will minister, or serve God, in the Holy Place. Here, the holy place refers to any part of the tabernacle where the priest serves. This descendant will wear Aaron's clothes for all seven days of the ordination ceremony. The ceremony includes washing and re-dressing, but it will always be with the same clothes.

Stop here and look at a picture of the high priest's clothes as a group. Pause this audio here.

In the second scene, God returns to the instructions for the first ceremony to ordain the priests. Moses will cook meat from the second ram for Aaron and his sons to eat. Moses should do these steps inside the tabernacle courtyard. Moses, Aaron, and Aaron's sons would still be at the entrance to the tabernacle, or the tent of meeting, from the last steps of the ordination ceremony. We know from another passage about this event that Moses also brought together the people of Israel. However, Moses does not mention this fact in this passage. The meat from the second ram will also be there, along with the bread, and the proper tools to cook and eat the meat.

Stop here and look at a picture of the tabernacle again as a group. Pause this audio here.

God tells Moses to take the meat from the ram of the ordination. God does not say which piece of meat to cook. It could be the thigh, the breast, or another piece of meat. However, it is definitely meat from the ram of ordination. Moses should cook the meat in a holy place, which probably means the tabernacle courtyard. Moses probably cooked the meat by boiling it in a large pot of water. He may have also browned it on the altar as well.

At the entrance to the tent of meeting, Aaron and his sons should eat the cooked meat and the bread that is left in the basket. This is the bread without yeast which God told Moses to make and put in a basket. Moses has already burned some of the bread on the altar. There is still at least one loaf of each of the three kinds of bread left in the basket.

God very clearly states several times that just Aaron and his sons should eat this food. This meat is from the ram for their ordination. Moses used some of the bread as an offering to Yahweh. This food is holy and the priests are now holy too. Any other people are not holy and should not eat the holy meat and bread. God also

says that if any of this food is left by morning, that is the next sunrise, that Moses should burn it. No one should eat it after daybreak. Moses or the priests would probably burn the leftover food in the tabernacle courtyard. The food is holy, so it stays in the Holy Place. Again, God says that the food is holy. It is important that the people treat holy things the way God says to, because these holy things belong to him. Because it is holy, or set apart for God, God makes the decision of who can eat it and when.

Stop and discuss the following: Talk about kinds of food in your culture that are only eaten at certain times or by certain people, such as wedding foods or foods for a special event. Why are these foods only eaten at these times? What does it mean when you eat these foods at this time? Who all can eat these foods? Pause the audio here.

In the third scene, God gives more instructions about the whole seven day process. God commands Moses to do everything God has said every day for seven days to ordain the priests. Moses would do all of the steps of the ordination ceremony on each of the seven days. So on each day, Moses will gather the supplies, dress and anoint the priests, make each of the different offerings exactly as God told him to. On each day, the priests will eat the newly prepared food.

Stop and discuss the following: Give instructions for a task that should happen every day, like brushing teeth or getting dressed. Listen for words that show that each step must be done every day. Pause the audio here.

While Moses is ordaining the priests, God says Moses should also purify the altar. Moses will do this by offering a bull every day. This could be the same bull as the one for the ordination ceremony, or a second bull. This is a sin offering for the priests to atone for their sins, or cover over and forgive their sins. It is also an atonement for the altar, to cover over any impurities that the altar might have, and make it fit for service to God. Moses should also anoint the altar by pouring the anointing oil on it each day to make it holy. God says that at the end of those seven days, the altar will be the most holy, or very holy. God says that whatever touches the holy altar will also be holy.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 29:29–37 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- God, whose personal name is Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- Aaron's four sons
- The people of Israel who are watching

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

God says to Moses, "Aaron's holy clothes will belong to each descendant who becomes high priest after Aaron's death. This descendant, who will serve me in the Holy Place inside the tent of meeting, will wear these clothes for the entire seven day ordination ceremony."

Pause the drama.

"Take the meat from the ram for the ordination," God continues, "and cook the meat in the tabernacle courtyard, which is a holy place. At the entrance to the tent of meeting, Aaron and his sons should eat this cooked meat and the bread that is in the basket. The meat and bread come from the offerings to ordain the priests. Only the priests may eat this food. They have the right to eat it because the food is holy and dedicated to me. If any of the food is left until the next daybreak, you must burn the food. No one may eat the leftover food, because it is holy."

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing Aaron and his sons, "What are you feeling or thinking?" They might answer things like, "I feel honored that we are eating this meal in God's presence, or with God," or "I see from these actions that I can trust God to keep his covenant." [!end] Continue the drama.

Then God says, "Repeat all the steps in this ordination ceremony for Aaron and his sons every day for seven days in a row, just as I have instructed you. Sacrifice a bull to me each day to make things right and purify the altar. You must also pour the special anointing oil on the altar to make it holy. Do this for seven days and then the altar will be so holy that anything or anyone who touches it will become holy."

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 29:29–37 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Aaron's clothes are **sacred**, which means they are holy. For more information on sacred, refer to the information on the word holy in the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for sacred as you used in previous passages.

These clothes will be passed down to each of Aaron's **descendants** who become the next high priest. A person's descendants are his children, grandchildren, and all future generations from the same family line. For more information on descendant, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for descendant as you used in previous passages.

Priests will **anoint** and **ordain** Aaron's descendant who wears these clothes.

To anoint was to pour or rub a little bit of oil on the head. This showed that God was appointing someone to a special place, service, or function in the purpose of God. For more information on anoint, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for anoint as you used in previous passages.

To **ordain** means to officially make someone a priest. Use the same word or phrase for ordain as you used in previous passages.

These descendants will serve in the **Holy Place** in the tent of meeting, or the **tabernacle**. This was a large tent that the Israelites moved from place to place where the Jewish ancestors worshiped God. For more information on the tabernacle, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for tabernacle as you used in previous passages.

The Holy Place in this passage refers to any place in the tabernacle area where the priests might perform their priestly duties. For more information on the Holy Place, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for Holy Place as you used in previous passages.

Stop here and look at a picture of the inside of the tabernacle tent as a group. Pause this audio here.

Aaron and his sons will eat the meat that Moses offered to God for their **atonement**. The act of atonement is how people reconciled with God whenever they broke the terms of the covenant. Atonement "covers over" the

things which separate people from God. Atonement makes someone holy and clean so that they can be completely reconciled to God. In this case, when Moses made atonement by these offerings, it was for the sin of the priests. When Moses made atonement for the altar, it was to purify the altar to make it ready for service to God. For more information on the atonement, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for atonement as you used in previous passages.

God says to sacrifice a bull every day as a **sin offering**. This is a sacrifice that God instructs people to do when they have unintentionally sinned against God. They now need to be purified. In this case, God asks Moses to make this offering to cover over the sins and things that keep the priests from being in close relationship to God. Instead of the people dying as punishment for their sins, the bull would die. For more information on the sin, or purification, offering, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for sin offering as you used in previous passages.

Sin refers to an act of disobedience to God. For more information on sin, refer to the Master Glossary.

God instructs Moses to **purify** the **altar**, which means to make it clean and ready. An altar is a place where people present gifts like animals and burn them as an offering to God. This altar was the special one God commanded the people make for the tabernacle. It was a square box shape made out of wood covered with bronze and had four horns on the corners. For more information on the altar, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for altar as you used in previous passages.

Stop here and look at a picture of the altar as a group. Pause this audio here.

God says Moses should **consecrate** the altar. Consecrate means to make or dedicate something or someone as holy and set apart for God. For more information on consecrate, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for consecrate as you used in previous passages.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 29:29–37

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3414822 KB)

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Exodus 29:38–46

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 29:38–46 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 29:38–46 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 29:38–46 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

God has been giving Moses instructions on how to serve God in a way that is good and right. In the previous sections, God told Moses how to dedicate the priests to serve God. Now God is giving instructions for the daily offerings at the tabernacle. God will tell Moses the whole process before Moses should follow the instructions. God also gives Moses a reminder and promise of his presence.

God says that "you" should make two offerings every day. These instructions are probably for Moses to give to the priests, since it is the priests' job to make offerings to Yahweh. The priests should sacrifice two male lambs every day. Some translations use the word "ram" instead of "lamb." These male lambs should be a year old. When a lamb is a year old, it is fully grown and more valuable. The priests should offer one lamb in the morning

and one lamb in the evening when the sun goes down. These offerings happen at the beginning and the end of the day's activity, so each day starts and ends with offerings to Yahweh. God calls these burnt offerings, since they will be completely burned on the altar. Burnt offerings were for the forgiveness of sin in general. The death of the lambs will be a reminder of the need for a death to cover the sins of the Israelites.

Stop here and look at a picture of a lamb as a group. Pause this audio here.

When the priests kill and burn a lamb to give to Yahweh, they will also give a mix of flour and oil, as well as some wine. The priests should make a dough with a tenth of an ephah, or about one kilogram, of finely ground wheat flour mixed with a quarter of a hin of olive oil. This is about 1 litre of the best pressed, pure olive oil. The mixture of flour and oil will make a rich cake dough. This is a grain offering. The priests should also give a quarter hin, or about 1 litre, of wine, which is fermented grape juice. This is a drink offering. The priests will burn both of these offerings on the altar with the dead lamb. The priests will offer a lamb, the dough, and the wine at the beginning and at the end of each day.

Stop here and look at a picture of the altar of burnt offerings as a group. Pause this audio here.

God says these offerings will be a pleasing aroma, a food offering to Yahweh. This does not mean that God is actually inhaling the good smell or that it was food for God if he was hungry. The smoke of the burning offering rises to the sky and symbolically goes to God and no one else. God says the smell is good, like a pleasing aroma. The pleasing smell symbolizes that God is happy that the people are doing what he asked them to do. God uses his unique name, Yahweh, clarifying that this is an offering for him alone.

God says that each new generation should continue to give this burnt offering at the entrance of the tent of meeting, or the tabernacle, before Yahweh. Even when the current priests die, the new priests should always continue to make these offerings. Because the priests will be making the offering to Yahweh, it was important for the priests to make the offerings in the space where Yahweh said he would meet with the Israelites. God says he will meet and speak with Moses and the leaders of Israel at the entrance to the tabernacle. This is where Yahweh gives them authority and guidance. God will also meet with the Israelites there. This is where he will accept their gifts and worship and forgive their sins. God uses his unique name, Yahweh. This is not a place for any other nation's false gods, just Yahweh. By God's glory, or by the power of his presence, God will consecrate this place, making it holy.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about events that must happen in special locations, such as weddings, funerals, coming-of-age ceremonies. Why is it important that the event happens there? What would happen if the ceremony happened at a different kind of place? Pause this audio here.

God also says that he will consecrate the tent of meeting, or the tabernacle, and the altar. God had been meeting with Moses on Mount Sinai or in the old tent of meeting. Now, God's presence will be at the new tabernacle, which will become holy because God is there. Where God is, he takes ownership and things near him become his and holy. The rituals to prepare the tabernacle were important because the Israelites needed to be ready for God to come near. God says he will consecrate Aaron and his sons to serve God as priests. The ordination ceremony in the last passage was to prepare the priests to serve God. Everything Moses and the priests did in the ceremony was in Yahweh's presence, for Yahweh, doing things that Yahweh said to do. Yahweh will accept the offerings, showing that he is present and making the priests holy.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about a place that is named after or dedicated to an important person, such as a park or a hospital. How did the people who made the place show that it was dedicated to the important person? What did the important person do that made people want to dedicate this place to this person? What kind of ceremony did the people have to dedicate the place? Pause the audio here.

Then God says that he will dwell, or live, among the Israelites and be their God. He will be the one who will protect them, receive their worship, and bless them. God says that they, the Israelites, will know that he is Yahweh, their God, who brought the Israelites out of Egypt. God is reminding the Israelites who he is and what he has done. God brought them out of Egypt, the land of false gods, so that the Israelites could be set apart and ready for God to dwell among them. The Israelites will know that Yahweh is their God because they have seen what Yahweh has done. God's presence in the tabernacle in their camp also gives proof that he is the Israelites' God. God finishes by saying again, "I am Yahweh, their God." He repeats this because it is important that the Israelites remember who God is.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about ways that people in your culture remember important events in your history. What kind of physical reminders do you make, such as statues? How do you remind yourself and others of the stories of these events? Why is it important that people remember these events?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 29:38–46 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: God gives instructions for the two daily offerings of lambs, flour and oil, and wine.

In the second scene: God says that the Israelites should always make these offerings at the entrance to the tent of meeting and that he will meet with the Israelites there.

In the third scene: God gives a reminder and a promise of God's presence among the Israelites.

The characters in this passage are:

- God, whose personal name is Yahweh
- Moses
- The priests, which are Aaron and his four sons
- The Israelites

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

This section is in a series of commands that God gives to Moses on Mount Sinai. Here, God is giving Moses instructions about daily sacrifices. Moses will not begin to do the steps until God has finished telling him all of them. God also gives Moses a reminder and promise that God will be with the Israelites.

God gives Moses instructions for the burnt offering which the priests will make every day-once in the morning and once in the evening at sunset. God gives the instructions to Moses, who will tell the instructions to the priests. The priests will present the offerings to Yahweh. Twice a day the priests will sacrifice one lamb as an offering, with a mix of flour and oil, and wine. The lambs should be year-old male sheep. The priests would kill the lamb by cutting its throat, then put it on the altar and burn it.

The flour should be finely ground wheat flour. In the original language, God says to offer a tenth of flour, which was probably a tenth of an ephah, a standard dry measurement. A tenth is a little over a kilogram of flour. The priests should mix the flour with a quarter hin of olive oil. A hin was a standard liquid measurement that equalled about 4 litres, so this is about 1 litre of olive oil. This would be a rich, cake-like dough. The priests would probably mix the flour and oil together then put it on the altar to be burned. God calls this a grain offering.

The priests would also offer a quarter hin, or about 1 litre, of wine. The priests would pour the wine, which is fermented grape juice, on the offering. God calls this a drink offering. It is not clear whether they poured it on the lamb, on the top of the altar, or on the base of the altar. However, in the original language, this drink offering means to pour out, so the priests poured the wine out of a container to offer it to Yahweh.

The priests will offer this three-part offering at the beginning of the day, after the sun rises, and at the end, between sundown and nightfall. They will burn the lamb, the dough, and the wine on the bronze altar. As it burns, the smoke would rise up towards the sky, symbolizing that this portion is God's. God says it is a pleasing aroma, a food offering to Yahweh. He is clarifying what this offering means. God declares it a good portion by saying it is a "pleasing aroma." God specifically uses his unique name, Yahweh, showing that this offering is to him alone, not to anyone else.

In the next scene, God explains that the priests will continue to make this offering every day, through each generation. A generation is the people who live at the same time as each other. The location of the offering is important: the priests will burn the offering on the altar at the entrance to the tent of meeting. This place is in

Yahweh's presence. God says that this is where he will meet and speak to the leaders and priests of Israel. God will give them authority and guidance on how to lead the people. God also says that he will meet with the people of Israel there. God will accept their gifts and worship and forgive their sins. This will remind the Israelites that God's presence is with them. Since God's presence will be there, God will consecrate, or make holy, the entrance of the tabernacle with his glory, or the amazing power of his presence.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about a time when someone very important, like a famous person, came to a place, like a gathering place. How do people remember the visit? What kind of ways do people remember that the person came, such as a picture on the wall? How do people talk about that place differently, now that someone important came there? Pause the audio here.

In the third scene, God gives a reminder of what he has done and who he is. God says that he is the one who consecrates the tabernacle and the altar, as well as Aaron and his sons to serve him as priests. He makes things holy with his presence and with his power. Then God says he will dwell, or live, among the Israelites and be their God. This does not mean that all of God's physical presence will be in the tabernacle. Nothing can hold all of God's physical presence. But God's spirit, or presence, will be with the Israelites. This will remind the Israelites that it is Yahweh who took them out of Egypt. God brought them out of a land of many false gods to make the Israelites set apart. They are set apart so that they can serve God correctly and so God's presence can be with them. God finishes by saying, "I am Yahweh, their God." When God repeats his name, he is reminding the Israelites of all that his name signals: all that God has done, all of his characteristics, and the personal nature of giving his personal name.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In the original language, people repeat certain statements to show that they are very important to know and understand. As an activity, introduce yourself and give some information about yourself. Include small things, like your favorite color, and important things, like who your family is. Listen for ways that you show certain information is very important. Pause this audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 29:38–46 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- God, whose personal name is Yahweh
- Moses
- The priests, which are Aaron and his four sons
- The Israelites

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

God says to Moses, "This is what you should tell the priests to do. Every day, make two burnt offerings to me. Each offering should have a year-old lamb, a kilogram of the best wheat flour mixed with a litre of pure olive oil to make a dough, and a litre of wine. Make the first sacrifice in the morning and the second at the end of the day. This is a burnt offering to Yahweh. The smoke will rise to me like a pleasing aroma from food and I will see that it is good."

Pause the drama.

Then God said, "Repeat two daily burnt offerings throughout each generation. Make the offerings at the entrance to the tent of meeting in my presence. I will meet and speak to the leaders of Israel here. I will also meet with the Israelites here. The power of my presence will make this place holy."

Pause the drama.

God says, "By my presence, I will consecrate the tabernacle and the altar, as well as Aaron and his sons to serve me as priests. Then I will live among the Israelites and be their God. They will know that I am Yahweh, their God, who brought them out of Egypt so that they would be set apart and ready for me to live among them. I am Yahweh, their God."

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 29:38–46 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

God tells Moses what to offer on the **altar** of burnt offerings. An altar is a place where people present gifts like animals and burn them as an offering to God. For more information on the altar, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for altar as you used in previous passages.

Stop here and look at a picture of the altar of burnt offerings again as a group. Pause this audio here.

God tells Moses to gather a tenth of flour, a quarter of a **hin** of olive oil, and a quarter of a hin of wine. The tenth of flour probably was a tenth of an **ephah**, which was a standard dry measurement. A tenth of an ephah was probably a little over a kilogram. A hin was a standard liquid measurement of about 4 litres. A quarter of a hin would be about 1 litre. Use the same word or phrase for the measurements as you used in previous passages.

Wine is fermented grape juice. This was a common drink in this time. Use the same word or phrase for wine as you used in previous passages.

God calls the dough a **grain offering** and the wine a **drink offering**. He also calls the whole offering of lamb, dough, and wine a **burnt offering**. These are all kinds of **offerings**, which are gifts or sacrifices offered in a ritual to God, usually in the temple or on a special altar.

A grain offering is when people brought gifts of grain, like wheat flour, sometimes mixed with oil, to Yahweh as an act of worship. The priest would burn it on the altar to symbolically give it to God. For more information on offering, grain, refer to the Master Glossary.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **grain offering**. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

For a drink offering, people brought a gift of wine and the priest would pour it out over the altar to symbolically give it to Yahweh as an act of worship. Use the same word or phrase for drink offering as you used in previous passages. For more information on offering, drink, refer to the Master Glossary.

Burnt offerings were when people sacrificed animals to God by burning them completely. These offerings were for the forgiveness of sin in general. For more information on burnt offerings, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for burnt offering as you used in previous passages.

God says that these offerings will be a pleasing **aroma**, a food offering presented to **Yahweh**. Aroma means a good smell. This does not mean that this offering is food for God to eat. The smoke of the burning sacrifice rose to the sky and symbolically showed that the people were giving the gift to God and no one else.

God specifically uses his unique name Yahweh several times. Yahweh is God's proper name. Yahweh is a unique name-no other religion in the land around Israel used a name like this for their god. God says that the priests should make the burnt offerings to Yahweh specifically, by making them in Yahweh's presence. Twice, God says that he is Yahweh, the Israelites' God. He is showing that Yahweh specifically, and no one else, is Israel's only God. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for Yahweh as you used in previous passages.

God says that the Israelites should continue to offer these sacrifices during each new **generation**. Generation refers to the people who live at the same time as each other. God is clarifying that the priests should continue to make sacrifices as the years pass and new people are born. For more information on the generations, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for generation as you used in previous passages.

God says that the priests should present the offerings at the entrance to the **tent of meeting**, which is another name for the **tabernacle**. This was a large tent that was moved from place to place where the Jewish ancestors worshiped God. This is where the priests would give offerings to Yahweh. For more information on the tabernacle, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for tabernacle as you used in previous passages.

God says he will **consecrate** the entrance to the tent of meeting. Consecrate means to make or dedicate something or someone as holy, or set apart, for God. For more information on consecrate, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for consecrate as you used in previous passages.

God will consecrate this place by his **glory**. Glory is the fame and admiration that you gain by doing something impressive. When God shows his glory, people can see how beautiful, powerful, and majestic God is. When God reveals his glory, it also shows that he is present there. It can be difficult to translate the word glory. In some cases, you can say "God's power and splendor." For more information on glory, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for glory as you used in previous passages.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 29:38–46

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3348937 KB)

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Exodus 30:1–10

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 30:1–10 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 30:1–10 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 30:1–10 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

God has been giving Moses instructions on how to make a place of worship and the priests holy, or set apart, in a visible way. This place of worship is called the tabernacle, or the tent of meeting. Now God gives Moses instructions on how to make a special altar for burning incense to put in the tabernacle. This altar is different

than the altar that the priests use for sacrifices. God also gives instructions on how to use the altar. God will tell Moses the whole process before Moses should follow the instructions.

God gives instructions for the altar's material and size. God gives the instructions to Moses who will tell skilled workers how to make it. God says to make the altar out of wood from the acacia tree, just like the altar of burnt offerings. This altar will be a rectangle shape with a square base. The altar's base will be a cubit, or 50 centimeters, square and it will be two cubits, or about one meter, tall. God says to carve horns, or points, out of the wood at the top four corners. God says to cover the altar with a thin layer of pure gold and add a decorative gold border close to the top. Then, make two gold rings and attach them to opposite sides of the altar. This can possibly mean that there was one pair of rings-one ring for each side-or that there were two pairs of rings-two rings for each side. The workers should also make poles out of acacia wood and cover them in gold. The priests will slide the poles through the rings to carry the altar when the priests move the tabernacle.

Stop here and look at a picture of the altar of incense as a group. Pause this audio here.

Inside the tabernacle tent, a curtain divides the tent into two sections which are called the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. God's presence was in the Most Holy Place. Only the priests could enter the tabernacle tent, and only the high priest could go through the heavy curtain into the Most Holy Place. This showed to the people how holy God was.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What are some places in your culture that only certain kinds of people can enter? What makes these places different from other places? Why can some people enter and others cannot? Pause this audio here.

God tells Moses to put the altar in front of the curtain, so that the altar will be in the Holy Place. Behind the curtain in the Most Holy Place is the ark of the covenant, or ark of the testimony. This is a gold-covered box that will hold the stone law tablets that God gives to Moses. Testimony can mean a solemn statement or evidence of a covenant, or a special promise. The stone law tablets represented the testimony that God made a covenant with his people, the Israelites.

On the top of the golden box is a golden lid. God says he will meet with Moses there in the Most Holy Place. The Israelites believed that God literally lived in the space directly above the ark of the covenant, so the ark of the covenant symbolized God's presence. When the high priest made atonement, or covered over the sins of the Israelites, before God once a year, he would spread blood on the lid of the ark of the covenant. Because this is where the high priest did the atonement ritual asking for mercy from God to cover over their sins and be reconciled to him, the Israelites called the lid the atonement cover, or the mercy seat.

Stop here and look at a picture of the ark of the covenant as a group. Pause this audio here.

Next, God gives instructions on how to use the altar of incense. Aaron, the high priest, must burn special incense on the altar twice every day. Incense is a mix of natural materials like spices and gums that smells good when people burn it. Later, God will give Moses instructions on how to make the special incense. Aaron will burn incense in the morning when he cleans the lamps on the lampstand that is in the Holy Place. Then he will burn incense again when he lights the lamps at night.

Stop here and look at a picture of the lamps as a group. Pause this audio here.

God says that Aaron will burn the incense before Yahweh. God uses his unique name, Yahweh, clarifying that Aaron is burning incense for Yahweh alone. The fragrant smoke from burning incense symbolized prayer in this time. Since the high priest always represented the people in his actions, his offering of incense represented the prayers of the whole people of Israel. The smoke would go into the Most Holy Place, where God's presence is represented by the ark of the covenant. This symbolized the prayer going to God.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about how your culture uses incense, or the burning of other materials like herb bundles, to make a pleasing smell. When do people burn these things? What does it mean when they burn them? Pause this audio here.

God says that Aaron should do this so that incense burns continually for the generations to come. Aaron burns the incense daily, reflecting the way people pray at all times of day and night. When God says "for generations to come," he means that from now on each high priest should continue to burn the incense on the altar. God says that no one should offer any incense on this altar except the special mix that God will describe. Only the

high priest should offer the special incense in the way and at the time God says. Also, the priests should not use this altar to sacrifice an animal as a burnt offering or offer grain as a grain offering. The priests should not pour out wine as a drink offering on this altar. The priests will offer those offerings on the bronze altar outside of the tabernacle tent.

Once a year, Aaron should make atonement for the altar to purify the altar of incense. All things that priests use in the tabernacle must be pure, or fit for service to God. The altar has not sinned, but perhaps it has become unclean or unfit to serve God because something unclean has touched it. This atonement, or purification sacrifice, will purify the altar so that priests can use it to serve God. Aaron will purify the altar by putting blood on the four horns of the altar. He will get the blood from the animal that the priests will sacrifice for the sin, or purification, offering. This sin offering is an offering that people give to God to ask him to remove their sins. And this sin offering will be for atonement, which is the process of repairing a relationship with God that is broken by sin. Again, each high priest should continue to make this yearly atonement for the altar throughout the generations to come.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about items that people in your culture keep ready to use for important events, such as special dishes for celebrations or items used at weddings. How do you treat these items differently than other similar items? What steps do you do regularly to keep them ready for use? Pause this audio here.

God finishes his instructions for the altar of incense by saying that the altar is most holy, or completely dedicated, to Yahweh. God uses his unique name, Yahweh, clarifying that this is an altar that belongs to him alone. Because this altar belongs to him, he has the right to choose the correct way for the high priest to use the altar.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 30:1-10 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: God gives Moses the instructions for building the altar for burning incense.

In the second scene: God gives instructions for how Aaron should burn incense on the altar.

In the third scene: God gives instructions for purifying the altar.

The characters in this passage are:

- God, whose personal name is Yahweh
- Moses
- The skilled workers to whom Moses will give the instructions
- Aaron, the high priest

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

God has been giving Moses instructions for building the tabernacle. God later says that Moses should give these instructions to the skilled workers who will make the tabernacle and the items in it. God will give Moses all of the instructions before Moses should assign the work to the skilled workers.

In the first scene, God gives the instructions for making the altar of incense. God says to make an altar out of the wood from an acacia tree. This is a hard and durable wood. The skilled workers would cut and carve the wood to make the right shape.

Stop here and look at a picture of the acacia wood as a group. Pause this audio here.

The altar will be a rectangle shape. The workers should make a base that is one cubit square. A cubit was a standard measurement of length that is about 50 centimeters. The altar should be two cubits, or about one meter, tall. This altar will be smaller than the large bronze altar for sacrifices, which was outside the entrance to the tabernacle tent. At the top four corners of the altar of incense, workers should carve four points called horns, which may have looked like bull's horns. The workers should carve the horns out of the same piece of wood as the rest of the altar.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Describe a wooden object, like a cart or a chair. Describe the size, the material, the different pieces, the special elements like carvings or decorations. Listen for the words you use for each of these elements. Pause this audio here.

Next, God says to cover the top, sides, and the horns with a thin layer of pure gold. This would be the best kind of gold, without anything else mixed in it. The workers should also make a molding out of gold. This is a decorative gold border close to the top of the altar, going around the sides. Then the workers should add two gold rings, or circles, to opposite sides of the altar. This can possibly mean that there was one pair of rings—one ring for each side—or that there were two pairs of rings—two rings for each side. There were probably four rings total, but the original language is unclear. These rings will be large enough to put a pole through. The workers will attach the rings to two opposite sides of the altar so that they can slide two poles horizontally through the rings on either side of the altar. The priests will then be able to pick up the poles to carry the altar when they move the tabernacle. The workers should also make the poles from the wood of the acacia tree and cover the poles with gold.

Stop here and look at a picture of the altar of incense as a group. Pause this audio here.

There are two sections inside the tabernacle tent: the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. These sections are divided by a curtain that hangs from the top of the tent to the ground. God says that Moses should put the altar in front of the curtain in the tabernacle tent. The altar will be in the Holy Place.

Stop here and look at a picture of the inside of the tabernacle tent as a group. Pause this audio here.

The sacred chest called the ark of the covenant is behind the curtain, in the Most Holy Place. Inside the chest will be the stone law tablets. On top of the chest is a gold lid that is sometimes called the atonement cover, or the mercy seat. This is where God says he will meet with Moses and talk with him.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Describe a place that is dedicated to someone, such as a grave or a shrine. How do people keep this place separate from the area around it? What shows that this area is dedicated to this person? How do people treat the area? Pause this audio here.

In the second scene, God gives instructions on the right way for Aaron to use the altar. God says that Aaron, the high priest, should burn a special mix of incense on the altar every day, at the start and end of the day. Later, God gives the ingredients for the special mix of incense. Aaron should burn incense in the morning when he takes care of the lamps. The priests kept the lamps lit from evening to morning. In the morning, Aaron took care of the lamps by cleaning them, trimming the wick, and adding more oil. Aaron should also burn incense on the altar when he lights the lamps in the evening, probably when the sun went down. Aaron would make a small fire on the top of the altar and burn the incense in the fire. He would do one task at a time, probably starting with the lamps.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about daily tasks that you do at a certain time of day, one after another, such as getting dressed and doing your hair. Listen for words that show that while they don't do the tasks at the same time, they do both tasks at the same time of the day together. Pause this audio here.

God says that the high priest should burn incense regularly before Yahweh. The altar for the incense is in front of the Most Holy Place, where the ark of the covenant represents Yahweh's presence. The smoke would go into the Most Holy Place, and so go into Yahweh's presence.

God clearly says do not offer any other, unauthorized incense on this altar. Only the high priest should offer the correct mix of incense at the specific times. God also says that this altar is not for the burnt offerings, nor the grain and drink offerings. The priests would offer those offerings on the bronze altar of burnt offerings outside the tabernacle tent. This altar of incense is just for the priests to burn incense on.

Stop here and look at a picture of the altar of burnt offerings as a group. Pause this audio here.

In the third scene, God gives instructions for purifying the altar. Once a year, Aaron should make atonement, or purify the altar. Aaron will put some blood on the horns of the altar. The blood is from a sin offering. Aaron will gather some of the blood when the priests kill the animal for the sin, or purification, offering. God does not say how much blood, but Aaron probably smeared just a little blood on the four horns of the altar. Each high priest in the future should continue to purify the altar once a year. God says that this altar is completely holy to Yahweh. By following God's instructions, the priests keep the altar holy and ready for service to Yahweh.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 30:1-10 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- God, whose personal name is Yahweh
- Moses
- The skilled workers to whom Moses will give the instructions
- Aaron, the high priest

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

God says to Moses, "Tell the skilled workers to make an altar for burning incense out of wood from the acacia tree. Make it fifty centimeters square and one meter tall. From the same piece of wood, they should carve points like horns at the top four corners. Then cover the top, the sides, and the horns with pure gold. Make a decorative gold border around the sides of the altar, close to the top. Make gold rings, then attach the rings on the two sides of the altar. The priests can put poles through these rings for carrying the altar. Make the carrying poles out of wood from the acacia tree and cover them with pure gold."

Pause the drama.

"Put the altar in front of the curtain that hangs between the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. The sacred box with the golden lid is behind the curtain. This is the place where I will meet and talk with you."

Pause the drama.

God then says, "Aaron must burn a special mix of incense on the altar every morning and every evening when he takes care of the lamps. The High Priest should always burn this incense every day before Yahweh from now on. Only burn the correct incense mix. Do not use this altar for the animal sacrifices or the grain and drink offerings."

Pause the drama.

"Once a year, Aaron should perform a ritual to purify the altar. He should put blood on the four horns of the altar. Aaron should use the blood from the animal that the priests kill for a sin, or purification, offering. This sin offering is for atonement, when the people ask me to remove their sins. This altar is very holy to me, and by doing this, Aaron will keep the altar ready to use to serve me."

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 30:1-10 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

God says to make an **altar** for burning incense out of **acacia** wood. An altar is a place where people present gifts and burn them as an offering to God. This altar is inside the tabernacle tent and is different than the altar for burnt offerings outside the tent. The priests will burn incense on this indoor altar. For more information on altar, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for altar as you used in previous passages.

Stop here and look at a picture of the altar of incense again as a group. Pause this audio here.

Acacia wood is wood from an acacia tree. This is a hard and durable wood.

Stop here and look at a picture of the acacia wood again as a group. Pause this audio here.

This altar is where the priests will burn **incense**. Incense is a mix of natural materials like spices and gums that smells good when people burn it. The priests will burn a special mix of incense on this altar. Use the same word or phrase for incense as you used in previous passages.

God says to make the altar's base a **cubit** squared and two cubits tall. A cubit is the length of the average forearm of an adult male. This is a common way to measure things and is used frequently in the Bible. The length of one cubit, or the length of the average forearm, is about 50 centimeters. For more information on cubit, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for cubit as you used in previous passages.

God says to put the altar in front of the curtain that separates the **Holy Place** from the **Most Holy Place**. These are the two rooms in the tabernacle. The door of the tabernacle opened into the Holy Place, which had the lampstand, a gold table, and the altar of burning incense. The Most Holy Place had the ark of the covenant. Only the priests could go into the Holy Place, and only the high priest and Moses could go into the Most Holy Place. For more information on the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same words or phrases for the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place as you used in previous passages.

Stop here and look at a picture of the inside of the tabernacle tent again as a group. Pause this audio here.

The **ark of the covenant** is in the Most Holy Place. This is sometimes called the **ark of the testimony**. This is an oblong chest of acacia wood covered in gold that God asked Moses to make. Inside the ark of the covenant were the tablets that God gave to Moses with the Law written on them. The Israelites believed that God literally lived in the space directly above the ark, so it came to symbolize God's presence. The ark had a gold lid that was sometimes called the atonement cover, or the mercy seat. For more information on ark of the covenant, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for ark of the covenant as you used in previous passages.

Stop here and look at a picture of the ark of the covenant again as a group. Pause this audio here.

God says that Aaron should burn incense when he takes care of the **lamps**. The lamps were seven gold oil lamps on a gold lampstand in the Holy Place. These lamps were bowl shaped, filled with oil, and had a piece of cloth called a wick in the bowl. The wick would soak up the oil and people would then light the wick. The priests would keep the lamps in the tabernacle burning from evening to morning. For more information on lamps, refer to oil lamps in the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for lamp as you used in previous passages.

Stop here and look at a picture of the lamps again as a group. Pause this audio here.

God specifically uses his unique name **Yahweh** twice. Yahweh is God's proper name. Yahweh is a unique name—no other religion in the land around Israel used a name like this for their god. God says to burn the incense before Yahweh. The high priest does this by burning the incense before the ark of the covenant, where God says he will meet with Moses. God also says that the altar is very holy to Yahweh. The altar is set apart and dedicated

to Yahweh alone. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for Yahweh as you used in previous passages.

God says that incense should continue burning daily through each new **generation**. Generation refers to the people who live at the same time as each other. God is clarifying that each high priest should keep burning incense as the years pass, new people are born, and new men become the high priest. For more information on generations, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for generation as you used in previous passages.

God says do not offer **burnt offerings, grain offerings, or drink offerings** on the altar of incense. The priests should make these offerings on the bronze altar of burnt offerings that was outside the tabernacle tent.

A grain offering is when people brought gifts of grain, like wheat flour, sometimes mixed with oil, to Yahweh as an act of worship. The priest would burn it on the bronze altar of burnt offering to symbolically give it to God. Use the same word or phrase for grain offering as you used in previous passages.

For a drink offering, people brought a gift of wine and the priest would pour it out over the altar of burnt offering to symbolically give it to Yahweh as an act of worship. Use the same word or phrase for drink offering as you used in previous passages.

Burnt offerings were when people sacrificed animals to God by burning them completely. These offerings were for the forgiveness of sin in general. For more information on burnt offerings, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for burnt offering as you used in previous passages.

Once a year, Aaron should make **atonement** for the altar. He should do this with blood from the atoning sin offering. The act of atonement is how people reconciled with God whenever they broke the terms of the covenant. Atonement "covers over" the things which separate people from God. Atonement makes someone holy and clean so that they can be completely reconciled to God. When the priests made the atoning sin offering, they made it for the sins of the Israelites. When Aaron made atonement for the altar, it was to purify the altar to make it ready for service to God. For more information on atonement, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for atonement as you used in previous passages.

Aaron should use blood from the **sin, or purification, offering**. This is a sacrifice that God instructs people to do when they have unintentionally sinned against God. They now need to be purified. Instead of the people dying as punishment for their sins, an animal would die. For more information on the sin offering, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for sin offering as you used in previous passages.

People used **blood** to consecrate something, or make it holy. For more information on blood, refer to the Master Glossary.

God says that the altar is **holy**. Holy means set apart. If an object is holy, it means that it is set apart for God's special purposes. An object that is holy can only be used for the worship of God, and cannot be used for ordinary work. For more information on holy, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for holy as you used in previous passages.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 30:1-10

Audio Content

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Exodus 30:11-16

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 30:11-16 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 30:11-16 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.

6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 30:11–16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

God has been giving Moses instructions on how to serve God in a way that is good and right. In the previous sections, God gave Moses instructions for making and using the altar of incense. Now, God is giving instructions for the right way to take a census, or count the people of Israel. God does not specifically say that Moses should count the people immediately after hearing the instructions.

The section begins by saying, "Yahweh said to Moses." Yahweh is God's personal name. This is a reminder that Yahweh specifically, the God of Israel, is giving these instructions. God addresses Moses and gives him these instructions for "whenever you take a census." These instructions are not only for when Moses takes a census, but also for future leaders as well. A census is when leaders of a nation order record keepers to count the people of the nation. For the Israelites during this time, a census would count only the adult men. In these times, rulers often commanded record keepers to count their people for two reasons: to prepare for war, and to tax the people. Only men could be in the army, so a census would show how many men a leader could gather for an army. Men were the leader of a household, and so they were responsible for paying the taxes for their household. God gives strict rules for a census in Israel because the Israelites could only go to war or take taxes when God told them to. God did not tell the Israelites to take a census very often, but when he did, the Israelites needed to follow these strict laws.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What kind of process does your culture have to keep track of the number of people in your group or nation? Who decides when to count the people? Why is it important in your culture to know the number of people? Pause this audio here.

God says that when Moses takes a census, each man will pay a ransom for his life to Yahweh. A ransom in this context is a payment someone gives to symbolically buy someone's life. Again, God uses his personal name, Yahweh. The people of Israel paid the ransom to Yahweh because they belonged to Yahweh. Yahweh rescued the Israelites from Egypt to be his special people. He kept them alive, protected them, and blessed them. When the men pay the ransom to Yahweh, they still belong to Yahweh. They pay the ransom as a reminder that their lives belong to Yahweh. Since they belong to Yahweh, they should do what Yahweh says.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about how a child belongs to a parent. In your culture, how does a child honor the parent who raises them? What should a child do for their parents when the child is an adult? What are the ways that the grown-up child acknowledges the care the parents gave the child? Pause this audio here.

God says that following his instructions for a census will keep a plague from coming to the people. A plague can specifically be a sickness that spreads quickly, or can just mean danger or a disaster. If the people do not follow God's specific instructions for the census, there will be a punishment through this plague. Also, rulers order a census to prepare for war and to take taxes. God is the one who will tell the Israelites when to fight and God gives instructions for taxes. So a part of following God's instructions means the people should only take a census to prepare for war or taxes when God says to.

God says the amount each man should pay is a half shekel, which is 20 gerahs. The Israelites did not have a set of coins they used at this time, but used various weights of precious metal for their money. A shekel was a unit of measurement for weight. It equals about 11 grams, so the half shekel would be about 5 1/2 grams. A gerah is the smallest unit of measurement of weight, less than .6 of a gram. Here God does not specifically say what kind of precious metal the men should pay with. In a later passage, it says that the men paid a half shekel of silver.

Stop here and look at a picture of a shekel of silver as a group. Pause this audio here.

God says that this shekel should be weighed according to the holy, or the sanctuary, shekel. Sanctuary can mean the inside, or holiest, part of a place of worship. This standard could be the one that the priests used at the tabernacle, which was a holy place. There were different standards for weight measurement at this time, so God specifies which measurement to use. He does this so everyone would pay the same amount.

God says that the shekel will be an offering to Yahweh. An offering is a gift or sacrifice offered in a ritual to God, usually at the tabernacle. Again, God uses his unique name, Yahweh, to clarify that this offering is to Him alone, not to the people who are counting the Israelites. In the original language, it says each one who crosses over to the ones counted must pay. In this time, the record keepers would gather the people together. The record keeper would count a man, then the man would walk, or cross over, from the general group of people to the group of counted people.

God says that all men who are twenty years old or older should give this offering to Yahweh. God is clarifying that the census should count all the men who are 20 years old and older. God says that the rich men should not give more than a shekel and the poor men should not give less than a shekel. The money the men pay is a symbol that means that God owns and values their lives. Each person is equally valuable to God. No one will show off by paying more. While silver is a precious metal and valuable, the amount is not very expensive, so most people should be able to pay it. This does not mean that people are only worth a little bit of silver to God. It is a symbol that God says their lives have value, like the silver has value.

[!action]

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about ceremonies in your culture that honor the value of a person, such as a coming of age celebration or an award ceremony. What kinds of tokens do you give to the person to show that person's value? How do these tokens represent the person's value? Listen for words that show that even though the tokens are not worth the same thing as the person, they show that the person is valuable. Pause this audio here.

God says this offering to Yahweh will make atonement to purify the men's lives. Atonement means reconciling, or restoring, a relationship with God when the relationship is broken. By paying a ransom, the men are agreeing with God that their lives belong to Yahweh. Since the men belong to Yahweh, they should do what Yahweh says. This payment is to atone, which means to completely restore their relationship with Yahweh. By following Yahweh's command to pay the ransom, they will be pure and ready to serve God.

God says that Moses, and future leaders, should take this ransom money and use it to take care of the tent of meeting, or the tabernacle. The tabernacle is a large tent that was moved from place to place where the Israelites worshiped God. Later, when Moses takes a census, the skilled workers use the ransom silver to make the tabernacle. Once the workers finish making the tabernacle, the leaders will use the silver to maintain the worship at the temple, probably by buying provisions or making repairs.

God says that the silver will be a memorial for the Israelites before Yahweh, making atonement for their lives. This could mean that when the Israelites pay the silver to Yahweh, they are reminded that their lives belong to Yahweh. It reminds them that Yahweh is the one who keeps them alive and protects them. Remembering who they belong to is a step in atonement, in repairing the Israelites' relationship with Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about groups you belong to, such as a family, a country, or a club. What kind of things do you do that remind you that you are a part of this group? What are some things you do to support the group, so that the group can continue its normal actions?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 30:11–16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has two scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh describes how to correctly count the adult men of Israel, collecting a payment from each man counted.

In the second scene: Yahweh describes what to do with the collected money.

The characters in this passage are:

- God, whose personal name is Yahweh
- Moses
- The record keepers, who will help Moses count the Israelites
- The adult men of Israel, including the rich men and the poor men

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

This section is in a series of commands that God gives to Moses on Mount Sinai. Here, God is giving Moses instructions about how to take a census, or count the people of Israel. God does not specifically say that Moses should take a census now. Moses will not begin to do the steps until God tells him it is time to take the census.

Stop here and discuss this as a group: As an activity, give instructions for an event which will happen sometime in the future, such as what to do on a wedding day. Listen for words that show that the listener should not do these steps immediately. Also listen for words that show that while the event will happen in the future, there is not yet a set day or time it will happen. Pause this audio here.

In the first scene, God describes the correct way to count the people of Israel. These instructions are not just for Moses, but for any leader in the future who will count the people of Israel. When Moses does count the people, Moses would not count each person on his own. Moses would probably tell some record keepers to count the people and keep track of the number. However, it is the leader's job to make sure that everyone follows God's instructions. For the census, these record keepers would not count all the men, women, and children. They would just count the adult men aged 20 years and older.

God says that each man must pay a ransom to Yahweh. Then no plague will come as a punishment to the people. God clarifies exactly how much each man should pay. God says that each man should give half a shekel, which is a unit of measurement and weighs about 11 grams. He gives another unit of measurement, a gerah, which is about .6 of a gram. God also specifies that the weight should be according to a certain standard. God is being very clear about the amount of money, so that no one would accidentally pay more or less than anyone else.

The record keepers would likely announce that they were taking a census, so the men could gather up the right amount of silver. The men would gather in a group. Each man would cross in front of the record keeper from the group of uncounted men to the group of counted men. The record keeper would count the man who crosses and the man would pay his silver.

God clarifies that the record keepers should count all the men who are 20 years old and older. Each one must pay the ransom. Again, God clarifies that for this offering every man should pay the same amount. The rich men should not pay more silver and the poor men should not pay less silver. God is repeating the important instructions so that the leaders will correctly set up the census and not cause a punishment to come to the Israelites.

Stop here and discuss this as a group: As an activity, give instructions for a task that has to do with money, such as putting money in a bank or paying taxes. Give a warning of what may happen if someone does it incorrectly. Listen for the way that the speaker shows how important certain steps are. Pause this audio here.

In the second scene, God tells Moses what to do with the silver from the census. God says to use it to take care of the tent of meeting, which is another name for the tabernacle. When it is time to build the tabernacle, Moses will give the silver from the census to the skilled workers to make the bases of the tabernacle frame. After the workers finish the tabernacle, Moses would probably give the silver to the priests. The priests would use the silver to pay for repairs, supplies, and anything else needed to follow God's instructions for the correct worship at the tabernacle.

Stop here and look at a picture of the silver bases of the tabernacle as a group. Pause this audio here.

God finishes by saying that one purpose of the silver payment is to be a memorial for the Israelites before Yahweh. A memorial is something that people create to remind themselves of an event or an idea. The silver payment will remind the people that they belong to God. God often gives visible reminders through physical objects or actions. When they pay the silver, the people will be reminded by that action that they belong to God. The silver that the craftsmen use to make the tabernacle will be a physical reminder that the people can see.

Because the silver will go to the tabernacle and Yahweh's presence is at the tabernacle, the memorial will be in Yahweh's presence, or before Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Talk about someone who is very devoted to a group that they belong to, such as a nation or a sports group. How did they act differently from someone who is not a part of the group? What actions do they do that show they are a part of the group? What kind of physical reminders do they have to show they are a part of the group? Pause this audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 30:11–16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has two scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- God, whose personal name is Yahweh
- Moses
- The record keepers, who will help Moses count the Israelites
- The adult men of Israel, including the rich men and the poor men

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Yahweh says to Moses, "Here are instructions for whenever you count the number of adult men in Israel. Each man that you count must pay a ransom for himself to Yahweh. Then there will not be any plague or disasters when you are counting. The men must give a small amount of silver as a holy offering to Yahweh. The amount is 6 grams, weighed according to the correct weight. Every man who is twenty years old or older, whether rich or poor, must give the same amount as a holy offering to Yahweh. This is an atoning offering."

Pause the drama.

Ask the persons playing the men of Israel, "What are you feeling or thinking?" They might answer things like, "I am reassured that Yahweh is a fair God, who values everyone equally," or "I feel surprised that my life does not belong to me," or "I feel relieved that someone else is in charge of protecting me." [End] Continue the drama.

Yahweh says, "Take the money and use it to build and take care of the tabernacle and the worship there. This ransom will be a reminder to the Israelites, in Yahweh's presence, that their lives belong to Yahweh."

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 30:11–16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

God specifically uses his unique name, **Yahweh**, many times in this passage. Yahweh is God's proper name. Yahweh is a unique name-no other religion in the land around Israel used a name like this for their god. The passage opens saying that Yahweh spoke to Moses. This is a reminder of how personal Yahweh is, since he has been directly speaking to Moses. God says several times that the men should give the offering of silver to Yahweh. Their lives belong to Yahweh, not any other god, so the offering goes to Yahweh specifically. The memorial for the Israelites is before Yahweh. The silver will go to the tabernacle and Yahweh's presence is at the tabernacle, so the memorial will be in Yahweh's presence, or before Yahweh. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for Yahweh as you used in previous passages.

God gives Moses instructions for a **census**. A census is when someone officially counts the number of people in a group, often a nation or a tribe. In this time, rulers often wanted to know the number of their people to prepare for war or to collect taxes.

Use the same word or phrase for census as you used in previous passages.

God says that each person will pay a **ransom** for their lives. A ransom is the price for a person's life. When a person belongs to someone else, someone can buy that person free. The money that the person pays is called a ransom. When the people pay a ransom to Yahweh, they still belong to Yahweh. They pay the ransom as a reminder that their lives belong to Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for ransom. Look up ransom in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

God says that following the instructions will prevent a **plague**. A plague is a disaster or dangerous thing, such as a sickness, drought, or flood. Use the same word or phrase for plague as you used in previous passages.

The men must pay a **shekel**, or 20 **gerahs**, of silver. A shekel and a gerah are both units of measurement for weight. A shekel is about 11 grams. A gerah is about .6 grams. People used different standards for weights, so God says to use a certain standard-the holy, or sanctuary, standard. For more information on shekel, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for weight measurements as you used in previous passages.

God says that the silver is an **offering** to Yahweh. An offering is a gift or sacrifice offered in a ritual to God. People give offerings for many reasons, including to give thanks, to be purified, or to ask forgiveness for sin. This offering is considered holy, or special, because it will be for the tabernacle, so some translations add "holy" to make that clear. For more information on offering, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for offering as you used in previous passages.

God says the men give this offering to **atone** for and purify their lives. To atone means to reconcile or restore a relationship with God when the relationship has been broken. The people's lives belong to Yahweh, so Yahweh has the right to instruct the people how to live their lives. When the people do not follow Yahweh's instructions, they break their relationship with God. The people atone for their broken relationship by paying the ransom, which reminds them that their lives belong to Yahweh. This offering purifies the people's lives and makes them ready to serve Yahweh again. For more information on atone, refer to atonement in the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for atone as you used in previous passages.

To **purify** means to make something or someone clean. The Israelites had to follow certain rituals to make them clean, or acceptable, before God. For more information on purify, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for purify as you used in previous passages.

God says that the silver will be for the **tent of meeting**. This is another name for the **tabernacle**. This was a large tent that the Israelites moved from place to place where the Jewish ancestors worshiped God. For more information on the tent of meeting, refer to tabernacle in the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for the tent of meeting as you used in previous passages.

God says that the silver will be a **memorial**. A memorial is something, often a physical object, that reminds people of a person or event or idea. Use the same word or phrase for memorial as you used in previous passages.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 30:11-16

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3337012 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Exodus 30:17–21

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 30:17–21 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 30:17–21 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 30:17–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Yahweh gave Moses instructions for taking the census and gathering the tax of the tabernacle from the Israelites. In this passage, Yahweh continues to instruct Moses on preparing the tabernacle.

Yahweh tells Moses to make a basin—a large bowl or vessel that holds water—that the priests will use for washing. Yahweh tells Moses to make the basin out of bronze, a metal commonly used in the ancient world. You will remember that bronze is a mixture of copper and tin. Some other items in the tabernacle were also made of bronze, like the altar for sacrifice, the utensils for the burnt offerings, and the bases for the tabernacle frame. Yahweh also tells Moses to make a stand for the basin to rest upon, and says that the Israelites must also make the stand of bronze.

Stop here and look at a picture of a bronze basin resting on a stand as a group. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses to place the bronze stand, with the basin on top of it, between the altar and the tent of meeting, or tabernacle. He tells Moses to fill the basin with water so that Aaron and Aaron's sons can wash their hands and feet with the water from the basin. This basin was not for ordinary washing, and it was not for everyone to use. Yahweh explains that the basin has a special use: Aaron and his sons must wash their hands and feet with the water from the basin whenever they go into the tabernacle, and they must wash their hands and feet with water from the basin whenever they go to the altar to make a sacrifice.

Yahweh says that Aaron and his sons must wash their hands and feet this way so that they will not die. When Yahweh says this, He means that if anyone goes into the tabernacle without first washing from the basin, or goes to the altar to make a burnt offering to Yahweh without first washing from the basin, then that person will die. Yahweh says this to Moses twice, which shows how important this commandment was. Yahweh then tells Moses that this act of washing hands and feet is a permanent law: Aaron and his sons must always observe it, and all their offspring and descendants must observe it year after year as well. Just as Aaron and his sons are priests at this time in the story, so Aaron's descendants will also be priests. This is why Aaron's descendants will also need to obey the law about washing hands and feet in the basin, because they will also be working in the tabernacle and making burnt offerings to Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss: Have each person in your group tell the team about a rule or tradition in your culture that your ancestors passed down to you and that your family still follows. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh wanted Moses to clearly understand what would happen to the person who did not wash from the basin before going into the tabernacle or before going to the altar to make a sacrifice: that person would die. They would die because the tabernacle and the altar were holy, set apart for Yahweh's special purposes. Humans become unclean, or unfit for service to Yahweh, and therefore the priests could not enter Yahweh's

presence without preparation. By washing his hands and feet before entering the tabernacle or making a burnt offering on the altar, the priest would show that he was approaching Yahweh's holy places with preparation and respect. If the priest prepared a sacrifice with unclean hands, or entered the tabernacle with dirty feet, he would bring the dirt and grime from the world into Yahweh's holy places; this would show carelessness and disrespect. It would show that the priest did not understand Yahweh's holiness. By washing his hands and feet in the bronze basin first, the priest made himself clean and acceptable to Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What rituals do you perform before beginning certain special activities? Why are those rituals important to perform each time you do that special activity? Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 30:17–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh instructs Moses on the construction and placement of the bronze washing basin.

In the second scene: Yahweh instructs Moses on how the Israelites must use the basin.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron and his sons

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: Moses is standing on top of Mount Sinai, while Aaron and other Israelites wait for his return at the bottom of the mountain. On top of the mountain, Yahweh is speaking directly to Moses.

In scene one, Yahweh tells Moses to build a basin for washing. Yahweh gives very specific directions about the basin, telling Moses to make it out of bronze metal. He also says to make a stand for the basin to rest on, and says that the stand should be made out of bronze metal as well. The basin was probably round, and large enough to hold water for four or five priests to dip their hands into, and to pour the water from their hands onto their feet.

Yahweh tells Moses to place the stand, with the basin on top of it, between the large altar used for burnt offerings near the entrance to the courtyard and the tabernacle, or tent of meeting. Both terms, "tabernacle" and "tent of meeting," occur at different times in Exodus. They both refer to the same thing. Translators can either use both terms, just as the text does, or they can choose to call it the "tabernacle" each time. Yahweh then tells Moses to fill the basin with water.

Stop and show a picture of a bronze basin on top of a bronze stand, and a diagram of the placement of the basin and the altar. Pause the recording here.

In scene two, Yahweh tells Moses that Aaron and his sons must wash their hands and feet in the basin before entering the tabernacle, or before offering a sacrifice upon the altar, so that Aaron and his sons will not die. Yahweh means that if anyone enters the tabernacle or makes a sacrifice on the altar without washing their hands and feet in the basin first, then that person will die.

Yahweh repeats these instructions a second time. Yahweh then says that this act of washing the hands and feet in the basin will be a statute or law that will last forever: Aaron and his sons, and all their descendants and offspring, must always observe this custom through all the years to come.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 30:17–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron and his sons

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

In the first scene, Yahweh instructs Moses to prepare a basin made of bronze metal, and a stand made of bronze metal for the basin to rest upon. Yahweh tells Moses to place the stand with the basin on top of it between the altar for sacrificing and the tabernacle.

Pause the drama.

In the second scene, Yahweh tells Moses to fill the basin with water, and says that Aaron and his sons must always wash their hands and feet in the water of the basin before entering the tabernacle, or before making a sacrifice upon the altar. Yahweh says they must do this so that they do not die.

Pause the drama.

Then Yahweh repeats the instruction a second time: He says again that Aaron and His sons must always wash their hands and feet in the water of the basin before entering the tabernacle, or before making a sacrifice upon the altar, so that they will not die.

Pause the drama.

Yahweh lastly says that this act of washing the hands and feet will be a statute or law that will last forever: Aaron and his sons, and all their descendants and offspring, must always observe this custom through all the years to come.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 30:17–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The Lord God tells Moses to make a basin of water for washing. References to Lord in this passage are to Yahweh. Yahweh is the personal name for God. Use the same name you have used in previous passages, and remember that Yahweh is in the Master Glossary.

He tells Moses to make the basin out of **bronze**, a metal made from a mixture of copper and tin. Refer to bronze in the Master Glossary for more information, and remember to use the same word to translate it as you used in previous passages.

Yahweh tells Moses to also make a bronze stand for the basin to rest upon.

Stop here and look at a picture of a bronze basin resting on top of a bronze stand as a group. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses to take the bronze basin on its bronze stand and place it between the **altar** and the **tabernacle**, or the **tent of meeting**. Yahweh instructs Moses to fill the basin with water, and says that Aaron and his sons must wash their hands and feet in the basin's water before either entering the tabernacle or making a **sacrifice** upon the altar. Use the same word or phrase for altar, sacrifice, and tabernacle or tent of meeting as you used in previous passages. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on these words. Remember that tabernacle and tent of meeting refer to the same thing.

Yahweh tells Moses that the washing of hands and feet in the basin will be a **statute**, a decree that usually refers to a law or rule about how to perform duties in the tabernacle, or temple. Use the same word to translate statute as you used previously, and refer to the Master Glossary for more information.

Yahweh says that the statute is for Aaron and his sons to observe. Yahweh tells Moses that this statute will last forever. This means that Aaron and his sons must always wash their hands and feet in the basin before entering the tabernacle or making a sacrifice on the altar; and Yahweh also says that all of Aaron's **generations**, or descendants, must always observe this statute, year after year. Use the same word to translate generations as you used previously, and refer to the Master Glossary for more information.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 30:17–21

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (2253776 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
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- [FIA Step 4](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Exodus 30:22–33

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 30:22–33 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 30:22–33 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 30:22–33 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passages, Yahweh instructed Moses on the preparation of special objects which the Israelites will use to worship Yahweh. Yahweh also instructed Moses to appoint Aaron and his sons as priests set apart from the other Israelites. In this passage, Yahweh now tells Moses how to make a special oil which the Israelites use to anoint, or pour upon, the priests and the objects used in the worship of Yahweh.

Yahweh tells Moses to gather several of the best or finest spices, or sweet-smelling plant substances. When Yahweh says that the Israelites must use the best or finest spices, He means that the spices will be expensive, rare, and of the highest quality. This indicates that not just any spices would be acceptable. The worship of Yahweh in His holy places calls for the very best that the Israelites can gather.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, what foods or food ingredients do you save for the most special occasions? What foods or food ingredients are most meaningful? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses to gather liquid myrrh. Some translations call this "free-flowing," "pure," or "fresh" myrrh. The myrrh would harden into a sweet-smelling sticky sap, or people could even grind it into powder. Myrrh came from a plant in southern Arabia, far from where the Israelites lived, and therefore would be very rare, precious, and expensive.

Stop here and look at a picture of the plant myrrh came from and look at a map showing Arabia and the Sinai Peninsula as a group. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses to gather five-hundred shekels of myrrh. You will remember from earlier that the shekel was a weight measure used for dry, non-liquid measurements. A shekel averaged about 11.4 grams, so 500 shekels would weigh about 6 kilograms or 12 pounds.

Yahweh then tells Moses to gather fragrant or sweet-smelling cinnamon. This spice came from the inner barks of trees only found in southern India, and so it was once again a precious, rare, and expensive substance. Not all cinnamon had a fragrant scent, so when Yahweh tells Moses to gather "sweet-smelling" cinnamon, He means that Moses must not use the ordinary kind of cinnamon. This once again indicates how special the spices used to make the anointing oil were to be.

Stop here and look at a picture of bark cinnamon and ground cinnamon as a group. Look at a map showing India and the Sinai Peninsula as a group. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses to use half as much cinnamon as myrrh; Yahweh then explains more specifically that this means 250 shekels, which is about three kilograms or six pounds in modern measurements. Next, Yahweh tells Moses to gather 250 shekels of aromatic or sweet-smelling cane, which is about six pounds, or three kilograms, in modern measurements. A person would make cane spice from reeds, and some translations call it "scented reed" or "reeds of balsam"; others call the spice "calamus." This spice also came from India, far away; like the other spices, it was rare, expensive, and valuable.

Stop here and look at a picture of cane spice as a group. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh next tells Moses to gather 500 shekels, or twelve pounds, or six kilograms, of a spice called cassia. This was a sweet-smelling spice similar to cinnamon; like cinnamon, it came from India, and was expensive and precious. Yahweh more specifically tells Moses to measure the cassia according to the shekel of the sanctuary: this "sanctuary shekel" was a special unit of measurement that differed from the normal shekel. Yahweh probably means here that the Israelites should measure not only the cassia, but also the cane, cinnamon, and myrrh according to the sanctuary measurement and not the normal measurement. This once again indicates the special, set-apart nature of the Israelites' worship of Yahweh.

Stop here and look at a picture of cassia as a group. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh also tells Moses to gather olive oil, a fine liquid substance drawn from the fruit of a tree called an olive tree.

Stop here and look at pictures of an olive tree, olives, and olive oil as a group. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh says Moses must gather a hin of olive oil: a "hin" was a unit of measurement which the Israelites used for measuring liquids. A hin is approximately four litres or one gallon using modern measurements.

Yahweh says that Moses and the Israelites must take the four spices-the myrrh, the cinnamon, the cane, and the cassia-and blend or mix them together with the olive oil. Yahweh tells Moses that the Israelites must blend the spices and the olive oil together. The passage does not say how they were to do this, but probably the Israelites would mix the olive oil and the spices into a paste and then press the mixture through a filtering cloth. This cloth would separate the liquid material from the dry residue of the paste, leaving behind a sweet-smelling liquid incense. Yahweh says that the Israelites must do all of this just as a skilled perfumer or expert incense-maker would do it. This means that the Israelites must blend the oil and the spices with great carefulness and skill. An oil made by careless or hasty blending would not be acceptable to Yahweh. This shows once again how the Israelites' worship of Yahweh would be holy and special. Worshipping Yahweh would not be a dull or ordinary activity.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, what activities call for the most careful and skillful preparation? What activities show others the most honor? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses that the Israelites will make a holy or sacred anointing oil out of the mixture of spices and olive oil. This means that the oil will be poured or smeared upon certain objects and people. Yahweh says twice that the anointing oil will be holy, or sacred, which shows how important it was to Yahweh.

Yahweh instructs Moses to anoint with the oil the following items: the tabernacle or tent of meeting; the ark of the testimony; the table and all its utensils; the lampstand and all its utensils; the altar of incense; the altar of burnt offerings, and all of its utensils; and the bronze basin and its stand. You will remember that these are the items that Yahweh told Moses to make in previous passages. Yahweh says that by anointing those items, the Israelites will consecrate those items, which means to make them holy. Yahweh says that consecrating those items with the anointing oil will make the items most holy, or absolutely holy. This is important. Yahweh wants to show that making something or someone holy sets them apart for the very special work of serving Yahweh. That is why Yahweh says that anything that touches these items will also become holy. Another possible meaning of this passage is that only something or someone that is holy should touch these consecrated items. In either case, Yahweh is making it clear that only Yahweh decides who or what should be holy. No one else but Yahweh can decide.

Yahweh further instructs Moses to anoint Aaron and his sons with the sacred anointing oil. Yahweh says that doing so will consecrate Aaron and his sons, so that they can serve Yahweh as his priests. No one could serve God without being first set apart and consecrated. This shows once again that the worship of Yahweh was a sacred and special thing, set apart from the ordinary things of the world.

Yahweh instructs Moses to tell the Israelites that this oil made from blending the olive oil with the precious spices will be Yahweh's holy anointing oil throughout the generations. Yahweh says He will not permit the Israelites to pour the anointing oil on any ordinary person: this means that Yahweh will only allow the Israelites to use the anointing oil on His priests. Yahweh also says He will not permit anyone to make an oil out of the same materials as this one: this means that no one may mix together an oil by blending myrrh, cinnamon, cane, and cassia with olive oil.

Yahweh then repeats that the anointing oil made from these spices is holy, and says that it shall be holy to the Israelites as well. Yahweh is saying here that he has specially chosen this oil, made from these particular spices, to be His own. The anointing oil is from Yahweh's own design. He regards it as sacred and special. The Israelites, Yahweh says, must likewise regard it as sacred and special. That is why they must not make another oil like it to use for ordinary purposes.

Yahweh declares that if anyone makes another oil like the sacred anointing oil, or puts the sacred anointing oil on an ordinary person who is not a priest, then the person who does these actions will be cut off from the rest of the Israelites. This means that Yahweh would no longer consider that person a member of Yahweh's chosen people. That person would no longer be an Israelite in Yahweh's eyes. This once again shows how much Yahweh wanted to specially set apart both people and things for His purposes.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What objects do people in your culture only use for special purposes, and should not be used for ordinary purposes? What happens in your culture when someone uses these special objects incorrectly? Pause this audio here.

This passage repeatedly shows how the worship of Yahweh was a sacred and special thing. In order for the Israelites to worship Yahweh, they needed to follow Yahweh's instructions on how to worship Him. The Israelites needed to make the special anointing oil according to Yahweh's instructions. The Israelites were not to use the anointing oil for ordinary purposes. Instead, consecrating the priests and the objects used in worship with the anointing oil would make clear that those things had a special and holy purpose.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 30:22–33 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has three scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh instructs Moses on the preparation and mixing of the holy anointing oil.

In the second scene: Yahweh instructs Moses on how to use the holy anointing oil.

In the third scene: Yahweh provides Moses with rules on how the Israelites should not use the anointing oil.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron and his sons
- Perfumer
- Disobedient Israelite cut off from the community

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: Moses is standing on top of Mount Sinai, while Aaron and other Israelites wait at the bottom of the mountain for Moses to return. On top of the mountain, Yahweh is speaking directly to Moses, giving Moses instructions to share with the Israelites. The Israelites will carry out these instructions later. Aaron, Aaron's sons, the perfumer, and the disobedient Israelite are not present on top of the mountain. They will perform their actions later, when Moses returns from the mountaintop with Yahweh's instructions.

In the first scene, Yahweh tells Moses what ingredients to use in making the holy anointing oil. He tells Moses to gather the following items:

- liquid or "pure" myrrh
- cinnamon
- cane or scented reed
- cassia
- olive oil

Yahweh next tells Moses to blend or mix the ingredients together into a holy anointing oil. He tells Moses to mix the ingredients just as a professional perfumer or incense-maker would mix them. This means that the Israelites would carry out these instructions very carefully and skillfully, mixing the olive oil and the spices into a paste and then pressing the mixture through a filtering cloth to leave behind a sweet-smelling liquid incense.

Stop and discuss: Ask a member of the group to give a description of how they make something. The other group members should pay particular attention to the way the person describes their process for making it. Pause this audio here.

In the second scene, Yahweh instructs Moses to anoint these objects in the sanctuary with the holy anointing oil:

- the tent of meeting, or tabernacle
- the ark of the testimony, or ark of the covenant
- the sanctuary table and its utensils
- the lampstand and its utensils
- the altar of incense
- the altar of burnt offering, and its utensils
- the bronze basin and the bronze stand that the basin rests upon

This means that the Israelites will pour or smear the oil upon each of these objects. Yahweh tells Moses that whatever touches these consecrated items will itself become holy or should be holy themselves.

Next, Yahweh instructs Moses to anoint Aaron and his sons. The Israelites must pour the holy anointing oil upon Aaron and his sons. Yahweh explains that this will consecrate Aaron and his sons and make them fit to serve Him as His priests.

In the third scene, Yahweh gives Moses a message and a warning for the Israelites. Yahweh tells Moses to tell the Israelites these things:

- The Israelites and their descendants must regard the anointing oil as holy.
- The Israelites must not pour the holy anointing oil on the body of an ordinary person: this means that the only people the Israelites should anoint with the oil are the priests.
- The Israelites must not make another oil out of the same ingredients as the holy anointing oil.
- If anyone disobeys these commands, the Israelites must remove that person from the community. Yahweh will no longer regard him or her as one of Yahweh's chosen people.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 30:22–33 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has three scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron and his sons
- Perfumer
- Disobedient Israelite cut off from the community

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

You can have the perfume makers, priests, and disobedient person act out the instructions that Yahweh gave Moses.

In the first scene, Yahweh tells Moses to gather certain spices: liquid myrrh, cinnamon, cane or scented reed, and cassia. These spices were precious and expensive, because they came from faraway places, and therefore would be hard to find. Yahweh tells Moses to blend or mix the ingredients together into a holy anointing oil in the same way that a professional perfumer or incense-maker would mix them.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the perfumer, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer, "The worship of Yahweh is so special that I need to prepare the anointing oil with the greatest skill and care." [!end] Continue the drama.

In the second scene, Yahweh tells Moses to take the holy anointing oil and anoint (or pour or smear the oil) on the objects of worship in the sanctuary. He tells Moses to anoint all of these things:

- the tent of meeting, or tabernacle
- the ark of the testimony, or ark of the covenant
- the sanctuary table and its utensils
- the lampstand and its utensils
- the altar of incense
- the altar of burnt offering and its utensils
- the bronze basin and the bronze stand that the basin rests upon

Yahweh tells Moses that the anointing oil will consecrate these objects, making them holy. He also tells Moses that anything that touches these consecrated objects will itself become holy. Therefore, whatever touches these things should be holy.

Pause the drama.

Yahweh also tells Moses to anoint Aaron and his sons. This means that the Israelites will pour the oil on the heads of Aaron and his sons. Yahweh says that this will consecrate Aaron and his sons, so that they may be fit to serve Yahweh as priests.

Pause the drama.

In the third scene, Yahweh gives Moses a message and a warning for the Israelites. Yahweh tells Moses to say to the Israelites that they and all their generations must regard the anointing oil as holy or sacred. Yahweh tells Moses to say to the Israelites that they may not use the anointing oil on an ordinary person, only on a priest, and that they may not make any other oil for personal use out of these ingredients.

Pause the drama.

Lastly, Yahweh tells Moses to say to the Israelites that if anyone disobeys these commands, Yahweh will no longer consider that person a member of Yahweh's chosen people.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 30:22–33 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Yahweh tells Moses to gather the best or finest **spices**. Use the same word to translate Yahweh as you used in previous passages. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on Yahweh. Use the same word to translate spices as you used in previous passages.

Yahweh tells Moses to gather liquid myrrh; some translations call this "pure," "fresh," or "free-flowing" myrrh. **Myrrh** was a sticky, sweet-smelling sap; it could also be ground into a powder.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for myrrh. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses that the myrrh must be 500 **shekels** in weight; some translations say "twelve pounds," or "six kilograms." Use the same word to translate shekels as you used in previous passages.

Yahweh then tells Moses to gather fragrant or sweet-smelling **cinnamon**, a spice made from the inner barks of trees. Yahweh specifies that it should be sweet-smelling cinnamon because not all cinnamon had a fragrant aroma; Yahweh wants Moses to choose only the cinnamon that is sweet-smelling.

Stop here and look at a picture of cinnamon.

Discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for cinnamon. Pause this audio here.

Next, Yahweh tells Moses to gather 250 shekels, or six pounds, or three kilograms, of aromatic, or sweet-smelling, **cane**. Cane spice was made from reeds, and so some translations call it "scented reed" or "reeds of balsam"; other translations call the spice "calamus."

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for cane. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses to also gather 500 shekels, or twelve pounds, or six kilograms of a spice called **cassia**. Continue to use the same word to translate shekels as you previously used. Cassia was similar to cinnamon.

Stop here and look at a picture of cassia.

Discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for cassia. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh now tells Moses to measure the cassia according to the **shekel of the sanctuary**, a special unit of measurement that differed from the normal shekel. Yahweh probably means that Moses should measure not only the cassia, but also the other spices, according to the measurement of the sanctuary shekel. The **sanctuary** was the place where God dwelt among the Israelites. The word can refer to either the tabernacle or tent of meeting, or it can refer to the whole area that contained the tabernacle. Use the same words or phrases to translate sanctuary and sanctuary shekel as you used in previous passages. For more information, refer to sanctuary in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh next tells Moses to gather **olive oil**. This is a fine liquid substance drawn from the fruit of a tree called an olive tree. Remember to use the same word to translate olive oil as you have previously used.

Yahweh says they must gather a **hin** of olive oil. Remember to use the same word for hin as you used in previous passages.

Yahweh instructs Moses to use the mixture of spices and olive oil to make a **holy** or **sacred** oil for **anointing**. Yahweh tells Moses twice that the anointing oil will be holy or sacred. Use the same words to translate anoint and holy, or sacred, as you used previously, and refer to the Master Glossary for more information.

Yahweh tells Moses to blend, or mix, the spices and the olive oil together with as much care and skill as a **perfumer** would use. Perfumers were people who were skilled at blending spices to make special sweet-smelling substances. Some translations may say something like **incense-maker** instead of perfumer.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word you will use for perfumer or incense-maker. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses to use this holy oil to anoint several objects: the **tent of meeting**, or **tabernacle**; the **ark of the testimony**, or **ark of the covenant**; the sanctuary **table** and its **utensils**; the **lampstand** and its **utensils**; the **altar of incense**; the **altar of burnt offering** and its **utensils**; the **bronze basin**; and the bronze stand that the basin rests upon. Translate all of these objects using the same words or phrases that you previously used. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on tabernacle, ark of the covenant, and altar.

Yahweh says that Moses will **consecrate** all of these objects, so that the objects will become most or very holy. Yahweh means here that the act of anointing these objects with the holy oil will make the objects holy. Yahweh further says that anything that touches the consecrated objects within the sanctuary will itself become holy. Use the same words to translate consecrate as you previously used, and refer to the Master Glossary for more information.

Yahweh next instructs Moses to anoint and consecrate Aaron and Aaron's sons with the holy oil, so that they may serve Yahweh as **priests**. This means that before Aaron and his sons can properly serve Yahweh in their roles as priests, they must first be anointed and consecrated. Remember to continue using the same word to translate priest as you have previously used. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on priests.

Yahweh instructs Moses to tell the Israelites they must regard the oil as Yahweh's holy anointing oil throughout all their generations. Use the same word to translate generations as you used previously, and refer to the Master Glossary for more information.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 30:22–33

Audio Content

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Exodus 30:34–38

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 30:34–38 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 30:34–38 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 30:34–38 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Yahweh gave Moses instructions on the preparation of the holy anointing oil, which the Israelites would use to consecrate, or set apart, Yahweh's chosen priests as well as the objects used in the sanctuary for worshiping Yahweh. In this passage, Yahweh gives Moses instructions on the preparation of a special incense or fragrant, smoky aroma made from burning the substance made from mixed spices, which the Israelites will use in the sanctuary.

Yahweh tells Moses to gather certain sweet or fragrant spices. These are spices that have a pleasing scent. Yahweh names four spices that Moses must gather. First Yahweh names stacte, or storax, which was a sweet

tree sap, or resin. This is also called "gum resin," or "resin droplets," since we do not know exactly what tree produced this sap, but the sap must have been especially fine and sweet.

The next spice Yahweh names is onycha. This is also called "aromatic shell" or "mollusk scent," because it was a substance made from the hard shells of certain water-dwelling creatures called "mollusks" or "shellfish." This spice did not smell sweet by itself, but it made a very sweet smell when people combined it with other spices.

Stop here and look at a picture of mollusks or shellfish as a group. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh next names the spice called galbanum. This was a sticky sap, or resin, that people made from certain plants. Like onycha, galbanum did not smell sweet by itself, but when people combined it with other spices, it became more fragrant and sweet-smelling.

Yahweh next says to take sweet spices with pure, or clear, frankincense. When Yahweh says "sweet spices with pure, or clear, frankincense," He probably means that the Israelites should take the three spices He has already named and mix them with the frankincense. Frankincense was another sticky, sweet sap, or resin. It came from trees that grew in East Africa and southern Arabia, far away from where the Israelites were living. Frankincense was therefore precious and expensive, and very special.

Stop here and look at a picture of a frankincense plant and look at a map showing East Africa, Arabia, and the Sinai Peninsula as a group. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh says that Moses should gather an equal amount of each of the four spices. There should be the same amount of stacte, onycha, galbanum, and frankincense; there should not be more of any one spice than the others. Yahweh instructs Moses to blend the four spices together and make them into an incense, a substance that will produce strong and pleasing smells when people burn it.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What plants or burnt smells are especially pleasing and beloved in your culture? How do you use burning spices or pleasant smells in your culture-for worship, healing, or for other purposes? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses that a professional perfumer or skilled incense-maker will mix the spices into an incense. If the Israelites carelessly or hastily mixed together the incense, then the incense would not be acceptable to Yahweh. This shows once again how the Israelites' worship of Yahweh would be holy and special. The Israelites must honor Yahweh with the best incense they can make.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, what activities call for the most careful and skillful preparation? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses that the Israelites must season, or sprinkle, the incense with salt. Salt was a spice which people often used to preserve food or to make the food taste better; however, Yahweh does not mean here that the Israelites should regard the incense as a kind of food. People could also use salt to make incense burn faster and produce more smoke. The salt may have been a symbol for preserving the incense and showing the value of it.

Yahweh also tells Moses that the incense must be pure, or clean, and holy. This again shows how the Israelites must treat the incense as special and set-apart. Yahweh would not accept dirtied or unclean incense. The Israelites must also regard the incense as sacred, or holy, because its ingredients were designed and chosen by Yahweh Himself for this special purpose.

Yahweh tells Moses to grind or beat part of the incense into a powder, or small substance. Yahweh instructs Moses to put the ground part of the incense in front of the ark of the covenant, or ark of the testimony, inside the tabernacle or tent of Meeting, where Yahweh Himself will meet with His priests. Yahweh then says that Moses and the Israelites must treat the incense inside the tabernacle as most holy, or holy in the greatest way. When the Israelites worship Yahweh, or when the priests meet Yahweh on behalf of the other Israelites, it will not be an ordinary event. Worshiping Yahweh will be like nothing else the Israelites do.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What activities do you do in your culture that you only do for very special purposes, and not every day? Who does these activities? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh further says that the Israelites cannot use this incense for their own purposes. This means that they can only use this special incense, made according to Yahweh's directions from the four spices, seasoned with

salt, and ground into a powder, inside the tabernacle. It is not for ordinary or personal use. Yahweh then repeats a third time that the Israelites must regard the incense as holy. Yahweh says here that the Israelites must regard it as holy to Yahweh: this means that Yahweh Himself regards the incense as set-apart and sacred, and therefore that the Israelites must do likewise. Yahweh says that anyone who makes an incense in the same manner as this incense, and uses it on his own body, will be cut off from the other Israelites. Yahweh will no longer regard that person as one of Yahweh's chosen people. This shows once more how special and set-apart the incense was.

In this passage and in the previous passages, Yahweh has given Moses descriptions about the tabernacle and its furnishings, and has given Moses instructions on how the Israelites will make these things. Now those descriptions and instructions are complete.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 30:34–38 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has two scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh instructs Moses on the making of the holy incense.

In the second scene: Yahweh instructs Moses how the Israelites are to use the holy incense, and how they are not to use it.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- A perfumer

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Moses is standing on top of Mount Sinai, while Aaron and other Israelites wait at the bottom of the mountain for Moses to return. On top of the mountain, Yahweh is speaking directly to Moses, giving Moses instructions to share with the Israelites. The Israelites will carry out these instructions later.

In the first scene, Yahweh tells Moses to gather four sweet spices. The spices are:

- stacte, also called storax, gum resin, or resin droplets
- onycha, also called aromatic shell or mollusk scent
- galbanum
- pure or clear frankincense

Yahweh says that Moses should gather an equal amount of each spice. Remember that Moses will give these instructions to the Israelites later: they are instructions for the Israelites to carry out, not just for Moses. Yahweh tells Moses to blend or mix these four spices together to make an incense: a professional perfumer or incense-maker will do this. Yahweh calls them "sweet spices" twice in the text: He probably uses it a second time as a summary of all three spices that He previously mentioned. You do not need to say the word twice.

Yahweh tells Moses to season, or sprinkle, the incense with salt. Yahweh tells Moses that the incense must be clean, or pure, and holy.

In the second scene, Yahweh tells Moses to beat or grind the incense until it is very small, and to put a part of the incense inside the tabernacle, or tent of meeting, in front of the ark of the covenant, or the "testimony." We don't know exactly where this was, but Yahweh was probably referring to burning this incense on the altar of incense. When the priests burned the incense, it would make a sweet and pleasing smell.

Yahweh tells Moses that the Israelites must regard the incense as most holy, or greatly holy. Yahweh has already said before that the Israelites must regard the incense as holy; now Yahweh says this a second time. He does this to demonstrate how important it is that the Israelites regard the incense as sacred or set-apart. This shows the importance of the holiness of the incense.

Yahweh also tells Moses that the Israelites must not make an incense for personal use out of these same ingredients. They must use the incense only in the tabernacle. Yahweh says that the Israelites must understand that He regards the incense made from these ingredients as holy.

Yahweh says that if anyone makes an incense out of these ingredients and uses it for themselves, then Yahweh will no longer regard that person as a member of Yahweh's chosen people.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 30:34–38 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has two scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- The perfumer

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

In the first scene, Yahweh tells Moses to gather equal portions of four sweet spices: a sap called "stacte," or "storax," or "gum resin"; a spice called onycha, made from the shells of certain water-dwelling creatures; another sap, called "galbanum"; and another sap, called pure, or clear, "frankincense."

Pause the drama.

Yahweh tells Moses to blend the spices together to make an incense. Yahweh says to do this with the same skill and careful attention that an expert or professional incense-maker would use. Yahweh says that the incense must be seasoned, or sprinkled, with salt, and that the incense must be clean, or pure, and holy.

Pause the drama.

In the second scene, Yahweh tells Moses to take some of the incense and grind or beat it until it is very small. Yahweh tells Moses to place the ground incense inside the tent of meeting (or "tabernacle") in front of the ark of the covenant (or the "testimony"). Yahweh tells Moses that the incense will be most holy, or greatly holy, to the Israelites.

Yahweh then warns Moses that the Israelites may not use this holy incense for personal purposes. The Israelites may only use it in worshipping Yahweh. Yahweh says that He regards the incense as holy, and the Israelites

must understand this. Yahweh warns that if anyone uses the holy incense for personal purposes, then Yahweh will no longer regard that person as a member of Yahweh's chosen people.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 30:34–38 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Yahweh tells Moses to gather sweet **spices**. Some translations say "fragrant," or nice-smelling, spices or similar wording. Use the same word to translate spices as you used in previous passages. Be sure also to indicate that these are "sweet" or "fragrant" spices, since not all spices are sweet or fragrant. Yahweh wants Moses to use spices that will produce a pleasing smell. Use the same word to translate Yahweh as you used in previous passages. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on Yahweh.

Yahweh names four spices that Moses must gather. The first spice Yahweh names is **stacte**, or storax. This was a sweet tree sap, or resin, and so some translations call it "gum resin," or "resin droplets," or similar wording.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for stacte. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

The next spice Yahweh names is **onycha**. People made onycha from the hard shells of water-dwelling creatures called mollusks or shellfish, and so people sometimes refer to it as "aromatic shell" or "mollusk scent," or similar wording.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for onycha. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

The next spice Yahweh names is **galbanum**. Similar to stacte, this was a sticky sap, or resin, that people made from certain plants.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for galbanum. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

The fourth and last spice Yahweh names is pure **frankincense**, or in some translations, clear frankincense. This was another kind of sticky, sweet sap, or resin.

Stop here and look at a picture of a frankincense plant as a group, if needed. Discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for frankincense. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses to use an equal amount of all four spices. There should not be more of one spice than another. Yahweh tells Moses to mix, or blend, the spices together to make an **incense**. An incense is a substance that produces pleasing-smelling smoke when people burn it. Use the same word to translate incense as you used in previous passages.

Yahweh tells Moses to mix the spices into an incense in the same way that a professional **perfumer** would do it. Some translations say **incense-maker** or similar wording instead of perfumer. Use the same word to translate perfumer or incense-maker as you used in the previous passage.

Yahweh says that Moses must season the incense with salt; some translations say that Moses must sprinkle salt upon the incense. Yahweh also tells Moses that the incense must be clean, or pure, and **holy**. "Clean," or "pure," means that the incense should not have anything mixed into it except what Yahweh has commanded. Use the same word to translate holy that you have used previously. Look up holy in the Master Glossary for more information.

Yahweh tells Moses to beat or grind the incense until the incense is very small. Yahweh instructs Moses to take a portion of this incense and place it in front of the **ark of the covenant**, or **ark of the covenant law**, inside the **tent of meeting**, or **tabernacle**. Sometimes people call the ark of the covenant simply "the covenant," and some others call it "the testimony." Use the same words or phrases to translate ark of the covenant and tent of

meeting, or tabernacle, as you used in previous passages. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on the ark of the covenant and the tabernacle.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 30:34-38

Audio Content

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Exodus 31:1-11

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 31:1-11 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 31:1-11 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 31:1-11 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this passage, Yahweh continues to speak to Moses on top of Mount Sinai. In the previous passages, Yahweh gave Moses detailed instructions on how to make the objects and items of the sanctuary, where the Israelites would worship Yahweh. In this passage, Yahweh tells Moses who will make all of these items, and what kinds of talents or abilities they will have.

Yahweh says that He has specially chosen a man named Bezalel, who is the son of a man named Uri and the grandson of a man named Hur. Some translations say that Yahweh called Bezalel "by name," which means to specially choose or appoint someone. Bezalel was from the tribe of Judah, which was one of the twelve tribes of the Israelites.

Yahweh says that He has filled this man Bezalel with the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God refers to a power that comes from God, called "Yahweh" in this passage. Only God can fill someone with His Spirit: it is not something people can make happen. When God fills a person with His Spirit, that person receives from God a special power or ability, such as physical strength, wisdom, or the power to perform miracles. In this case, Yahweh says that he has filled Bezalel with the Spirit of God which enables Bezalel to use special knowledge, understanding, and skill. Yahweh says that Bezalel is to use this knowledge, understanding, and skill for making all kinds of crafts or works of the hand.

Yahweh explains that Bezalel has the abilities and knowledge to do several things: to take objects made from gold, silver, and bronze and put artistic designs or patterns on those objects; to engrave or carve designs or figures into precious stones or jewels, and to place the precious stones or jewels into other objects; and to make things with wood.

Stop here and look as a group at pictures of an artistic design or pattern made on a metal object, of an engraving carved into a precious stone, and of an item carved out of wood. Pause this audio here.

Bezalel can do all of these things, Yahweh says, with great skill and understanding. But now that Yahweh has filled Bezalel with the Spirit of God, Bezalel can make every item perfectly, exactly the way Yahweh wants it made.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What are some examples of beautiful and skillful works that people make by hand in your culture? What makes them attractive to look at? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh then says that He has specially chosen a man named Oholiab, who was the son of a man named Ahisamach. Oholiab was from the tribe of Dan, which was another of the twelve tribes of the Israelites. Yahweh

says that He has chosen Oholiab to be Bezalel's assistant or helper. Oholiab will work with Bezalel in the making of crafts and works of the hand.

Yahweh further says that He has given special wisdom or understanding to all the skilled artistic workers among the Israelites. These skilled artistic workers included both men and women. The text does not say here that Yahweh filled them with the Spirit of God, as Yahweh did for Bezalel; but the text does indicate that Yahweh made them able to perfectly understand Yahweh's intentions and plans. When these skilled artistic workers begin to make what Yahweh has commanded, they will now know exactly how Yahweh wants each item made, and this knowledge comes directly from Yahweh Himself.

Yahweh says that he has given them this special ability so that they can make all the things that Yahweh commanded them in the previous passages to make. This indicates that there will be many people working to make the objects of worship for the sanctuary, although Bezalel will be in charge of the other workers, and Oholiab will assist Bezalel in leading the workers.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What kinds of jobs in your culture require many people to work together? Talk about a time when many people had to work together, and discuss how you divided up the work then. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh now repeats all of the things the Israelites need to make in order to worship Yahweh:

- the tabernacle, or Tent of Meeting
- the ark of the covenant, or the ark of the testimony
- the seat of mercy, or atonement cover of the ark of the covenant
- all the furnishings of the tabernacle, which include:
 - the table and the table's utensils
 - the lampstand made of pure gold and the lampstand's utensils
 - the altar of incense
 - the altar of burnt offerings and the altar of burnt offering's utensils
 - the bronze basin and its bronze stand
 - the beautifully sewn garments of Aaron and his sons to wear as priests
 - the anointing oil and the fragrant incense for the Holy Place of the tabernacle

Stop here and look as a group at the pictures you used in previous passages for each of these items if needed. Pause this audio here.

In previous passages, Yahweh gave detailed instructions on how to make all of these items. Yahweh is now repeating them so that Moses will clearly remember each of them.

Lastly, Yahweh reminds Moses that the skilled artistic workers among the Israelites must make each of the items for worship exactly as Yahweh previously instructed Moses. Yahweh says this in order to make it clear that the artistic workers must follow all of the detailed instructions that Yahweh gave to Moses in the previous passages.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Give examples of special rules, or instructions, for certain tasks in your culture. Pause this audio here.

This passage acts as a summary of all the instructions for making the tabernacle and everything in it. Now that Yahweh has given those instructions, it is fitting that He now appoints the skilled workers and explains how He will enable them to do this work. The passage also shows us that Yahweh wanted the Israelites to worship Him with objects of the highest quality. Yahweh specially chooses Bezalel, a skilled artistic worker, and Yahweh fills Bezalel with the Spirit of God so that the things Bezalel makes will be perfect. Yahweh also specially chooses Oholiab to help Bezalel, and Yahweh gives special skills and abilities to all the other workers who will make the

items used to worship Yahweh. Yahweh wanted everything in the sanctuary to be made with the best skills and to have the most pleasing qualities.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 31:1-11 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh explains to Moses that a man with the name Bezalel will be in charge of building the objects of worship in the sanctuary.

In the second scene: Yahweh explains to Moses who will help Bezalel in building the objects of worship in the sanctuary.

In the third scene: Yahweh continues speaking to Moses. Yahweh names all of the objects of worship that the people will build.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Bezalel
- Oholiab
- And the other skilled workers of the Israelites

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: Moses is standing on top of Mount Sinai, while Aaron and other Israelites wait for his return at the bottom of the mountain. On top of the mountain, Yahweh is speaking directly to Moses. This is near the end of Yahweh's instructions to Moses on Mount Sinai. The things Yahweh will describe in this passage have not happened yet: Yahweh is telling Moses what Moses will do, and what Moses will tell the people when Moses goes back down the mountain.

In the first scene, Yahweh says that He has specially appointed, or called by name, a man named Bezalel. Yahweh explains that Bezalel's father had the name Uri and his grandfather had the name Hur; Yahweh says that this family was from the tribe of Judah, which was one of the twelve tribes of Israel. Yahweh gives specific details about Bezalel's family in order to single Bezalel out. Yahweh does this so that Moses will not confuse the Bezalel that Yahweh means with any other man named "Bezalel."

Stop here and discuss as a group how your language identifies or singles out specific people. What kind of information do speakers of your language usually give in order to do this? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh says that He has filled Bezalel with the Spirit of God so that Bezalel can skillfully make many things by hand. The Spirit of God is what gives Bezalel the wisdom, understanding, and skills needed to carry out Yahweh's instructions.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will describe and translate being filled with the Spirit of God. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh says that Bezalel is a talented craftsman, and that filling Bezalel with the Spirit of God gives Bezalel ability, intelligence, and knowledge. The word in the Hebrew language for "ability" refers to knowing how to do a job skillfully and well. The word for "intelligence" in the Hebrew language has a similar meaning, but refers to having creative or clever ideas. And the word for "knowledge" means knowing something intimately or very well. Bezalel will use these to do such things as put artistic designs or patterns on objects made from gold, silver, and bronze; engrave or carve things into precious stones or jewels, and to place the precious stones or jewels into other objects; and to make things with wood.

Stop here if needed and look as a group at a picture of an artistic design or pattern made on a metal object, a picture of an engraving carved into a precious stone, and a picture of an item carved out of wood. Pause this audio here.

In the second scene, Yahweh is still speaking to Moses. Yahweh says that he has appointed a man with the name Oholiab to help Bezalel. Yahweh explains that Oholiab is the son of a man with the name Ahisamach; Yahweh says that Oholiab's family is of the tribe of Dan, another of the twelve tribes of Israel. Yahweh lastly says that He has given special abilities to all the skilled workers of the Israelites, so that they can use these abilities to make all the objects of worship in the sanctuary. Although the passage does not say so directly, Yahweh probably means that Bezalel will be the chief worker, and will lead the other workers; Oholiab will help Bezalel in leading the other workers. But many skilled workers will work together to make the objects of worship.

In the third scene, Yahweh names all of the objects of worship that the workers will make:

- the tabernacle, or Tent of Meeting
- the ark of the covenant, or of the Testimony
- the seat of mercy, or atonement cover
- all the furnishings of the tabernacle
- the table and the table's utensils
- the lampstand made of pure gold and the lampstand's utensils
- the altar of incense
- the altar of burnt offerings and the altar of burnt offering's utensils
- the bronze basin and its bronze stand
- the beautifully sewn garments of Aaron and his sons to wear as priests
- the anointing oil and the fragrant incense for the Holy Place of the tabernacle

Stop here and look as a group at the pictures you used in previous passages for each of these items. Remind each other of the names you have chosen to call each of these items. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh lastly reminds Moses that the Israelites must make everything just as Yahweh has commanded it. This refers back to the previous passages, in which Yahweh gave detailed instructions about how to make all of these things. Yahweh is now reminding Moses that the Israelites must follow all of these detailed instructions.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 31:1-11 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Bezalel
- Oholiab
- And the other skilled workers of the Israelites

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

In the first scene, Yahweh and Moses are still on Mount Sinai, and Yahweh has told Moses that He has specially appointed Bezalel and filled Bezalel with the Spirit of God so that Bezalel can make perfectly all of the objects of worship that Yahweh has commanded the Israelites to make.

Pause the drama.

In the second scene, Yahweh says that he has appointed a man with the name Oholiab to help Bezalel.

Pause the drama.

Yahweh next says that He has given special abilities to all the skilled workers of the Israelites. Yahweh says that these workers will use these abilities to make all the objects of worship in the sanctuary.

Pause the drama.

In the third scene, Yahweh names every object that the workers will make. He names the following objects:

- the tabernacle, or Tent of Meeting
- the ark of the covenant, or of the Testimony
- the seat of mercy, or atonement cover
- all the furnishings of the tabernacle
- the table and the table's utensils
- the lampstand made of pure gold and the lampstand's utensils
- the altar of incense
- the altar of burnt offerings and the altar of burnt offering's utensils
- the bronze basin and its bronze stand
- the beautifully sewn garments of Aaron and his sons to wear as priests
- the anointing oil and the fragrant incense for the Holy Place of the tabernacle

Yahweh lastly reminds Moses that the Israelites must make everything just as Yahweh has commanded them. This means that the Israelites must follow all of the detailed instructions that Yahweh gave to Moses about these objects in previous passages.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 31:1-11 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Yahweh speaks to Moses on top of Mount Sinai. Yahweh is God's personal name that He specially revealed to the Israelites. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on Yahweh. Yahweh says that He has specially chosen a man named Bezalel, who is the son of a man named Uri and the grandson of a man named Hur. Some translations say that Yahweh "called Bezalel by name," which means the same thing as saying He chose or appointed Bezalel. Yahweh says that Bezalel was from the tribe of Judah. Use the same word or phrase for **tribe** as you used in previous passages, and look up Israelites in the Master Glossary for more information.

Yahweh says that He has filled Bezalel with the Spirit of God. Being filled with the Spirit of God refers to a power that comes from Yahweh; here it gives Bezalel knowledge, ability, and skill. Yahweh says that Bezalel can use the knowledge, ability, and skill from the Spirit of God to make all kinds of crafts, or objects, made by hand.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **the spirit of God**. Remember that this phrase consists of just the normal word for God and the normal word for spirit: people do not translate this phrase the same way they translate "Holy Spirit" in the New Testament. However, although the phrase "spirit of God" is the general term for God's spirit, you can refer to Holy Spirit in the Master Glossary to hear more about the work of God's Spirit in the Old Testament. Pause this audio here.*

Yahweh also says that He has chosen a man named Oholiab from the tribe of Dan to help Bezalel. Yahweh says further that He has given special ability to all the **skilled workers** among the Israelites. Use the same word to translate skilled workers that you used previously.

Yahweh says that He has given this special ability to the skilled workers so that they can make all the objects for worship in the sanctuary. These are the objects that Yahweh told Moses to make in previous passages. Yahweh names all of the objects again. Use the same word or phrase for each of these words or phrases as you used in previous passages:

- the **tabernacle**, or Tent of Meeting: refer to tabernacle in the Master Glossary for more information on this word
- the **ark of the covenant**, or of the testimony: refer to ark of the covenant in the Master Glossary for more information on this word
- the seat of mercy, or atonement cover
- all the furnishings of the tabernacle
- the table and the table's utensils
- the lampstand made of pure gold and the lampstand's utensils
- the **altar** of incense: refer to altar in the Master Glossary for more information on this word
- the altar of **burnt offerings** and the altar of burnt offering's utensils: refer to burnt offering in the Master Glossary for more information on this word
- the **bronze** basin and its bronze stand: refer to the word bronze in the Master Glossary for more information on this word
- the beautifully sewn garments of Aaron and his sons to wear as **priests**: refer to priest in the Master Glossary for more information on this word
- the **anointing** oil and the fragrant incense for the **Holy Place** of the tabernacle: refer to anoint and Holy Place in the Master Glossary for more information on these words

Stop here and look as a group at the pictures you used in previous passages for each of these items if needed. Pause this audio here.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 31:1-11

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3167411 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Exodus 31:12–18

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 31:12–18 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 31:12–18 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 31:12–18 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In previous passages, Yahweh spoke to Moses on top of Mount Sinai and gave Moses many detailed instructions on how to make and arrange all the items needed for the Israelites to make the tabernacle, which is the place where the Israelites will worship Yahweh. Yahweh called Bezalel and Oholiab to oversee the making of these items, and gave ability and understanding to the skilled workers who would make the items. In this passage, Yahweh continues to speak with Moses on top of the mountain and reminds Moses of the specialness of the Sabbath, which was the seventh day of the week and a day specially set apart by Yahweh. The Israelites would gather on this day to observe the Sabbath, according to the commands of Yahweh.

Almost all of the instructions Yahweh gives to Moses in this passage are instructions that Yahweh gave to Moses in earlier passages. However, because Yahweh has just finished explaining all the things the Israelites need to know in order to make the tabernacle, Yahweh now repeats the instructions about keeping the Sabbath, because when the Israelites have completed the tabernacle, they will need to keep Yahweh's rules about the Sabbath in order to use the tabernacle properly, in the way that honors Yahweh.

Yahweh commands Moses to tell the Israelites that they must observe, or keep the rules about, Yahweh's Sabbath days. Yahweh says that observing the Sabbath will be a sign or special mark between Yahweh and the Israelites, and between Yahweh and all the Israelites' descendants in the years to come. This sign is also a special mark that sets the Israelites apart from all the other peoples around them. Yahweh explains that the purpose of this sign is for the Israelites and all their descendants to know that Yahweh has sanctified them, or made them holy. The Israelites were a special people, chosen and set apart by Yahweh; keeping the Sabbath is one way the Israelites would continue to show all through the years, from generation to generation, that they were Yahweh's special people.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What are some important customs or traditions that you pass on from generation to generation in your culture? Which of these customs are special to your own culture, and different from other cultures around you? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses that the Israelites must observe the Sabbath because the Sabbath is holy for the Israelites. This means that Yahweh set apart the Sabbath as special to the Israelites. The Sabbath was not an ordinary or common day. Yahweh next gives Moses and the Israelites a warning against profaning the Sabbath. "Profaning" something means treating it disrespectfully, or treating it as normal and ordinary. Yahweh warns that if anyone profanes the Sabbath, then the Israelites will put that person to death. In other words, if a person were to treat the Sabbath as a common day, that person would need to die as punishment. Yahweh says this because the Sabbath was so holy and special that the Israelites should never treat it as an ordinary day.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about someone who took something special and set apart and treated it in an ordinary, commonplace way, or a story about someone who failed to be appropriately careful or respectful towards something powerful and important. What consequences followed from this person's actions? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh says that if anyone does any work on the Sabbath, then the Israelites must cut that person off, or remove that person, from the other Israelites. This is another way of saying that the Israelites must put to death any person who works on the Sabbath. Working on the Sabbath would treat the Sabbath as an ordinary day. It would profane the Sabbath. That is why Yahweh commands such a severe punishment for a person who works on the Sabbath. Yahweh explains that the Israelites may work on any of the other six days of the week, but the seventh day will be a day of Sabbath rest: This means that the seventh day, the Sabbath, will be a day of total or complete rest.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: When do you work and when do you rest in your culture? What kinds of times are best for resting? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh says that the Sabbath is holy to Him, just as He said earlier that the Sabbath would be holy to the Israelites. When Yahweh says now that the Sabbath is holy to Him, He means that it is specially dedicated to him or set apart for Him. This is partly because the Sabbath was the day when the Israelites would worship Yahweh in the tabernacle. Yahweh says once more that if anyone works on the Sabbath, then the Israelites must put that person to death.

Yahweh says that the Israelites and all their descendants must think of the Sabbath as a covenant or strong agreement that will last forever. The covenant between Yahweh and the Israelites meant that the Israelites were Yahweh's chosen people. This covenant was to last forever, and observing the Sabbath was a way of keeping that covenant, week after week and year after year. This is another reason why profaning the Sabbath, treating it as an ordinary day, would be punishable by death. If a person profaned the Sabbath, it would show that he or she was not a part of the covenant with Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How would you indicate a covenant or agreement between people in your culture? What objects, signs, or phrases do you use? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh further tells Moses that observing the Sabbath is a sign or reminder that Yahweh made heaven and earth in six days but stopped working and received refreshment, or rested, on the seventh day. Yahweh says that this sign will be between Yahweh and the people of Israel, and it will last forever. In the same way as Yahweh, the Israelites were to work for six days and then rest and honor Yahweh on the seventh day.

After this, Yahweh was finished speaking to Moses. Yahweh then gave to Moses the two tablets of the covenant, or testimony. These tablets were made of stone. Yahweh wrote or inscribed the tablets with His own finger, which means that Yahweh himself had placed the words of the covenant onto those two stones. In those days, when a king made a covenant with his people, the king would make two copies of the covenant. One copy would be for the king, and one copy would be for the king's people. This showed that both the king and the king's people understood the words and meaning of the covenant. In a similar way, Yahweh was a king to the Israelites, and they were His people.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 31:12–18 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has four scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh tells Moses why the Israelites must observe the Sabbath, which was the seventh day of each week.

In the second scene: Yahweh explains to Moses the consequences of profaning the Sabbath, or treating it as an ordinary day.

In the third scene: Yahweh explains to Moses a second time why the Israelites must observe the Sabbath.

In the fourth scene: Yahweh gives to Moses the two tablets of the testimony, or tablets of the covenant.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- And one or more Israelites working and resting

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting: As in the previous passage, Moses is on top of Mount Sinai. Yahweh is speaking to Moses there. The other Israelites are at the bottom of the mountain, waiting for Moses to return. Yahweh gives instructions to Moses on top of the mountain. The things Yahweh will describe in this passage have not happened yet: Yahweh is telling Moses what Moses will tell the people, and how the people will obey Yahweh, after Moses goes back down the mountain.

In the first scene, Yahweh tells Moses that Moses must speak to the people of Israel. Yahweh tells Moses what Moses should say. Moses should say that the Israelites must keep, or observe, Yahweh's Sabbaths, because doing this will be a sign between Yahweh and the Israelites, and all the Israelites' descendants. This sign will be a reminder, or a way of knowing that it is Yahweh alone who has sanctified the Israelites, or made the Israelites holy. Remember that Yahweh wants the Israelites to be different from all the other people groups around them. Yahweh says that the Israelites must keep the Sabbath because the Sabbath is holy for them.

In the second scene, Yahweh tells Moses that if one of the Israelites profanes the Sabbath, treating it disrespectfully or treating it as an ordinary day, then the Israelites will put that person to death. Yahweh next says that if any Israelite does work on the Sabbath, then the Israelites will cut that person off from the other Israelites. This is another way of saying that they will put that person to death. In this scene, Yahweh first warns about the consequences of profaning the Sabbath, and then Yahweh warns about the consequences of working on the Sabbath. This is because working on the Sabbath is an example of profaning the Sabbath. If an Israelite worked on the Sabbath, he or she would be treating the Sabbath as an ordinary day.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will translate or describe the idea of "profaning" something special or set apart. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh then says that the Israelites may work on the other six days of the week, but that the Sabbath, the seventh day of the week, will be a day of solemn or complete rest. Yahweh says that the Sabbath will be holy to Him. Yahweh now repeats the warning from before: If an Israelite does any work on the Sabbath, then the Israelites will put him to death. Yahweh repeats it because it is a very serious warning to the Israelites about the holiness of the Sabbath and the consequences for profaning the Sabbath by working on it.

In the third scene, Yahweh again says that the people of Israel must keep the Sabbath and observe it from generation to generation. Yahweh says that observing the Sabbath from generation to generation will be a lasting or eternal covenant between Himself and the Israelites. Yahweh says that the Sabbath will be a lasting sign or reminder that Yahweh made heaven and earth, which means all of creation, in six days, but that Yahweh rested on the seventh day.

In the fourth scene, Yahweh has finished speaking with Moses on top of Mount Sinai. Yahweh gives to Moses the two tablets of the testimony, or tablets of the covenant. These are stone tablets, and Yahweh Himself wrote the words of the testimony or covenant on the stone tablets with His finger. Saying that Yahweh wrote the words with His own finger is a way of emphasizing the fact that these words came directly from Yahweh. These words did not come from Moses, but from Yahweh Himself, and therefore these words are greater and have more worth than anything a human being could think, say, or write.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 31:12–18 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has four scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- An Israelite who works for six days and rests on the Sabbath

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In the first scene, Yahweh tells Moses to speak to the people of Israel and tell them that they must observe Yahweh's Sabbaths. Yahweh says that doing this will be a reminder to the Israelites and all their descendants that Yahweh has sanctified the Israelites. Yahweh says that the Israelites must keep the Sabbath because the Sabbath is holy for them.

Pause the drama.

In the second scene, Yahweh tells Moses that if an Israelite profanes the Sabbath by working on the Sabbath, then the Israelites must put that person to death. Yahweh says that the Israelites may work on the other six days of the week, but on the Sabbath, the Israelites must have total or complete rest. Yahweh says that the Sabbath will be holy to Him, and says once more that if any Israelite works on the Sabbath, then the other Israelites will put that person to death.

Pause the drama.

In the third scene, Yahweh says again that the Israelites must keep the Sabbath and observe it from generation to generation. Yahweh says that this will be a lasting covenant between Himself and the Israelites, and a lasting reminder that Yahweh made all things in six days, but rested on the seventh day.

Pause the drama.

In the fourth scene, Yahweh has finished speaking with Moses on top of Mount Sinai. Yahweh gives Moses the two stone tablets of the covenant.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 31:12–18 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Yahweh instructs Moses to tell the **Israelites** that they must keep, or observe or celebrate, Yahweh's **Sabbath** days. Use the same words to translate Sabbath, Yahweh, and Israelite as you have previously used. For more information on Sabbath, Yahweh, and Israelite, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh says that His Sabbath days are a **sign** between Himself and the Israelites. The Hebrew word for sign in this passage means both a special mark and a reminder, because observing the Sabbath would be a way for the Israelites to remember that Yahweh specially chose them and set them apart. Use the same word to translate sign as you have previously used. For more information on sign, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh says that this sign will last throughout all the **generations** of the Israelites, meaning the sign will last through all the generations of the Israelites' descendants. Use the same word to translate generation as you have previously used. For more information on generation, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh says that the purpose of this sign is so that the Israelites will know that Yahweh is the one who has **sanctified** the Israelites, or made them **holy**. The Hebrew word for "know" in this passage means "to know through experience," because the experience of observing the Sabbath will help the Israelites truly know that Yahweh has made them holy. Use the same word to translate sanctify or make holy as you have previously used. For more information, refer to holy and sanctification in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh says that the Israelites must observe the Sabbath because the Sabbath is holy to the Israelites. Yahweh says that if anyone **profanes**, or desecrates, the Sabbath, then the Israelites must put that person to death. To profane something means to abuse it by treating it as ordinary and commonplace. It means to treat something without honor and respect. If an Israelite did not treat the Sabbath as holy and set apart, then that would profane the Sabbath.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for profane. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information about profane. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh says that keeping the Sabbath and observing it will be an eternal **covenant**, or a covenant that will last forever. A covenant was a solemn promise that people would make with one another, which they were not allowed to break. This covenant was between Yahweh and the Israelites. Use the same word to translate covenant as you have previously used. For more information on covenant, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh is now finished speaking with Moses on top of Mount Sinai. He gives to Moses the two tablets of the testimony, sometimes translated as tablets of the covenant. These tablets were stone tablets, and Yahweh Himself had written them. These tablets contained the laws that Yahweh had given to Moses, which the people of Israel were to obey as a sign of the covenant between them and Yahweh.

Stop here and review how you have described these tablets of stone in previous passages. You may translate this as tablets of the testimony or tablets of the covenant, but translate this in the same way that you have in previous passages. For more information on testimony or covenant, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 31:12–18

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (1846292 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Exodus 32:1-14

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 32: 1-14 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 32: 1-14 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 32:1-14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In a previous passage, Moses entered into a cloud and climbed a mountain. Yahweh spoke to Moses on the mountain and gave Moses ten words, or commandments, for the Israelites to follow. Moses had been on the mountain for forty days and forty nights. This passage tells the story of what the Israelites did near the end of those forty days, before Moses came down off the mountain.

The people of Israel saw that Moses was taking a long time, so they gathered as a group and approached Aaron. They say to Aaron, "Make us gods who will go before us." The word "gods" is a general word for God. People used this word for both pagan or false gods, or they used it as the general title of the God of the Israelites. The people tell Aaron the reason they ask is because they do not know what has happened to Moses. The people speak disrespectfully about Moses when they say "as for this Moses" or "this fellow Moses." The people also probably believe Moses has died.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell about a time you decided to do something on your own because you felt abandoned by your leader. Why did you do this? What happened when the leader returned? Pause this audio here.

Aaron says, "Take off all the gold earrings your wives, sons, and daughters are wearing and bring them to me." Aaron uses a very strong word when he says "take off." This possibly shows Aaron was impatient with the Israelites for requesting an image to worship. These gold earrings likely came from the Egyptians when the Israelites plundered them just before leaving. The people obey Aaron.

Stop here and discuss as a group: What is something important or valuable in your culture? How easy would it be to give it up for something else? How difficult do you think it was for the Israelites to give up their gold earrings? Pause this audio here.

Aaron takes all the gold the people give him, melts the gold, and makes a cast image of a calf. He uses a tool to shape the calf. Scholars are not sure what tool Aaron used, but he probably used a chisel or a tool that shapes metal. It is possible that Aaron first made the calf of wood and then overlaid it with gold, but we do not know. The calf was a young bull or ox. The bull represented strength and fertility. Many people in the region made images of bulls to represent their gods.

Stop here and look at a picture of a golden calf as a group. As a group, discuss what kinds of statue-making or metal crafts exist in your community. What other crafts do people in your area create? Who makes these crafts? Which of these crafts are special or only done by your community? Pause this audio here.

The spokesmen for the people of Israel see the golden calf Aaron made. They tell the people that these are their gods who brought them out of Egypt. Aaron sees what the people are saying about the idol and builds an altar in front of the calf. Aaron says, "Tomorrow shall be a feast to Yahweh." Aaron allows the people to worship the idol, but he tries to make the idol a symbol of Yahweh's presence. Aaron follows the nearby cultures that use idols as representatives of their gods, rather than Yahweh's laws that do not allow the people to see Yahweh face to face.

The next morning, all the people get up early and offer burnt offerings and fellowship or peace offerings to the golden calf. You will remember that Yahweh instructed the people to make these offerings in previous passages. These offerings required the sacrifice of a young bull or ox. People burned the entire animal in burnt offerings, but people did not burn the entire animal in peace offerings. The person making the sacrifice sprinkled the animals' blood on the altar and on the people. Next, the people of Israel celebrate by eating and drinking and dancing. We are not sure exactly what kind of dancing and celebration the people did, but it was improper for worshiping Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a time when you witnessed someone or a group of people worshiping an idol. What idol did they worship? What did the person or the group do when they worshiped the idol? What idols do people worship in your culture? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh sees what the people are doing and says to Moses, "Go down the mountain, because your people, who you delivered out of Egypt, have become corrupt." Moses has been on the mountain with Yahweh for forty days. You will remember that earlier Yahweh called the Israelites his people. Now Yahweh is calling the Israelites Moses' people. He is giving Moses the credit for rescuing the Israelites out of Egypt. By saying this, Yahweh is showing how unhappy and upset he is with the Israelites, and Yahweh is disowning the Israelites. Yahweh tells Moses the people have done the opposite of what he commanded them to do. Yahweh tells Moses the people have made a golden calf and have worshiped and sacrificed to it. And now the Israelites are saying the idols are their gods who delivered them out of Egypt. You will remember in a previous passage Yahweh commanded the Israelites not to worship any god except Yahweh. The Israelites accepted those rules and agreed to Yahweh's covenant with them.

When Yahweh tells Moses he has seen the people of Israel, he is saying he knows what the people are really like. They are stiff-necked, or stubborn, people who refuse to obey. Yahweh is saying the people of Israel are just as stubborn. Yahweh tells Moses what he is about to do unless Moses intervenes for Israel. When Yahweh says his wrath will burn hot against the people and he will consume them, Yahweh is saying he is so angry with Israel he wants to destroy them. But Yahweh tells Moses he will make Moses into a great nation.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell of a time someone did something wrong to you. How did you feel? How did you react? Pause this audio here.

Moses responds to Yahweh with humility. Moses sees that Yahweh is angry and tries to calm down Yahweh's anger toward Israel. Moses says, "Why are you so angry with Israel, the people you brought out of Egypt with your mighty hand?" Moses refers to Israel as Yahweh's people, in contrast to what Yahweh said earlier. Moses also said that Yahweh used his mighty hand, or his great power, to bring the people out of Egypt. The Israelites saw Yahweh's great power when Yahweh sent the plagues to Egypt and when he helped the Israelites cross the Red Sea. Moses appeals to Yahweh's reputation. He asks why the Egyptians should say Yahweh only had evil intent when he brought Israel out of Egypt but then wants to kill them in the mountains and remove them from the face of the earth, or destroy them. Moses begs Yahweh to turn away from his anger and not destroy the Israelites. Moses then reminds Yahweh of the promise he made with the ancestors of Israel, Yahweh's servants Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to multiply their offspring so much that they are as many as the stars in the sky. Moses also reminded Yahweh of his promise to give the Israelites land to call their own.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell about a time when you defended a friend who did something wrong to another person. Why did you defend your friend? How did you feel about the situation? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh responded to Moses' plea by holding back his anger and not destroying the people of Israel.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 32: 1-14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: The Israelites come to Aaron asking for a representation of a god for them to worship. Aaron tells them to bring all the gold earrings from the women and children and then molds the earrings into a golden calf. Aaron tells the people that the next day they will have a feast for Yahweh.

In the second scene: Aaron and the Israelites wake up early and offer burnt offerings and peace offerings to Yahweh. The Israelites eat, drink, and dance wildly.

In the third scene: On top of the mountain, Yahweh tells Moses what the Israelites are doing. Yahweh's anger burns against the Israelites. Moses talks to Yahweh and reminds Yahweh of the promise that Yahweh had made with the Israelites' ancestor Abraham of making his offspring as numerous as the stars. Yahweh changed his mind about the disaster that he had spoken about doing to the Israelites.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- Israelites

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

This scene starts with the Israelites at the bottom of the mountain. Aaron is leading them. Moses has been on top of the mountain with Yahweh for 40 days. The Israelites do not know where Moses is, so they go to Aaron and say, "We don't know where this man Moses is." The Israelites are speaking disrespectfully about Moses. The Israelites, probably hostile, gather around Aaron and ask him to create a god for them.

Aaron tells the Israelites to bring him the gold earrings the women and children were wearing to melt them down. Aaron did not ask for the earrings from the men, likely because he did not need their earrings. The Israelites would have had the gold from when they had lived in Egypt.

Aaron took the gold and created it with his hands and graving tools. No one knows exactly how Aaron made the golden calf, but he most likely learned how to work with gold from the Egyptians. Aaron probably carved and shaped a calf out of wood. After that he would have melted the gold earrings and then hammered them into thin sheets. Next, Aaron would have covered the wooden calf with the gold sheets.

Aaron presented the golden calf to the Israelites as a representation of Yahweh to go before the people. It is important to remember that the Israelites were not trying to create a new god to worship as they had seen in Egypt, but the Israelites asked Aaron for a visible representation of Yahweh to be with them like the pillar of fire or smoke that had led them out of Egypt.

The Israelites were pleased with the golden calf and proclaimed that the golden calf was the god that brought them out of Egypt. The Israelites used the general term for gods, not the name Yahweh. When Aaron saw this, he built an altar in front of the golden calf and told the Israelites to come back the following day and there would be a feast to Yahweh. Remember that the Israelites had just made a covenant with Yahweh in which they said that they would not make or worship any object that represents Yahweh. However, they are breaking this covenant here when they try to make an idol that represents Yahweh.

The next morning the Israelites got up early and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the golden calf. After the people presented their offerings, they sat down to eat and drink, then got up to dance.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How do you talk about dancing wildly or inappropriately, or celebrating in a way that is not honoring to God? Discuss how you will describe what the Israelites did when they ate, drank, and danced together in front of the idol. Pause this audio here.

Now the language makes it clear that the scene suddenly shifts to the top of Mount Sinai, where Moses is meeting with Yahweh. On Mount Sinai, Moses was receiving instruction from Yahweh for 40 days and nights before Aaron presented the golden calf to the Israelites.

It is important to understand that now Yahweh changed the way he was talking about the Israelites to Moses. Yahweh tells Moses to go down from Mount Sinai because Moses's people, who Moses brought up out of the land of Egypt, had so quickly turned away from what Yahweh had commanded them to do. Yahweh tells Moses about how the Israelites have made for themselves a golden calf and have worshiped and made sacrifices to the golden calf. Yahweh uses the word gods, many many gods, even though he is referring to only the golden calf. Yahweh says to Moses, "I have seen these people, and pay attention! They are a **stiff-necked** people. Stiff-necked is special language that people use to call someone stubborn. A stiff-necked person does not easily obey whoever is in charge. Yahweh tells Moses to leave him alone because he is so angry with the Israelites Yahweh wants to destroy them. But Yahweh is actually commanding Moses to intercede, or pray, for Israel. Yahweh commands Moses to leave him alone, but he tells Moses what he will do if Moses does not intervene. Yahweh also knows that Moses will intervene and pray for Israel. Yahweh says that he would make a great nation out of Moses.

Moses seeks the favor of Yahweh, his God. Moses reminds us here that his God is Yahweh himself, and Moses uses God's personal name when he talks with him. Moses asks Yahweh why he is so angry with the Israelites that Yahweh had brought out of Egypt. He uses similar language as Yahweh by calling the people of Israel "your people," that is, Yahweh's people. Moses asks Yahweh to remember the forefathers who had come before the Israelites. Yahweh had established the covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Israel. After the reminders from Moses, Yahweh relented or changed his mind, meaning that Yahweh held back his anger toward the Israelites.

Stop here and discuss as a group: We know that Yahweh does not make mistakes. How can you translate this idea, that Yahweh held back his anger and did not destroy the people of Israel?

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 32: 1–14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- God
- Moses
- Aaron
- Israelites

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

The people of Israel saw that Moses was taking a long time to come down from the mountain, so they said to Aaron, "Make us gods who will go before us. We don't know what has become of this man Moses, who brought us out of the land of Egypt." Aaron says to the people, "Take off the gold earrings your wives, sons, and daughters are wearing and give them to me." The people obeyed Aaron.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Aaron, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Fearful of the people," or "Impatient with Moses for taking so long," or "Impatient with the people for being so impatient with Moses!" or "Disheartened for not being asked to be the new leader." [!end] Continue the drama.

Aaron took the gold earrings and made them into a golden calf. The people of Israel said, "These are your gods, Israel. They brought you out of the land of Egypt." When Aaron saw this, he built an altar to Yahweh.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Aaron, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Despair because the people do not see the golden calf as a representation of the one true Yahweh," or "Discouraged that the people of Israel are beginning to turn away from Yahweh," or "Afraid that I made a mistake in granting the people their wish for an idol." [!end] Continue the drama.

He said to the people of Israel, "Tomorrow shall be a feast to Yahweh."

The next day the people of Israel got up early and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. Then the people began eating, drinking, and dancing wildly.

Meanwhile, on the mountain, Yahweh said to Moses, "Go down, for your people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves. They have turned aside quickly out of the way that I commanded them. They have made for themselves a golden calf and have worshiped it and sacrificed to it and said, 'These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!'" Yahweh said to Moses, "I know these people. They are very stubborn and disobedient. Now step aside so I can destroy and consume them. Then I will make you into a great nation."

Pause the drama.

Moses said to Yahweh, "Yahweh, why are you so angry with your people, whom you have brought out of the land of Egypt with great power? Why should the Egyptians say, 'With evil intent did he bring them out, to kill them in the mountains and to consume them from the face of the earth'? Turn from your burning anger and relent from this disaster against your people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, to whom you swore by your own self, and said to them, 'I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your offspring, and they shall inherit it forever.'"

Pause the drama.

Then Yahweh held back his anger and did not destroy the people of Israel.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 32: 1-14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The people of Israel saw that Moses was taking a long time to come down from the mountain, so they said to Aaron, "Make us **gods** who will go before us. We don't know what has become of Moses, who brought us out of the land of Egypt." The word used for gods is a general word for "god" that can mean the Creator God or any false gods people might worship. Look up gods in the Master Glossary for more information. Use the same word gods that you have used in previous passages.

Aaron took the gold earrings the people gave him and made a golden calf. The people of Israel said, "These are your gods, Israel. They brought you out of the land of Egypt." When Aaron saw this, he built an **altar** before the

calf. An altar is a structure usually built of stone or earth where people sacrifice animals. Use the same word for altar as you used in previous passages. Look up altar in the Master Glossary for more information.

Aaron said to the people of Israel, "Tomorrow shall be a feast to **Yahweh**." Yahweh is the personal name for Israel's God. Use the same word as you used in previous passages. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information.

The next day the people of Israel got up early and offered **burnt offerings** and **peace or fellowship offerings**. Burnt offerings and peace offerings are animal sacrifices made to Yahweh. Use the same word or phrase for burnt offerings and peace offerings as you used in previous passages. Look up burnt offerings and peace or fellowship offerings in the Master Glossary for more information.

Meanwhile, on the mountain, Yahweh told Moses the Israelites have made a golden calf and are sacrificing to it. **Sacrifice** is a gift someone gives to God that could either be an animal or food. A person might make a sacrifice to God to thank him for something or ask forgiveness for something they did wrong or to confirm their relationship with God. Use the same word of sacrifice as you used in previous passages. Look up sacrifice in the Master Glossary for more information.

Yahweh said to Moses, "I have seen these people, and behold, they are a stubborn and disobedient people." Yahweh told Moses to leave him alone so his **wrath** might burn hot against the people of Israel. Yahweh wanted to destroy the Israelites so he might make Moses into a great **nation**. Wrath is strong anger towards someone. Use the same word for wrath and nation as you used in previous passages. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on nation.

Moses said to Yahweh, "Remember **Abraham**, **Isaac**, and **Israel**, your **servants**, to whom you **swore** by your own self, and said to them, 'I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your offspring, and they shall inherit it forever.'" Abraham, Isaac, and Israel are the ancestors of the Israeli people. A servant is a person who works for or serves someone else. Use the same word for servant as you have used in previous passages. Refer to servant in the Master Glossary for more information. To swear is to make an **oath** or a promise. To swear an oath means you will absolutely keep your promise. To swear an oath and not keep the promise is very disgraceful and dangerous. Use the same word for swore as you used in previous passages. Look up oath in the Master Glossary for more information.

Then Yahweh held back his anger and did not destroy the people of Israel.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 32:1-14

Audio Content

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Exodus 32:15-24

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 32:15-24 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 32:15-24 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 32:15-24 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, while Moses was on the mountain receiving instructions from God on how the people of Israel were to behave, the people asked Aaron to build them an idol who could lead them through the

wilderness. When Yahweh saw what the people were doing he became angry, but Moses prayed for the people and Yahweh held back his anger.

Moses turned and went back down the mountain. As Moses went down the mountain, he carried two stone tablets that Yahweh had written his covenant law on. This covenant law was the ten words, or commandments. Both sides of the tablets, or stone slabs, had writing on them. Yahweh had written the ten commandments on each tablet so there were two copies of the commandments. This was a common practice for this type of tablet during this time. They wanted to make sure that there was an extra copy in case something happened to the other copy. The phrase "written by Yahweh himself," means Yahweh literally engraved, or carved, his covenant on them.

Stop here and look at a picture of the stone tablets as a group. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh wrote the instructions for Moses. These tablets were the most valuable item to the Israelites.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What is the most valuable or sacred item in your culture? Why is it so valuable or important? Pause this audio here.

Joshua had gone with Moses up the mountain, but did not enter into the cloud with Moses. You will remember in earlier passages, Yahweh appeared to Israel in a cloud, but only Moses was allowed to enter the cloud to talk with Yahweh. The cloud was on the top of the mountain. You will also remember in an earlier passage that Joshua went with Moses up the mountain. But Joshua did not enter the cloud. Instead, Joshua waited for Moses outside the cloud. When Joshua and Moses were coming back down the mountain, Joshua heard noise from the Israelites' camp. Joshua thought there was a noise of war in the camp. Moses said the noise did not sound like shouting for victory or crying for defeat. Moses said that it sounded like singing. It is important to remember from the previous passage that Yahweh told Moses what was happening in the Israelite's camp. Joshua did not hear what Yahweh had said.

When Moses got near the camp, he saw the golden calf and his anger burned. This means that Moses was very, very angry.

Yahweh had commanded the people of Israel not to make any idols and to only worship Yahweh. The golden calf was an idol that the people were worshiping. Moses threw the tablets, with great force, on the ground and the tablets broke at the foot, or base, of the mountain. The people of Israel would have understood the broken tablets as their breaking of God's covenant with them. The location at the foot of the mountain is also important because it was normally where Yahweh would meet the Israelites.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What would happen if a leader destroyed a valuable or sacred item in your culture? How would people react to the leader destroying the item? Pause this audio here.

The people of Israel would have understood the severity of their sin. Moses burned the golden calf with fire, then ground it into a fine powder and scattered it on the water. Moses used a stone to grind the gold and wood of the idol into powder, similar to the way that people ground grain into flour with a stone. Moses then made the people of Israel drink the water. Perhaps Moses made the people drink the gold water so that the people could never use the gold again. Or perhaps drinking the gold was a trial to show who was guilty. In either case, Moses' actions ensured that he completely destroyed the golden calf and the people could never use the gold and wood again.

Then Moses asked Aaron what the people did to him to make him bring such a great sin, or disobedience to Yahweh, upon them. Worshiping an idol instead of Yahweh is a deliberate break of the covenant commandments, which all the people of Israel had already agreed to. Aaron shifts blame away from himself and tells Moses not to be angry with him. Aaron calls Moses, "lord," even though Moses is younger than Aaron. By calling Moses, "lord," Aaron is acknowledging that Moses has authority over him. Aaron reminds Moses that the people of Israel are determined to do evil. Aaron tells Moses that the people told him to make gods who will go before them because they did not know what had happened to Moses. Aaron explains that he asked the people to give him all the gold they were wearing. Aaron said he threw gold into the fire and out came the calf. Aaron is saying that the calf happened accidentally. He is trying to put all the blame on the people of Israel.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story of a time when someone did something wrong but they tried to cover it up by shifting blame on someone else. What happened to that person? How did you feel? Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 32: 15–24 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has four scenes.

In the first scene: Moses comes down from Mount Sinai carrying the two tablets on which Yahweh had engraved his instructions. On the way down the mountain Moses met Joshua, and Joshua said that he heard the sound of war in the Israelite camp. Moses told Joshua that the sound was not of victory or defeat from war but the sound of celebration.

In the second scene: As Moses and Joshua came near the camp they saw the golden calf and the Israelites dancing. Moses became very angry. Moses threw the tablets he was carrying on the ground at the bottom of Mount Sinai.

In the third scene: Moses took the golden calf that the Israelites made and burned it with fire, ground it to powder, and scattered it on the water. He made the people of Israel drink the water with the gold powder in it.

In the fourth scene: Moses talked to Aaron about what had led Aaron to bring about such a great sin against Yahweh in making the golden calf.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Joshua
- Aaron
- Israelites

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It is important to remember that Yahweh had been speaking with Moses about the laws for the people of Israel for 40 days before Moses started to come down Mount Sinai. Yahweh had told Moses what was going on in the camp before Moses turned and went back down the mountain. Moses turning implies that his back was to Israel and he was facing Yahweh. This shows Moses as a mediator between Israel and Yahweh.

It is important to remember that Moses was bringing with him two tablets on which Yahweh had written his laws. Yahweh had written on the front and back of both tablets. These tablets represented his covenant to the Israelites. The Israelites had already accepted this covenant before Moses went up on top of the mountain to receive the covenant in written form.

Stop here and look at a picture of the tablets. Pause this audio here.

Joshua, Moses' assistant, joined Moses and walked down the mountain with Moses. We do not know where Joshua had been waiting. Joshua is far enough away from where Moses was talking to Yahweh that Joshua could not hear what Yahweh told Moses. Joshua was also not close enough to the Israelite camp to know the Israelites had been making a golden calf, because Joshua thought that the noises he heard was from a war that had broken out. Joshua thought the noises were loud shouting noises or fighting noises. Moses answers Joshua very clearly, using special language in a 3-part response. Moses tells Joshua the noise is *not* the sound of victory. It is *not* the sound of defeat. *Instead*, it is the sound of celebration. Moses' anger could be growing stronger the closer he gets to the camp. If it is appropriate for your culture, translate it as poetic.

Stop here and discuss. What kind of sounds do people in your culture make when they are celebrating? How do you describe these sounds? Pause audio here.

The Israelites camped near the base of Mount Sinai. When Moses got near the base of the mountain he could see the golden calf and the people celebrating and Moses' anger burned hot. This means Moses was very angry.

Stop here and discuss. How do you talk about someone who is very angry in your culture? Pause audio here.

Moses threw the tablets he was carrying forcefully on the ground and broke the tablets. The tablets breaking symbolized the broken covenant between Yahweh and Israel because of Israel's disobedience.

Stop here and discuss how you would translate throwing forcefully in your culture. Pause audio here.

Moses then went through a several step process of destroying the golden calf. Moses would have needed a very hot fire to melt the golden calf down. A wood center of the calf would have helped get the gold hot enough, but we do not know exactly how Aaron made the calf. After the gold had cooled, Moses could then grind the gold into a fine powder with a rock or some sort of grinding object. Other people may have helped him in this process. Grinding the gold into a fine powder shows that Moses completely destroyed the calf. Moses then added the powder into water and made the people of Israel drink the water. Making people drink this type of water was often a way for leaders to determine who is guilty and who is not. Drinking this water was also a form of punishment to the Israelites and would have shown the Israelites the seriousness of the sin that they committed against Yahweh.

After Moses made the Israelites drink the water with the gold in it, Moses talked with Aaron. Until now, Moses may have been too angry to talk to Aaron, but now he probably has had time to calm down. Moses asks Aaron what the people did to him that Aaron would allow this sin to happen. Moses directed his question at Aaron specifically because Moses had left Aaron in charge while Moses went up to Mount Sinai to receive tablets of the covenant from Yahweh. Moses knows the Israelites are the ones who have sinned, but he blames Aaron for their sin. Aaron answers Moses and tries to pass the blame to the people. However, Aaron recognizes that although Moses is his younger brother, Moses has authority over him. Aaron speaks respectfully to Moses and calls him "my lord," or "master." Aaron continues the special language around anger when he says to Moses, "Do not let your anger burn hot, my master." Then Aaron says that the people are "set on doing evil," meaning that they are determined to do evil things.

Then Aaron tries to explain what happened in order to further pass the blame to the Israelites. Aaron said he told the Israelites to give him their gold earrings. The people tore their earrings out and gave the earrings to Aaron. He says that he threw the gold from the Israelites into the fire and to his surprise, out came the golden calf. Aaron is implying that the calf just accidentally formed by itself without Aaron shaping it. Everyone would have known this was not possible. There is no record of any more discussion about the golden calf between Aaron and Moses.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 32: 15–24 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has four scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Joshua
- Aaron
- Israelites

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Yahweh had written his commandments on both sides of two stone tablets. Moses left the mountain with the two stone tablets and returned to where Israel was camped. Moses carried those two stone tablets with him. Joshua, Moses' helper, met Moses as he was coming down the mountain, and walked with him towards the camp. Joshua and Moses heard noises coming from the Israelite's camp. Joshua said, "There is a noise of war in the camp." Moses said, "The sound is not of shouting for victory or crying for defeat. I hear the sound of singing."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Intrigued about what is going on in the camp," or "Worried about what I might find when I get to the Israelite camp," or "Hopeful that what I find at the camp is not as bad as what Yahweh said." [!end] Continue the drama.

When Moses and Joshua got near the camp, Moses saw the golden calf and became furious. Moses threw the tablets on the ground and the tablets broke. Moses burned the golden calf with fire, then ground the gold into a powder. He scattered the powder across the water and made the people of Israel drink the water.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing Israel, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Worried about what might happen to us," or "Afraid of what Moses might do," or "Sad that we disobeyed Yahweh." [!end] Continue the drama.

Moses said to Aaron, "What did the people do to you that you have brought such a great sin upon them?" Aaron said, "Don't be angry with me. You know the people are determined to do evil things. The people told me, 'Make gods who will go before us. We do not know what has happened to Moses.' So I told them to give me all the gold they were wearing. I threw it into the fire and out came this calf."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Aaron, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Afraid of what Moses might do to me," or "Sorry for making the golden calf," or "Worried that Moses or Yahweh might punish me."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 32:15–24 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Yahweh is the personal name of God and is used throughout this passage. Use the same word or phrase for Yahweh as you used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses left the mountain and returned to where Israel was camped. Yahweh had written his **testimony** or **covenant** law on both sides of two stone tablets. The covenant law was the ten words, or commandments, that Yahweh had given the people of Israel. Sometimes this covenant law was called the tablets of the testimony because the covenant law was a witness to the fact that Yahweh had a covenant with his people. A covenant is a promise that two people or two groups of people make to each other. A covenant is a sacred promise and has serious consequences if people break it. If you use the phrase "covenant law" for the two tablets, use the same word or phrase for covenant as you used in previous passages. If you use the phrase "tablets of the testimony,"

use the same word or phrase for testimony as you used in previous passages. For more information on testimony or covenant, refer to the Master Glossary.

When Moses and Joshua got near the camp, Moses saw the golden calf and became furious. The word idol is not in the story, but if your audience will be confused by just saying calf or golden calf, you could include the word idol in your translation.

Moses said to Aaron, "What did the people do to you that you have brought such a great **sin** upon them?" Sin is disobeying Yahweh. Use the same word or phrase for sin as you used in previous passages. For more information on sin, refer to the Master Glossary.

Aaron said, "My **lord**, or master, don't be angry with me. You know the people are set on doing evil. The people told me, 'Make **gods** who will go before us.'" Use the same word for lord and gods as you used in previous passages. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on lord and gods.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 32:15–24

Audio Content

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Exodus 32:25–35

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 32:25–35 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 32:25–35 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 32:25–35 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Moses and Joshua came down from Mount Sinai. When Moses saw that the Israelites had made a golden calf and were worshiping the idol, Moses burned the calf, ground it into powder and mixed it with water, and made the people drink it.

Moses sees that the people of Israel are out of control, or running wild. The people are running wild because Aaron had let the people run wild. Israel's enemies are now secretly laughing at and mocking Israel. Moses stands, or positions himself, in the gate of the camp and shouts to all the people of Israel. A camp usually does not have gates, so most likely the gate refers to the main entrance to the camp or the main area for tribal activities.

Moses tells the people to come to him if they are on Yahweh's side. To serve Yahweh or to be loyal to Yahweh is to be on Yahweh's side. All the Levites gather around Moses. Moses says that Yahweh, the God of Israel, commands that all the men of the Levites must strap their sword to their belt and go back and forth, from gate to gate, throughout the camp, and kill their brother, friend, and neighbor.

The sword here is a long dagger about eighteen inches long with a wood or bone handle. A person usually carried the sword in a leather sheath that was strapped to the left thigh. It is not clear how many gates there were. When the Levites went back and forth from gate to gate or entrance, they were going from one end of the camp to the other. Moses says that Yahweh has instructed the Levites to kill their brothers, friends, and neighbors, or their fellow tribesmen, Israelites, and people close to them. It is important to know that Yahweh's command to kill only includes men. The Levites were not to harm the women and children. The Levites obey Moses and kill about 3000 Israelite men.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story of a time when you had to punish a close friend or relative. Pause this audio here.

When the Levites return, Moses tells them that they have been ordained, or consecrated, or Yahweh has set them apart to serve him because they obeyed Moses. Because the Levites obeyed Yahweh and did not spare the lives of those closest to them, Moses tells them that Yahweh will bless them. It is not clear what the blessing is, but it is important to remember the blessing is coming from Yahweh.

The next day, Moses tells the people of Israel that they have committed a great sin. But Moses says that now he will go up to Yahweh and maybe make atonement for their sin. Moses will climb the mountain and enter back into the cloud where Yahweh is. Perhaps this shows Moses is hopeful, but he still has doubts. Moses will make atonement, or cover up the sins of the Israelites so they can have a good relationship with Yahweh again. Moses knew he could not forgive Israel's sins, but he was hopeful he could persuade Yahweh to forgive Israel's sins.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story of a time when someone had to ask forgiveness for someone else. What was the result of the request? Pause this audio here.

Moses climbs back up the mountain to meet with Yahweh. Moses tells Yahweh the Israelites have committed a terrible sin. Moses is confessing Israel's sin to Yahweh so he can ask forgiveness from Yahweh. Moses says the Israelites made a god or gods of gold. Moses asks Yahweh, "If you will forgive the Israelites' sin," as a question to Yahweh. If Yahweh will not forgive Israel's sin, then Moses asks Yahweh to blot, or remove, Moses from Yahweh's book. Yahweh's book is a scroll or document in which Yahweh has written the names of the living or the names of his people. The book can be referred to as the "book of the living" or the "book of remembrance." The idea of a "book of the living" was common in ancient times. Cities would keep records of people who lived there for various reasons. In a similar way, Yahweh keeps a record of all people. If those people sin against Yahweh, Yahweh can erase them from the book.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, how do you pass down history from generation to generation? Why is history important to remember? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh responds to Moses' proposal, saying he will blot out, or wipe away from his book, anyone who has sinned against him. Yahweh tells Moses to go lead the people to the place Yahweh spoke of. This instruction from Yahweh is a command to Moses. The place Yahweh spoke of is the land he promised Moses and Israel. It might be helpful to recall an earlier promise Yahweh made in a previous passage. Yahweh tells Moses something very important. Yahweh says his angel, or messenger, will go ahead of Moses to the people. However, on the day Yahweh visits, or the day Yahweh comes for punishment, he will punish the Israelites who disobeyed.

Then Yahweh sends a plague, or disaster, to the people because of what they did with the calf Aaron had made. We do not know what kind of plague Yahweh sent.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 32:25–35 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has four scenes.

In the first scene: Moses saw that Aaron had allowed the people of Israel to get completely out of control. Moses stood at the entrance to the camp and shouted to the people of Israel and asked the people that were with Yahweh to come and join Moses and the Levites came and gathered around Moses.

In the second scene: Moses spoke to the Levites and told them what Yahweh told them to do because the people of Israel had committed such a great sin. Moses gave them the instruction of what Yahweh had asked for the Levites to do. The Levites obeyed Moses' command. Moses told the Levites that by obeying Yahweh the Levites had prepared themselves for service to Yahweh and that the Levites would receive a blessing.

In the third scene: Moses spoke to the people of Israel about how they had committed a terrible sin. Moses said that he would go back up to Yahweh on Mount Sinai to ask forgiveness.

In the fourth scene: Moses spoke to Yahweh on behalf of the Israelites and asked for forgiveness. Yahweh told Moses what will happen to the Israelites that sinned against Yahweh. Yahweh then gave Moses instructions that an angel from Yahweh would lead the way before the people of Israel. Yahweh said that he will call the people of Israel to account and hold them responsible for their sins. Yahweh sent a great plague on the people of Israel because they worshiped the golden calf that Aaron had made.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Aaron
- The Levites
- Israelites
- Yahweh

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It is important to remember that Moses had just finished a conversation with Aaron where Aaron did not tell the truth about what had happened in the Israel camp with how the golden calf had been created. Moses saw how out of control the Israelites had been under Aaron's leadership. Aaron had let the people of Israel run wild, and now the people were a shame to their enemies. That is, Israel's enemies whispered, ridiculed, and secretly laughed at Israel.

It is important to consider there is not a specified amount of time between the conversation Moses had with Aaron and Moses standing at the entrance of the camp and shouting to the Israelites. But Moses probably stood at the entrance to the camp soon after the conversation.

Moses stood at the entrance to the camp and shouted to the Israelites.

Stop here and look at an illustration of Israel's camp as a group. Pause this audio here.

Moses asked for the Israelites who were on Yahweh's side, or who were loyal to Yahweh, to come and stand beside Moses. All of the Levites gathered around Moses.

*Stop here and discuss as a group how you will show that **Yahweh's side** means those people who were loyal to Yahweh. What word or phrase will you use for "Yahweh's side"? Pause this audio here.*

Yahweh gave Moses instructions to give to the Levites about who to punish and how to carry out the punishment of the Israelites for their terrible sin against Yahweh. Moses instructed the Levites to strap their sword to their side. This shows that the people were ready to act.

Stop here and show a picture of an Israelite with their sword strapped to their side. Pause this audio here.

Moses told the Levites to kill their brothers, neighbors, and fellow countrymen. This means they were to kill those who sinned against Yahweh, even if those people were close friends or family. The Levites' devotion to Yahweh was more important than their devotion to their family and friends.

The Levites obediently carried out the instructions. When they return to Moses, Moses tells the Levites they are set apart to serve Yahweh, and that Yahweh will bless them because of their obedience.

The next day, Moses says to the people that he will go back up Mount Sinai and ask Yahweh to forgive the people for their sins that they had committed.

Moses meets Yahweh on the mountain and asks Yahweh to forgive Israel's sins. Moses begins his request by using language that shows Yahweh he is confessing Israel's sin and is about to ask Yahweh to forgive Israel. Moses is respectful and humble when he makes his request. If Yahweh will not forgive Israel's sins, Moses asks Yahweh to remove his name from Yahweh's book. Yahweh tells Moses that he will only remove from his book the people who disobey him. He tells Moses to go back to the people of Israel and lead them. Yahweh promises to send his angel to guide Moses. And when the time is right, Yahweh will punish the people of Israel who disobeyed him.

Then Yahweh sent a plague on Israel because of the calf Aaron made. We do not know what kind of plague Yahweh sent.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 32:25–35 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Aaron
- The Levites
- The disobedient Israelites
- Yahweh

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Moses saw that the people of Israel were out of control. Aaron had let the people get out of control and become shamed before their enemies. Moses stood in the gate of the camp and shouted to the people, "Whoever is on Yahweh's side come to me."

Pause the drama.

All the sons of Levi gathered together with Moses. Moses said to the Levites, "This is what Yahweh, the God of Israel says: 'Let every man strap his sword to his belt and go back and forth from gate to gate throughout the camp and kill your brother, friend, and neighbor.'"

Pause the drama.

The Levites obeyed Moses and killed 3,000 people.

Moses said to the Levites, "You have been set apart for Yahweh because you were against your own sons and brothers. Yahweh has blessed you today."

The next day, Moses said to the people of Israel, "You have committed a great sin, but now I will go up to Yahweh. Maybe I can make atonement for your sin."

Pause the drama.

Moses went back up the mountain to meet with Yahweh. Moses said, "The people of Israel have committed a great sin. They made gold gods for themselves. Please forgive their sins. But if you do not, then remove me from the book you have written."

Then Yahweh said, "Whoever has sinned against me I will blot out of my book. Now go, lead the people to the place I spoke of, and my angel will go before you. However, when the time comes for me to punish, I will punish them for their sin."

Pause the drama.

Then Yahweh sent a plague to the people because of what they did with the calf Aaron had made.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 32:25–35 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

All the sons of Levi gather around Moses. Levi was one of the twelve sons of Jacob. Levi's descendants are called **Levites**. Use the same word for Levites as you used in previous passages. Refer to Master Glossary for more information.

Moses says that Yahweh of Israel commands that all the men of the Levites must strap their **sword** to their belt. The sword here probably refers to a long dagger about eighteen inches long with a wood or bone handle. It was usually carried in a leather sheath that was strapped to the left thigh. Translate sword in the same way as you have in previous passages.

Stop here and look at a picture of a sword as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

The Levites were to kill their **brothers**, **companions**, and **neighbors**-anyone who had been disloyal to Yahweh. Brother here refers to fellow tribesmen or Israelites, and does not include women. Companion means friend or comrade. Neighbor refers to someone very close, either physically close or closely related.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what words or phrases you will use for **brother**, **companion**, and **neighbor**. Pause this audio here.*

When the Levites return, Moses tells them that they have been **ordained** to serve Yahweh because they obeyed Moses. To ordain someone is to dedicate them or set them apart for Yahweh.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **ordained**. Pause this audio here.*

Because the Levites obeyed Yahweh and did not spare the lives of those closest to them, Moses tells them that Yahweh will **bless** them. The word bless means to give a special favor of kindness. Use the same word for bless that you used in previous passages. For more information on bless, refer to the Master Glossary. It is not clear what the blessing is, but it is important to remember the blessing is coming from Yahweh.

The next day, Moses told the people of Israel that they had committed a great **sin**. But Moses said he will go up to Yahweh and maybe make **atonement** for their sin. What Moses is saying is that he will climb the mountain and enter into the cloud where Yahweh is. Atonement means to cover over to restore a broken relationship with Yahweh. To make atonement for sin means to cover up the sin of the Israelites so that they can have a good relationship with Yahweh.

Use the same word for atonement as you used in previous passages. Look up atonement in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there.

Moses says the Israelites made **gods** of gold. Gods here are plural, but it can also be singular, since Israel only made one bull. Use the same word for god as you used in previous passages. Look up gods in the Master Glossary for more information.

Yahweh's book is a scroll or document that Yahweh has written the names of the living or the names of his people. People can refer to this book as the "book of the living" or the "book of remembrance."

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **Yahweh's book**. Pause this audio here.*

Yahweh says to Moses, "Behold, or listen. My **angel** goes before you." Angels are supernatural messengers from God. Use the same word for angel as you used in previous passages. Look up angel in the Master Glossary for more information.

Yahweh is saying his messenger will go before Moses. However, on the day Yahweh visits, or the day Yahweh comes for punishment, he will punish the Israelites who disobeyed.

Then Yahweh sends a **plague** to the people because of what they did with the calf Aaron had made. Plague means to strike with a disaster.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **plague**. Pause audio here.*

We do not know what kind of plague Yahweh sent.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 32:25–35

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (1500573 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Exodus 33:1-11

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 33:1-11 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 33:1-11 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 33:1-11 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last passage, Moses met with Yahweh again to see if Yahweh would forgive the Israelites for worshiping the golden calf. Yahweh is the personal name for God and will be used throughout this passage. Yahweh told Moses He would punish the Israelites for their disobedience but that Moses should still lead them to the Promised Land. Then Yahweh caused a plague, or sickness, to spread among the people. Now, the Israelites mourn Yahweh's absence and Moses uses a temporary tent to meet with Yahweh.

Yahweh instructs Moses to leave Mount Sinai, where they currently are, and to continue traveling with the people to the land Yahweh promised to give to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Unlike before, Yahweh does not call the Israelites his people. Rather, Yahweh reminds the people that it was Yahweh himself, not the golden calf, who freed them from Egypt through the leadership of Moses. Yahweh also reminds the Israelites that He is still keeping his promise to their ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. As you remember, Yahweh promised Abraham that his offspring, or descendants, would be more than he could count and that Yahweh would prepare a special land for them. Yahweh says He will send an angel, or messenger of Yahweh, to guide them. Since there are already several people groups living in the Promised Land-the Canaanites, Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites-Yahweh promises to drive them out or force them to leave.

As Yahweh described before when Moses was at the burning bush, this Promised Land will be flowing with milk and honey. This phrase means the land will be rich and fertile. Milk refers to goat's milk while honey refers to a thick syrup made from dates or grapes. If your culture does not have date trees, you can compare it to the thick, sweet substance made by bees that people find in the wild.

Stop here and look at a picture of a date tree and the syrup made from it as a group. Pause this audio here.

But this time, Yahweh adds a restriction to his promise-Yahweh says he will not go with the Israelites to the Promised Land. As we will see later, this does not mean that Yahweh will not be with the Israelites at all on their journey. Rather, the Israelites will not enjoy the full presence of Yahweh as they did before their disobedience. Otherwise, Yahweh might consume or destroy the Israelites before they arrived at the Promised Land because they were a stiff-necked, or stubborn and rebellious, people. Yahweh is holy, so he cannot be in the presence of people who are sinful, or who disobey him. Therefore, Yahweh is being kind to the people. If Yahweh is with them and they are disobedient, he would have to destroy them. He does not want to do that, so he chooses to not be with the people.

When Moses tells Yahweh's words to the Israelites, they are distressed, or ashamed and frightened. This is a surprising change of events in Moses' narrative. Without Yahweh's presence, the Israelites no longer have an identity. They made the golden calf as a god they could see. Now, Yahweh is telling them his presence will not stay with them. This means the rest of their journey will be much harder and require them to trust Yahweh even more. The Israelites hear this news and mourn.

One form of mourning in Jewish culture was to change your appearance to show what you are feeling. So the Israelites take off all of their fancy clothes and ornaments, or jewelry, to show mourning. This was the same expression of mourning when someone died.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people show that they are mourning deeply in your culture? How do people's appearance or actions change when they are mourning? Tell a story about what someone did in your culture when they were in deep mourning. Pause this audio here.

But Yahweh commands them to take off their jewelry not only for a short time, but for the rest of their journey-from now when they are still at Mount Horeb, for the rest of their journey. Mount Horeb is another name for Mount Sinai. When Yahweh says, "I will decide what to do with you," this means he has not yet punished his people for worshiping the golden calf. So the Israelites will continue their journey not only experiencing less of Yahweh's presence, but also not knowing how Yahweh will punish them for their disobedience.

Moses then describes Yahweh's relationship with the Israelites during this time. Moses sets up the "Tent of Meeting." This was a single tent set apart from the main camp of Israel that was meant to be used for a short time until the Israelites made the tabernacle, or House of God. Even the name "Tent of Meeting" in Hebrew, the original language, is the same name used for the tabernacle. But the Israelites will not make the tabernacle until later on. We are not sure when exactly Moses started using the Tent of Meeting. But we do know that the Israelites spent around 10 months from their arrival at Mount Sinai until they made the tabernacle for Yahweh.

Unlike the instructions Yahweh gave his people for the tabernacle, the Tent of Meeting is placed outside the camp of the Israelites. Even though Yahweh is distant from his people, he still cares for the Israelites. Any person who needed guidance from Yahweh would go with Moses to the tent and ask Yahweh for help. Whenever Moses walked outside of the camp and met with Yahweh in the tent, all of the Israelites would stand at the entrance of their tents and watch until Moses entered. Every time Moses entered, Yahweh's presence in the form of a cloud would appear at the entrance of the tent, and Yahweh would speak to Moses. When the Israelites saw Yahweh appear at the tent they would worship him from afar in front of their own tents. Worship means they bowed down in reverence. Seeing this time and time again reminds the Israelites that Yahweh specially chose Moses to lead them.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, where are your sacred or holy places? Who has access to them? What happens if someone enters that place without having permission? Pause this audio here.

Though Yahweh said he will not go with the Israelites to the Promised Land, Moses still enjoys a close relationship with Yahweh. Moses is able to meet with Yahweh face to face. This does not mean that Moses saw Yahweh's face but rather that they met as close friends. Moses puts his assistant, Joshua, in charge of the tent whenever he is not meeting with Yahweh. Joshua was much younger than Moses and he stayed in the tent. It is possible that Joshua was like a caretaker and lived outside of the main camp of Israel in his own tent to be able to watch over the Tent of Meeting.

In the next passage, Moses will beg Yahweh once more to remember his chosen people and go with them to the Promised Land.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 33:1-11 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has five scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh speaks to Moses. It is possible that this conversation takes place in the Tent of Meeting. Yahweh tells Moses to lead the people away from Sinai and to continue their journey to the land he promised to their ancestors. Yahweh says that he will not go with them, but he will send an angel to guide them. Yahweh says he will force the people groups already living in the promised land to leave.

In the second scene: Moses tells the Israelites what Yahweh said, that Yahweh will no longer go with them to the Promised Land because they are a rebellious people. The Israelites take off their jewelry and mourn deeply.

In the third scene: Yahweh tells Moses to command the people to not wear jewelry while he decides what to do with them.

In the fourth scene: Moses walks out of the camp of the Israelites and meets with Yahweh in the Tent of Meeting. All of the Israelites watch as Moses enters the tent and the presence of Yahweh arrives at the entrance of the tent. The people worship Yahweh from their own tents.

In the fifth scene: Moses leaves the tent and walks back into camp. Joshua stays close to the Tent of Meeting and watches over it.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Yahweh
- The Israelites
- Joshua

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It's important to remember the story of the Israelites. Yahweh chose Abraham and promised he would have more descendants than he could count and that he would provide a special land for them. Even though Abraham was old and did not have children, he believed and trusted in Yahweh's promise. Abraham's descendants became known as Israel. Yahweh has just freed the Israelites from Egypt and made a special covenant, or agreement and promise, that He is their only God and they are his chosen people.

It is important to notice that Yahweh gives a message of hope about keeping his promise of bringing his people to the land he has prepared for them. But then Yahweh gives them the news that he will not be with them. Yahweh says this is because he didn't want to destroy his own people because of their sinfulness, or disobedience.

It's important to remember that the land Yahweh promised to the Israelites already has people groups living in the land, specifically the Canaanites, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. But Yahweh promised to force those people groups to leave the land.

It is important to notice that Yahweh tells the Israelites to go up to a land that gives good production. This description helps the Israelites to understand how fertile the land is. Yahweh says the land is flowing with milk and honey. It doesn't mean that milk and honey flow in the land like a river, but that the land's production is abundant.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: When you see a land that produces very well, how would you describe it to someone else? What are the common phrases to express that a land is very fertile in your language? Pause this audio here.

It is important to note that Moses describes the reaction of the Israelites after they heard the words of Yahweh-they mourned and took off their ornaments. Then Moses makes it clear what Yahweh told Moses before the Israelites mourned about the way to mourn.

It is important to notice that Yahweh is not speaking twice to Moses. The first time Moses emphasizes that Yahweh is not going with the Israelites because he does not want his presence to consume or destroy the Israelites. Then Moses repeats the words Yahweh told him to emphasize the mourning process-the Israelites needed to take off their ornaments until Yahweh decided what to do with them.

When Yahweh calls the Israelites stiff-necked, Yahweh is telling them that they are doing what they want and do not turn away from it. Stiff-necked is a way to say stubborn.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What are the ways to describe a person who is stubborn in your culture? What expressions do you have in your language that mean stubborn? Pause this audio here.

It is important to remember that the Egyptians gave the ornaments and jewelry to the Israelites when they departed Egypt and that the Israelites then used that jewelry to form the idol of the golden calf.

It's important to remember that not wearing jewelry was a cultural way for the Jews to show mourning. Yahweh tells Moses to tell the people to take off their ornaments or jewelry. "From Mount Horeb onwards" implies for the rest of their journey to the Promised Land-this will last for 40 years!

Then Yahweh says that he will decide what to do with them. This implies that Yahweh has not yet decided what to do with his people.

Moses then talks about something that has been happening while the Israelites were at Mount Sinai. Moses uses a word like "now" to describe something that was happening regularly. Now Moses used to set up a tent some distance from the camp-we can see that Moses met with Yahweh on a regular basis in the tent of meeting. Then Moses describes Yahweh's relationship with his people through the Tent of Meeting.

Moses sets up the Tent of Meeting at a distance from the main camp of Israel. The tent probably acted as a shield to keep Moses from seeing Yahweh fully since Moses was on the inside and Yahweh's presence was outside the tent in a cloud. Anyone who wanted to speak to Yahweh would have to walk away from the camp where everyone could see them.

Every time the people saw Moses going into the tent of meeting, the people stood outside their tent and showed respect by bowing.

Moses introduces Joshua as the son of Nun. It was normal in Jewish culture to refer to someone by using the name of their father; Nun was the father of Joshua.

Joshua watched over the tent of meeting when Moses was not meeting with Yahweh. Joshua most likely lived in the tent. It is possible that Joshua was like a caretaker and lived outside of the main camp of Israel in his own tent to be able to watch over the Tent of Meeting.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 33:1-11 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has five scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Yahweh
- The Israelites
- Joshua

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Act out Yahweh telling Moses to go to the land that Yahweh promised to Abraham and his descendants. Yahweh says that He will send an angel to drive out the people groups that are already living in the land promised to Abraham.

Pause the drama.

Act out Yahweh continuing to tell Moses to go to the land of milk and honey, but saying that He will not be with them, because the presence of Yahweh would destroy the Israelites due to their disobedience. The Israelites react to this news by mourning. They take off their jewelry as a way to mourn. Yahweh tells Moses that the Israelites have to take off their ornaments while he decides what to do with them.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Sad. We have disappointed Yahweh. I understand his anger, but he has to come with us. I can't do this without him," or "Angry. Why could the people not wait for my return? Why did they turn away so easily to worship another god?" or "Humble. Even though the people rejected him, Yahweh is faithful to his promises." [!end] Continue the drama.

Act out Moses pitching a tent, and calling it the tent of meeting. People regularly go out of the camp with Moses to the tent to seek guidance from Yahweh. But when Moses goes to the tent, the Israelites stand up at their doors watching him until he enters the tent. Then Yahweh's presence in the form of a pillar of cloud descends at the entrance of the tent. The people of Israel worship Yahweh from their own tents. Moses has a close relationship with Yahweh and speaks to Yahweh like a friend.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I am pleased with my servant Moses," or "I must be patient with my chosen people," or "I am faithful to my promises even when my people are not." [!end] Continue the drama.

Act out Moses coming back to the camp, and his assistant Joshua staying outside of the camp without leaving the tent.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 33:1-11 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Yahweh speaks to Moses. Remember, Yahweh is the personal name for God, and it is used throughout this passage. Use the same name for Yahweh that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and look at a map showing the Red Sea, the Wilderness of Sinai, Mount Sinai, and the land of Canaan as a group. Pause this audio here.

It is the land God promised or swore to give the Israelites. The word **swear** or **make an oath** means to make a promise so that people know they must keep their agreement and that it cannot be changed. When a person speaks the oath, they ask God to punish them if they do not keep their promise. Since God is making the oath, we know he is perfect and will not break his promise. Use the same word or phrase for oath as you used in previous passages. For more information on oath, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh says he will send an angel to guide the Israelites. An **angel** is a spiritual being who is a messenger of Yahweh. Use the same word or phrase for angel as you used in previous passages. For more information on angel, refer to the Master Glossary.

When Moses tells the people what Yahweh said, the Sons of **Israel**, or the descendants of Jacob, take off all of their jewelry and mourn. Use the same word or phrase for Israel as you used in previous passages. For more information on Israel, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses refers to Mount Sinai as Mount Horeb-both names reference the same mountain so either name can be used in your translation.

Moses sets up the **Tent of Meeting** and meets with Yahweh outside of the camp. Remember, even though the Tent of Meeting has the same name as what will become the tabernacle, they refer to two different things.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How will you translate the Tent of Meeting to be sure people know it is different from the tabernacle? Pause this audio here.

When the people see the cloud representing Yahweh's presence come down to the entrance of the tent, they **worship** in front of their own tents. Worship means to show awe and wonder of Yahweh. The word also carries the idea of bowing in reverence to someone. People in the Old Testament believed that worship could take place anywhere that Yahweh showed himself. Use the same word or phrase for worship as you used in previous passages. For more information on worship, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh meets with Moses in the form of **a pillar of cloud**. Be sure to use the same phrase for pillar of cloud as you used in previous passages.

Joshua is Moses' **assistant**. He had the important job of watching over the Tent of Meeting when Moses was not meeting with Yahweh. Be sure that your word for assistant implies that Moses gave him important tasks to do.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 33:1-11

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3771438 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Exodus 33:12-23

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 33:12-23 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 33:12-23 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 33:12-23 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The Israelites are in mourning after Yahweh told them he will no longer go with them to the Promised Land. Yahweh is the personal name for God and will be used throughout this passage. This rejection came after Yahweh's chosen people worshiped a golden calf. Instead, Yahweh said he will send an angel to guide them. Now, Moses begs Yahweh on behalf of the Israelites to change his mind and go with his chosen people to the Promised Land.

The Israelites are devastated by the separation from Yahweh's favor due to their sin of idolatry. So Moses continues his conversation with Yahweh. Moses reminds Yahweh of what Yahweh has told him in the past.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How important are promises in your culture? Tell a story of a time when someone made a promise or commitment and did not do it. Pause this audio here.

Moses knows Yahweh chose him to lead the Israelites. However, Moses asks who will go with him as he leads the Israelites. Even though Yahweh had already promised an angel would go before them to guide them, this was not the same thing as Yahweh himself guiding and protecting them with his constant presence.

Moses continues and tells Yahweh that if Yahweh is truly pleased with him, then Yahweh will allow Moses to know his ways, or to know him better and to understand his plans for Israel. This was a clever appeal since Yahweh himself had previously told Moses that he was pleased with him. As you remember, Yahweh told the people he was still deciding what to do with them after they rebelled and worshiped the golden calf. Moses humbly asks Yahweh to remember that Yahweh himself chose Israel as his people. As Yahweh's chosen leader for Israel, Moses asks Yahweh to not only show favor to Moses but to extend that favor to Israel.

Yahweh shows compassion on Moses and answers Moses' request. Yahweh restores his promise to go personally with the Israelites on their journey to the Promised Land, or the land Yahweh specially prepared for the descendants of Abraham. This was a huge relief for Moses because before, Yahweh said he would only send an angel to go with them. Now, Yahweh assures Moses of his full presence. Yahweh goes on to promise Moses rest. This could refer to Moses' responsibility for the people becoming easier because Yahweh is with him, or it could refer to Israel having peace and victory over their enemies when Yahweh successfully leads them to the Promised Land. It's best to leave your translation open to either interpretation.

Moses continues to ask for Yahweh's reassurance of his presence. Moses respectfully asks Yahweh to not allow him and the Israelites to leave Mount Sinai without Yahweh's constant presence. Moses reasons that Yahweh's presence is what makes the Israelites special and different from other nations, or other people groups, on earth. Moses asks how other nations will see the greatness of Yahweh on the Israelites' journey without Yahweh's presence accompanying them.

Yahweh agrees to do what Moses asked. Yahweh says He will personally go with the Israelites to the Promised Land. Yahweh will do this because he is pleased with Moses and knows him by name. This means that Yahweh has a special relationship with Moses. Moses then asks to see Yahweh's glorious, or powerful and shining, presence. Moses has seen Yahweh's presence before when Yahweh led them out of Egypt and at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting. But Moses asks once more to see Yahweh's presence.

Moses most likely wants reassurance. He probably wants to know that Yahweh is truly going to come with them and be present in the same way he has been before as the Israelites prepare to leave Mount Sinai. Yahweh responds by saying that all of his goodness will pass by Moses. We do not know what exactly this looked like. It most likely refers to Moses being able to see Yahweh's full splendor and light in a way that would leave no doubt of Yahweh's presence. Since there is no bad in Yahweh, all of Yahweh's goodness could also refer to the nature of Yahweh, that Moses would understand Yahweh better than he had before. Yahweh displays his goodness in that He continually keeps his covenant, or promise, to Moses and his chosen people. However, in this particular passage Yahweh is agreeing to pass by Moses with his goodness in a more specific and active way. Yahweh does not actually pass by Moses in this passage, but Yahweh agrees that he will show Moses his goodness and describes how he will do it.

Yahweh tells Moses that he will speak his own name so that Moses will have no doubts about who Yahweh is and what his promises mean. Yahweh helps Moses understand who He truly is by saying, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." Here, mercy refers to Yahweh not punishing the Israelites as they deserved, but instead having pity on them and showing compassion. Though the Israelites deserved to be punished for their idolatry, Yahweh instead chooses to honor

his promise to his chosen people and to go with them personally to the Promised Land. Yahweh is saying that his mercy and compassion are available to those he has chosen and with whom he has made his covenant, or promise.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Describe a time when someone showed mercy to another person where you live. How did the person respond? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh says he will not allow Moses to see his face, or to see his presence. This was a protection from Yahweh since Moses would die if he saw Yahweh fully because Moses was still a sinful human. Yahweh then gives Moses instructions for how he will experience his presence. Yahweh places Moses on a rock that is not far from Yahweh. Yahweh tells Moses that he will see Yahweh from behind, moving away from him. The descriptions of "cover you with my hand" and "remove my hand" does not mean that Yahweh is like a human and really has giant hands. But rather, these descriptive phrases are the closest way Moses can describe Yahweh's presence and gentle actions of protecting him while Yahweh passed by. Some scholars believe Moses' interaction with Yahweh takes place on top of Mount Sinai because of Yahweh's reference to the rock beside him, but it is possible that Moses was still in the tent of meeting at the base of the mountain.

Stop here and look at a picture of the top of Mount Sinai as a group. Pause this audio here.

In the next passage, we will see Yahweh restore the stone tablets and the covenant to Moses and to the Israelites.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 33:12-23 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has four scenes.

In the first scene: Moses continues his conversation with Yahweh. Moses asks Yahweh who He will send with Moses to the Promised Land. Moses tells Yahweh that if Yahweh is truly pleased with him then Yahweh will allow Moses to better understand his plans and how to keep pleasing Yahweh. Yahweh responds by saying that his presence will go with Moses and that Moses will have rest.

In the second scene: Moses tells Yahweh, "Do not let us leave Mount Sinai without you." Moses pleads with Yahweh saying that it is the presence of Yahweh that defines the people of Israel. Being Yahweh's chosen people makes Israel different from all of the other nations. Yahweh agrees to go with Moses and the Israelites to the Promised Land because of his close relationship with Moses.

In the third scene: Moses asks to see Yahweh's glory or his full presence. Yahweh speaks his name and says he will pass by Moses. Yahweh will not allow Moses to see his face because Moses would die if he saw Yahweh completely.

In the fourth scene: Yahweh tells Moses what He will do. Yahweh will put Moses on a rock and protect him while Yahweh's brilliant presence passes by. Yahweh will allow Moses to see his back as he moves away from him.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Yahweh

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It's important to remember that previously, Yahweh told Moses that He would not go with the Israelites to the Promised Land because they rebelled against him. The Israelites are also waiting to know what Yahweh is going to do with them after their idolatry.

It is possible that this conversation took place in the tent of meeting at the bottom of Mount Sinai. It is important to remember that Yahweh had told Moses that He would send an angel before Moses. This passage is a

continuation of Moses' earlier conversation with Yahweh. Moses responded to Yahweh by saying that Yahweh hasn't shown who is going with Moses. There is a difference for Moses between Yahweh saying he would send an angel before the Israelites and Yahweh saying that he would go with the Israelites. Moses knows that an angel is going ahead of them, but he wants Yahweh to personally go with them as Israel's one and only God.

Moses reminds Yahweh of what Yahweh said to him earlier: Yahweh knows Moses by name and Yahweh is pleased with Moses. The expression "knowing someone by name" does not refer to only knowing someone's name, but also having a good, deep relationship with that person. Yahweh is saying he has a close relationship with Moses, and that he sees him as a friend.

Moses asks Yahweh to show his ways to Moses and remember his people, Israel, because of the close relationship Yahweh has with Moses.

It is important to notice that Moses is not asking for a path or the way to get to a place, but Moses is asking Yahweh to reveal to Moses his instructions on how to behave and what to do.

Yahweh answers this request by saying that his presence will go with Moses and that Yahweh will give Moses rest.

It is important to notice that Moses is not commanding or being disrespectful to Yahweh when he says, "Do not let us leave here without your presence." Moses pleads to Yahweh looking for reassurance. Moses tells Yahweh that what makes Israel distinct from other people is that Yahweh is with them. So Moses pleads for Yahweh not to make them leave Sinai without his presence.

Yahweh again confirms that He will go with Moses. But Moses asks Yahweh to see Yahweh's glory to be certain that Yahweh will truly go with them. Again, this was a humble request and not a demand from Moses. Yahweh responds to Moses and explains that His goodness will pass before Moses. We are not sure exactly what Moses is about to see, but we do know that Moses will be able to sense and see Yahweh's brilliant presence as he passes by.

It is important to remember that Moses has already seen Yahweh's glory. So Moses is asking to see Yahweh's glory again as a way to have reassurance that Yahweh will truly be with the Israelites on their journey to the Promised Land.

Yahweh describes himself saying, "I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy." This is a part of who Yahweh is, so it was a way to proclaim his name. In Jewish culture, a person's name also gave information about that person's character.

Yahweh explains to Moses that Moses won't see Yahweh's face because no man survives that.

When Yahweh tells Moses to stand on the rock, it is unclear if this refers to a rock on Mount Sinai or if Mount Sinai is the rock. Remember that this conversation may have taken place in the tent of meeting at the base of the mountain. Then Yahweh says he will hide Moses in the crevice of the rock as Yahweh passes by. A crevice refers to a hole or gap in a rock.

Stop here and look at a picture of a rock crevice as a group. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh explains that Yahweh himself will cover the eyes of Moses, and after Yahweh passes Yahweh will remove his hand so that Moses can see Yahweh's back as he moves away. This does not refer to Yahweh's physical hands, but most likely was the closest description Moses could use to try to describe Yahweh's gentle, protecting presence.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 33:12–23 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has four scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Yahweh

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Act out Moses speaking with Yahweh. Moses asks Yahweh who He will send with Moses to the Promised Land. Moses tells Yahweh that if Yahweh is truly pleased with him then Yahweh will allow Moses to better understand his plans and how to keep pleasing him.

Pause the drama.

Act out Yahweh responding to Moses by saying that his presence will go with Moses and that Moses will have rest. Moses begs Yahweh saying, "if you are not coming with us, do not let us leave this place." Moses pleads with Yahweh saying that it is the presence of Yahweh who defines the people of Israel. Moses says that being Yahweh's chosen people makes Israel special and different from all the other nations.

Pause the drama.

Act out Yahweh agreeing to go with Moses and the Israelites to the Promised Land because of his close relationship with Moses.

Pause the drama.

Act out Moses asking to see Yahweh's glory.

Pause the drama.

Act out Yahweh speaking his name and saying he will pass by Moses. Yahweh will not allow Moses to see his face because Moses would die if he saw Yahweh completely. Yahweh says he will put Moses on a rock and gently protect him while Yahweh's brilliant presence passes by. Yahweh will allow Moses to see his back as he moves away from him.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 33:12–23 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Moses continues his conversation with **Yahweh**. Remember, Yahweh is the personal name for God, and it is used throughout this passage. Use the same name for Yahweh that you have used in previous passages. For more information on [Yahweh]t174, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses reminds Yahweh that Yahweh chose him to lead the Israelites to **the Promised Land**. This refers to the land of Canaan, or the land Yahweh specially prepared for his chosen people. Yahweh has previously described this land as a land flowing with milk and honey, or a land that is abundant. Although the Promised Land is not specifically mentioned in the original language, it is implied that Moses will lead the Israelites to that place. Many translations include the phrase "to the promised land" to be more clear about where Moses is leading the

people. If you use the phrase "Promised Land," use the same word or phrase for the Promised Land that you have used in previous passages. For more information on the Promised Land, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses reminds Yahweh that this **nation**, or the Israelites, are his chosen people. Here, nation refers to a group of people who belong together, live in the same area, and follow the same ruler. The nation of Israel were Yahweh's chosen people. Use the same word for nation that you have used in previous passages. For more information on nation, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses asks to see Yahweh's **glory**, or glorious presence. When God shows his glory, people can see how beautiful, powerful, and majestic God is. Not many people in the Bible have a chance to see the glory of God, so when it happens, this is a very special and impressive moment. It can be difficult to translate the word glory. In some cases, you can say "God's power and splendor." Use the same word for glory that you have used in previous passages. For more information on glory, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh says, "I will be merciful or gracious to whom I will be merciful or gracious." **Mercy** means goodness, kindness, or compassion. The meaning of mercy can be similar to the meaning of the word grace. **Grace** means that we receive something that we do not deserve. Grace and mercy go together. It is because of God's mercy that he does not punish us, and then it is because of his grace that he also gives us good things. Use the same word for mercy that you have used in previous passages. For more information on mercy and grace, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 33:12-23

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3637128 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Exodus 34:1-9

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 34:1-9 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 34:1-9 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 34:1-9 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Moses has just spoken with Yahweh. Yahweh is the personal name for God and will be used throughout this passage. Yahweh agreed to Moses' request and said he would go with the Israelites to the Promised Land. Yahweh also agreed to allow Moses to see his presence as He passed by. Now, Yahweh decides to forgive the Israelites and renew his covenant, or promise, with them. Yahweh says he will once more write His words, or commandments, on stone tablets for the Israelites.

Yahweh speaks to Moses and tells him to make two tablets out of stone like the ones Yahweh made before. This time, Moses would have to cut them out of stone. As you remember, Moses broke the original stone tablets in

anger when he saw the Israelites worshiping the golden calf. Yahweh tells Moses he will once again write his commandments on the stone tablets like he did before.

Stop here and look at an illustration of what the tablets of stone may have looked like as a group. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh would write the same ten commandments that he did on the original stone tablets. As was customary for covenants during that time, it is most likely that Yahweh wrote the same content on both tablets. That way one tablet would be for Yahweh while the other tablet was for the Israelites.

Yahweh tells Moses to be ready in the morning to make the journey from the Israelite camp to the top of Mount Sinai with the new tablets of stone. Traveling earlier in the morning would allow Moses to travel in cooler temperatures and give him time to climb to the top of the mountain. Moses would present himself by standing at the top and waiting for the presence of Yahweh in the form of a cloud to appear and cover him.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, when someone breaks a strong promise, or oath, who is responsible for restoring the agreement? What has to happen in order for this agreement to be restored? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh warns Moses that no one can come up with him and that not even the Israelites' flocks of animals can graze anywhere near the mountain. If they do, they will surely die. This is because Yahweh is holy, or set apart and morally perfect, and sinful people cannot be in his presence. Moses obeys and cuts out two tablets of stone like the first and brings them up Mount Sinai.

Stop here and look at a picture of the top of Mount Sinai as a group. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh comes down in a cloud and stands before Moses. Moses uses the description of Yahweh standing because it is the easiest way to describe something humans cannot fully understand. Moses could sense without a doubt that a real personal being had come to him and that he was in the glorious presence of Yahweh. As you remember in the last passage, Moses asked for two things: for Yahweh to come with the Israelites and for Moses to see Yahweh's presence. Yahweh responded favorably and agreed to both of Moses' requests.

Yahweh speaks or proclaims his name twice to Moses to show him who he really is and what he will be like to his people, the Israelites. In Jewish culture, names not only refer to what a person is called but to the nature or character of a person. In this case, Yahweh's name represents who he is as the one, true God. As Yahweh passes by Moses, he names five characteristics of himself that the Israelites very much needed to hear.

Yahweh speaks about himself and says He is a compassionate God, which means he deeply cares for humans and feels concern towards them. Yahweh also says He is merciful, or gracious. This means Yahweh does things for people that they do not deserve and grants favor to people who are not worthy of that favor. Thirdly, Yahweh says he is slow to anger. This phrase means that Yahweh has patience with his people when they fail him. Yahweh then says steadfast, or unfailing, love fills him. This love was a covenant, or promised and loyal, kind of love. This means Yahweh would continue in his loyal love and commitment to the people he chose to enter into a covenant with. Yahweh is saying He will be faithful to his promise to the Israelites even though they were not. Finally, Yahweh says he is abounding in faithfulness, or truth. This means Yahweh is completely reliable and that the Israelites can trust him.

When Yahweh says he will extend his love to thousands, this most likely refers to the thousands of descendants the Israelites will have. This means that Yahweh will continue in his covenant love and blessings to the Israelites as long as they do not break his agreement with them. Yahweh says that He is a God who is willing and eager to forgive iniquity, transgressions, and sins. These three words are very similar. Yahweh is saying he will forgive people who do evil, rebel, and commit sin. Forgiveness of sins, or disobedience toward Yahweh, means that Yahweh takes away a person's sins. Yahweh chooses not to punish them for their sins as they deserve.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How does your culture treat the children of someone who has broken the law, or done wrong? How can children escape the bad reputation of their family? Pause this audio here.

However, Yahweh gives a warning, saying there are heavy consequences for sin, and that He does not forgive sin lightly. Yahweh is just and ensures that He will punish the guilty as they deserve. This is meant to warn people who tend to sin on purpose because they assume Yahweh will forgive them for it later. When Yahweh says he will punish the children for their father's sin up to the third and fourth generation, this does not mean

that he will punish children for something their ancestors did. A generation refers to a people who live at the same time as each other. Yahweh is saying He will punish each generation for its own sin regardless of if he punished the generation before for the same sin. Every person should take responsibility for their own sin and be responsible for seeking out Yahweh's forgiveness for that sin.

Moses' immediate response is to worship, or to bow down low to the ground, and look at Yahweh in awe. Moses has been asking for greater and greater reassurances from Yahweh each time he asks Yahweh for something. This was a normal way to bargain in this culture. Each time Moses asked for something, Yahweh responded favorably. Finally, Moses makes his most important request to Yahweh. Moses wants Yahweh to go in the midst of the Israelites to the Promised Land. Moses wants full access to Yahweh all the time. Moses also wants Yahweh to forgive Israel for their sin of idolatry. Moses once again calls the Israelites a stiff-necked people, meaning they are stubborn and likely to rebel.

By making these requests, Moses is asking Yahweh to take back his chosen people. Moses wants Israel to be Yahweh's inheritance, or special possession. If Yahweh accepts, this means Israel would once again become Yahweh's covenant, or chosen, people. It would mean Israel would inherit Yahweh's favor and protection and that they would once again travel with Yahweh to the land he promised them.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 34:1-9 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has four scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh tells Moses to make two tablets out of rock. Yahweh says He will write on them as he did before. These stone tablets will be just like the old ones which Moses broke. Then Yahweh tells Moses to present himself at the top of Mount Sinai the next morning with the stone tablets prepared. Yahweh says no one can go up to the mountain with Moses and that no animal can be around the mountain when Yahweh appears.

In the second scene: Moses obeys Yahweh and cuts two tablets of stone similar to the ones before. The next morning, Moses climbs Mount Sinai with the stone tablets. Moses waits at the top for Yahweh to appear. Yahweh comes down in a cloud.

In the third scene: Yahweh passes before Moses and proclaims his name twice. Yahweh then describes his character.

In the fourth scene: Moses immediately falls down and worships Yahweh. Moses asks Yahweh to travel with the Israelites to the Promised Land. Moses also asks Yahweh for forgiveness for the evil of his people. Moses asks Yahweh to claim the Israelites as his chosen people once more.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Israelites
- Animals

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It is important to remember that Yahweh just talked with Moses and confirmed that Yahweh will go with Moses on the journey to the Promised Land.

As you remember, Moses smashed the old stone tablets when he saw the Israelites worshiping the golden calf. This time, Yahweh asks Moses to carve the stone tablets whereas the last time, Yahweh gave Moses the stone tablets himself.

Yahweh tells Moses to come up Mount Sinai by himself the next morning with two tablets carved from stone. Yahweh says that no one can come up with Moses. Neither can any animal be around the mountain. We know from previous passages that this is because sinful people cannot be in the presence of Yahweh or they will die. In this way, Yahweh is protecting the people and their animals.

Moses obeys Yahweh and carves two tablets of stone. Most likely, Moses communicates Yahweh's warning to the Israelites that they and their animals should not be on the mountain. The next morning, Moses goes to meet Yahweh on the mountain by himself. Moses waits at the top for Yahweh to appear.

Yahweh comes down in a cloud and stands in front of Moses. This just means that Moses was able to see the visible presence of Yahweh in front of him.

Yahweh fulfills what he told Moses he would do in the previous passage. Yahweh passes in front of Moses. Yahweh proclaims his name twice to emphasize who he is and then describes his character. It is important to notice that Yahweh talks about himself as if he is talking about someone else. This is a normal way for Yahweh to talk about himself. Yahweh is not talking about another god.

It is important to notice that Yahweh mentions his steadfast love for thousands of people, or for thousands of generations. This does not mean that his steadfast, or unfailing, love has a limit on how many generations. This expression is used to symbolize forever, or for a number of generations that people cannot count.

When Moses says, "He does not leave the guilty unpunished," he is emphasizing the fact that he will punish people for their disobedience. Moses says Yahweh will punish his people for their disobedience to the third and fourth generation. This does not mean Yahweh will punish children for the sins of their parents. Instead, it means that each generation will receive the punishment for their own sin, even if it is the same sin as the previous generation.

Moses immediately bows down in response to Yahweh. Moses pleads with Yahweh to go with his people to the Promised Land if Moses truly has Yahweh's favor. It is important to notice that Moses keeps using what Yahweh told him about finding favor as a way to ask for forgiveness for the Israelites.

Moses asks Yahweh to forgive his people even though they are stiff-necked. Stiff-necked is picture language that means the people are stubborn and likely to rebel.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you describe stubborn people in your language? Pay attention to what phrases your team uses to describe them. Pause this audio here.

Moses wants Yahweh to claim the Israelites once more as his chosen people and restore the covenant, or promise, he made with them.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 34:1-9 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has four scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Israelites
- Animals

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Act out Yahweh telling Moses to make two stone tablets. Yahweh says He will write on them as he did before. These stone tablets will be just like the old ones which Moses broke. Then Yahweh tells Moses to present himself at the top of Mount Sinai the next morning with the stone tablets. Yahweh says no one can go up to the mountain with Moses and that no animal can be around the mountain when Yahweh appears.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Protective. I do not want anyone to die because they do not understand how holy I am," or "Expectant. I yearn to restore my people to myself," or "Patient. I want Moses to learn that I am full of grace and ready to forgive." [!end] Continue the drama.

Act out Moses obeying Yahweh and carving two tablets of stone similar to the ones before. Moses warns the Israelites not to come near the mountain with their animals.

Pause the drama.

Act out Moses climbing Mount Sinai alone the next morning with the stone tablets. Moses waits at the top for Yahweh to appear. Yahweh comes down in a cloud. Yahweh passes before Moses and proclaims his name twice. Yahweh then describes his character. Yahweh also speaks about how he is a just God and punishes the guilty.

Pause the drama.

Act out Moses immediately falling down and worshiping Yahweh. Moses asks Yahweh to travel with the Israelites to the Promised Land. Moses also asks Yahweh for forgiveness for the evil of his people. Moses asks Yahweh to claim the Israelites as his chosen people once more.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 34:1–9 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Yahweh gives Moses instructions for making new stone tablets. Then Yahweh appears to Moses on Mount Sinai and proclaims his name, **Yahweh**, twice. Remember, Yahweh is the personal name for God, and it is used throughout this passage. Use the same name for Yahweh that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh says that he will write the "words" on the stone tablets that he had written on them before. Here, the "words" refer to Yahweh's commandments, or the rules, that he gave to his people. Your translation can say "words that Yahweh wrote," or "commandments." Use the same word for commandments that you have used in previous passages. For more information on commandments, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses warns the Israelites not to come close to the mountain with their **flocks** when he goes up to meet Yahweh. Here, flocks, or herds, refers to the animals the Israelites cared for. This most likely included sheep, goats, and cattle.

Yahweh describes his character to Moses after he passes by him. Yahweh says he is full of mercy. **Mercy** means goodness, kindness, or compassion. The meaning of mercy can be similar to the meaning of the word grace. Grace means that we receive something that we do not deserve. Grace and mercy go together. It is because of God's mercy that he does not punish us, and it is because of his grace that he also gives us good things. Here, Yahweh is full of mercy because he is choosing not to punish the Israelites as they deserve for their idolatry. Use the same word for mercy and grace that you have used in previous passages. For more information on mercy or grace, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh describes his love for Israel as unfailing and **steadfast**. This love was a promised and loyal kind of love. This means Yahweh would continue in his loyal love and commitment to the Israelites even when they are not loyal and committed to him.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How will you translate or describe this kind of love in your language? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh says he **forgives** iniquity, transgressions, and **sins**. These three words are very similar. Yahweh is saying he will forgive people who do evil, rebel, and commit sin. Forgiveness of sins, or disobedience toward Yahweh, means that Yahweh takes away a person's sins. Yahweh chooses not to punish them for their sins as they deserve. If Yahweh forgives the Israelites, it means He is not going to make the Israelites pay him back for the damage they have done by worshiping the golden calf. Use the same words for forgive and sin that you have used in previous passages. For more information on forgiveness and sin, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses reacts by immediately worshiping Yahweh. **Worship** means to show awe and wonder about Yahweh. Worship could happen anywhere Yahweh revealed himself. Moses shows worship by bowing down to the ground in front of Yahweh. Use the same word for worship that you have used in previous passages. For more information on worship, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses asks Yahweh to take the Israelites as his "special possession or inheritance." This refers to the idea of Israel becoming Yahweh's covenant, or chosen, people once again. In the same way a first-born son would receive or inherit the riches and possessions of their father, Israel would inherit Yahweh's favor and protection. If Israel is Yahweh's inheritance, then Yahweh will personally accompany them to the land he promised to their ancestors, the land of Canaan.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 34:1-9

Audio Content

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Exodus 34:10-17

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 34:10-17 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 34:10-17 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 34:10-17 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Moses is on Mount Sinai in the presence of Yahweh. Yahweh is the personal name for God and will be used throughout this passage. Moses has two new stone tablets and Yahweh said he would write the same words on them as he wrote on the first stones. Moses begged Yahweh to go with the Israelites to the Promised Land, to

forgive them, and to take them as his special possession. Now Yahweh answers and restores His covenant with his chosen people.

As you remember, the Israelites are waiting on Moses' meeting with Yahweh to know what Yahweh will do with them after they worshipped the golden calf. Yahweh answers Moses and uses a word like "listen" or "behold" to emphasize what He is about to say. Yahweh responds favorably to Moses and says he will restore his covenant, or unbreakable promise, with Israel. This is the same covenant Yahweh made with Moses before, only now, Yahweh is remaking it. By restoring this covenant, Yahweh is saying He wants to have a good relationship with his chosen people.

As was the custom for covenants in those times, Moses has already named the two parties of the covenant in the last passage-Yahweh proclaimed his own name and characteristics and Moses named the Israelites as a stubborn people. Yahweh says He will perform miracles, or acts that only He can do, and that they have never seen before. These miracles will be a blessing to the Israelites if they keep his covenant by obeying his commandments. Yahweh will show his power not just to the Israelites but to the non-believing nations around them. Yahweh tells Moses that if the Israelites obey his covenant, then he will bless them by driving out all of the people groups already living in the Promised Land, or the land of Canaan. The entire land was called Canaan, but it included the area where the Amorites, Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites lived. These are the same people groups Yahweh mentioned to Moses before when Yahweh promised he would remove them from the Promised Land.

Yahweh mentions specific commands from the first covenant that He is renewing with the Israelites. One of those covenant warnings was to not make covenants or binding promises with the people already living in the Promised Land. Those types of promises would snare, or trap, the Israelites into worshiping the false gods of other nations. Yahweh again commands the Israelites to destroy anything related to idolatry, or worship of false gods. This would have included altars, or stone platforms, where the people living in Canaan made sacrifices to their gods. Yahweh also tells them to destroy all of the sacred stones and Asherah poles. Sacred stones were vertical pillars that the people used to worship false gods. This is the first time Yahweh mentions Asherah poles. These were carved wooden poles the people made to worship the Canaanite goddess, Asherah. The people in Canaan believed Asherah granted fertility and people connected the Asherah poles to Baal, the Canaanite god who controlled the weather.

Stop here and look at an illustration of Asherah poles as a group. Discuss with your group: In your community, what customs do people practice or who do people worship to receive blessings, fertility, or good harvests? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh commands the Israelites to not worship any other god but Him. Yahweh says his name is Jealous and that He is a jealous god. Yahweh is jealous that people know that Yahweh himself is the one, true God. Yahweh will not allow his covenant people to insult his name by worshiping false gods, but instead, he requires their complete loyalty.

Yahweh warns the Israelites that if they do not see the covenant as absolute and instead make covenants with the people living in the land, then they will end up worshiping the Canaanite gods too. This would break Yahweh's covenant with them. Moses uses the comparison of prostitution to describe being unfaithful to Yahweh's covenant by worshiping other gods. This is like a person who seeks blessings through various gods instead of devoting themselves to a relationship with the one, true God. Yahweh knew the practices of the people living in the land. They held great feasts when they sacrificed to their gods. Yahweh forbids his people from eating at the sacrifices of the people living in the land. Yahweh knows the Israelites will want to do so. He warns them that they will end up worshiping the Canaanite gods.

Yahweh also warns against marrying the daughters of people living in the land. Since it was customary for a woman to move to her husband's home when she married, this meant she brought her religious customs with her. So if a Canaanite woman married into an Israelite family, she would move to live with the Israelites and bring her false gods with her. This was another way the Israelites could fall into idolatry and worship foreign gods.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: When your people group expands to other areas, what relationships do people allow with foreigners and why? How do religious and cultural customs change as a result? Give an

example of a religious or cultural custom that has changed because of influence from other people groups. Pause this audio here.

Finally, Yahweh commands once more that the Israelites must not cast, or make, idols for themselves out of metal. Although Yahweh mentions metal because that is what the Israelites already used to form the golden calf, Yahweh does not want the Israelites to make idols out of any material.

In the next passage, Yahweh will continue to emphasize his commandments from his renewed covenant with the Israelites.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 34:10–17 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has three scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh is speaking with Moses on Mount Sinai. Yahweh tells Moses he is going to make a new covenant with the Israelites. Yahweh says He will perform miracles and that the people are going to see amazing things that he will do for his own people. Yahweh tells Moses that if his people obey him, then He will expel the other people groups from the Promised Land.

In the second scene: Yahweh warns them not to make any covenant with the people of the Promised Land because that will bring trouble to his own people.

In the third scene: Yahweh tells Moses to destroy the altars of their foreign gods. If Yahweh's people do not do what Yahweh says, they will make a covenant with the Canaanites and Yahweh's people will end up worshiping false gods. Yahweh also warns against marrying Canaanite women because they will cause Yahweh's people to worship false gods. Finally, Yahweh commands his people to not make idols from metal.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Moses is on Mount Sinai in the presence of Yahweh. Yahweh uses a word like "listen" or "behold" to announce that He is making a new covenant, or binding agreement, with the Israelites. Since the Israelites broke the original covenant, Yahweh is the only one who can restore it. Yahweh then describes the terms of the covenant.

Yahweh tells Moses that Yahweh will do marvelous things that He has never done before. Yahweh says that all the people will see Yahweh's power. This most likely refers to both the Israelites and other nations or peoples.

Yahweh tells Moses to obey what He commands. Yahweh explains that He will go ahead of them to drive out the different people groups currently occupying the promised land, or the land of Canaan. This means Yahweh will go with his people to the promised land. As you remember, this is the land Yahweh promised to Abraham's descendants.

It is important to notice that Yahweh gives a warning against making covenants with the people of the land. This is because those covenants will become a trap for Yahweh's people. Yahweh knows that if the Israelites make promises to the Canaanites then they will end up worshiping their false gods.

It is important to notice that Yahweh gives specific actions for his people to do when they face the different people groups that live in the promised land. In contrast to making covenants with the people groups, Yahweh tells them to instead destroy the altars, sacred pillars, and idols in the land.

Yahweh tells Moses that the Israelites should perform specific actions in the land. The Israelites have to destroy the altars the inhabitants of that land use to offer sacrifices to their gods. The Israelites also have to smash their pillars of stone. People made these pillars by stacking stones on top of each other. The Israelites also have to

cut down the Asherah poles they use to worship false gods. The Asherah poles were poles the people living in the land made to worship the false goddess Asherah. The people in the land most likely made them from wood, so the Israelites would have to cut them down. Yahweh gives these instructions because He does not want his people to worship any other god but Yahweh.

Yahweh explains that His name is Jealous. Yahweh gives importance to that characteristic by saying that his name is "The Jealous One." This points to Yahweh's identity being the one, true God. Yahweh will not allow his chosen people to insult his name by worshiping false gods, but instead he requires their complete loyalty.

It is important to notice that Moses does not use "Jealous" at this moment as a description but as a name.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How would you describe the actions of a jealous person in your culture? How would you translate Yahweh's name as "Jealous"? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh says that the consequence of not following his instructions will be that Yahweh's people will end up eating the sacrifices to other gods and that their sons will marry the daughters of the people in the land. This will cause their sons to worship the false gods of their wives. The language used in this section is similar to language that people use when they are talking about prostitution.

Yahweh commands his people not to make any gods out of metal. As you remember, the Israelites have already done this once when they made the golden calf and broke the original covenant.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 34:10–17 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has three scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Act out Yahweh speaking to Moses on Mount Sinai. Yahweh tells Moses he is going to make a new covenant with the Israelites. Yahweh says He will perform miracles that will amaze people. Yahweh tells Moses that if his people obey him then He will drive out the other people groups from the land he is giving them for their own.

Pause the drama.

Act out Yahweh warning Moses that his people cannot make any covenant with the people of the Promised Land because that will bring trouble to his own people. Yahweh tells Moses to destroy the altars of their gods. Yahweh says that if his people make a covenant with the people in the land or marry Canaanite women then they will end up worshiping false gods. Finally, Yahweh commands his people to not make idols from metal.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I want my people to understand how harmful worshiping false gods is to our relationship," or "I will tell my people the consequences of breaking our covenant before it happens," or "I want my people to understand who I am as the one, true God."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 34:10-17 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Yahweh responds to Moses on Mount Sinai. Remember, **Yahweh** is the personal name for God, and it is used throughout this passage. Use the same name for Yahweh that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses that he is going to restore, or make anew, a **covenant** with the Israelites. A covenant is a binding promise. Both parties of the covenant agree not to break the agreement or God will punish them. People who make a covenant want a good relationship with each other. Yahweh is once again giving the Israelites commandments to follow as a part of their covenant. The Israelites needed to obey these commandments; that was their part of the covenant agreement. Yahweh promised the Israelites that if they obeyed him and kept their part of the covenant, they would be Yahweh's special people. Yahweh would bless them and give them a land of their own, and many other good things. But if the Israelites disobeyed Yahweh, and broke the covenant, Yahweh would punish them, and take away their land. Use the same word or phrase for covenant that you have used in previous passages. For more information on covenant, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh says he will perform **miracles** for the Israelites. Miracles are acts that only Yahweh can do that show his power and show people that they can trust Him. Yahweh says these miracles have not been performed anywhere on earth or in any **nation**. A nation refers to people who belong together, live in the same place, and have the same ruler. Use the same word for miracles and nation that you have used in previous passages. For more information on miracles and nation, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses that he will drive out the **Amorites, Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites**, and **Jebusites** from the land of Canaan. These are the same six people groups Yahweh has already mentioned to Moses. Be sure to use the same people group names that you used in previous passages.

Yahweh warns Moses to not make covenants with the people already living in the land of Canaan. If the Israelites make covenants with the people living in the land then they will **snare** the Israelites. Snare usually refers to a bird trap. In this case, snare is picture language that refers to a fatal trap, or a trap that causes death. Be sure to translate snare in the same way you have in previous passages.

Yahweh tells the Israelites to break down **altars** that people used to worship false gods. An altar usually refers to a place where people kill and burn animals as an offering to a god, or a place where people burn incense. It is often built of stones, perhaps like a table or small platform. Use the same word or phrase for altar that you have used in previous passages. For more information on altar, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses to "break down their altars, smash their sacred stones and cut down their **Asherah poles**." These sacred stones were stone pillars that the people living in the land used as part of their worship of false gods. Asherah poles were man-made poles most likely made from wood. The people used them to worship the false god Asherah. Yahweh wants his people to destroy anything used in the land of Canaan to worship false gods.

Yahweh says the Canaanites make **sacrifices** to their false gods. A sacrifice refers to a gift offered to a god. People usually placed the gift on a stone platform, or altar. They performed the sacrifice as a way to thank their god, worship their god, ask forgiveness from their god, or have a better relationship with their god. In this case, the sacrifice involved killing animals, which then burned on the altar. Yahweh does not want the Israelites to join the Canaanites in their celebrations because they would end up eating the animal sacrifices they made to their false gods. Use the same word or phrase for sacrifice that you have used in previous passages. For more information on sacrifice, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells his people to not cast, or make, **idols**. An idol is an image made by human hands, like a statue or other physical representation of a god that is worshiped as a god rather than the one true Creator God. People normally made, or cast, these idols from metal. **Casting** is the way to describe making something in a specific shape from metal. People bow down in front of the idol to worship that god. This was a clear reminder to the Israelites that they should not make idols again as they did with the golden calf. Use the same word or phrase for idol that you have used in previous passages. For more information on idol, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 34:10-17

Audio Content

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Exodus 34:18–28

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 34:18–28 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 34:18–28 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 34:18–28 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Moses is on Mount Sinai in the presence of Yahweh. Yahweh is the personal name for God and will be used throughout this passage. Yahweh has just agreed to restore the covenant with the Israelites. Now, Yahweh continues to give his commandments to Moses, and Moses records Yahweh's words.

Yahweh explains his requirements to Moses regarding when to worship and how to worship. Yahweh wants the Israelites to celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread every year. The Israelites celebrated the Feast of Unleavened Bread at the beginning of the barley harvest to remember the Passover, when Yahweh and Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt. For seven days each person was only supposed to eat bread that did not contain leaven, or yeast, which makes bread rise. They were also to bring an offering of food to Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people remember and celebrate historical or big events in your culture? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh says the Israelites should do this during the month of Abib, or early spring. Abib was the same month Yahweh brought the Israelites out of Egypt. Most likely, Yahweh emphasizes the Passover to remind the Israelites of what religious festivals should look like as opposed to the sacrificial festivals of the Canaanites.

Yahweh also repeats his commandment about firstborns. Yahweh reminds them of this commandment because Passover was during the season when domesticated animals usually had their babies. So the Israelites would be surrounded by new animal babies, and they would have the opportunity to offer the firstborns to Yahweh. By rights, Yahweh owned every Israelite firstborn animal or human, just as the first fruits, or harvest, of what the Israelites grew were also his. Instead of requiring every family to bring Him each firstborn person or animal,

Yahweh allowed families to repurchase the firstborns from him using a payment. This is how a person could redeem a firstborn. Yahweh mentions a specific example of firstborn male donkeys. Since people did not need donkeys at the place of worship, it was better for families to keep them and redeem them by substituting a lamb or goat instead. However, for some families, it may have been easier to quickly break the neck of the firstborn donkey instead of making the substitution.

This kind of exchange only worked with animals and did not apply to humans. Yahweh does not want child sacrifice or to take children from their families for service in the place of worship. Instead, Yahweh asks for all firstborn Israelite sons to be redeemed. Although the term firstborn human does not tell us if the child is a male or female, most translations assume that Yahweh is talking about firstborn sons of a mother. This was a huge difference from the Canaanites' religion, which required child sacrifice. When Yahweh says no one is to appear before me empty-handed, it means that the Israelites should come to worship Yahweh with a gift instead of with nothing to offer.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: The Israelites closely tied worship and sacrifice together. Describe what kind of sacrifices believers make where you live. How do you recognise true worship in their lives? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh repeats his requirements for the Sabbath, or day of rest, only this time He adds "even during the plowing season and harvest." This implies several things, one being that the Israelites could expect the land of Canaan to be a place of abundant harvests. Yahweh knew that the plowing and harvest seasons would tempt the Israelites to work seven days a week, since taking a day off could affect how many crops they harvested. Yahweh wants the Israelites to place more importance on worship and rest than on how many crops they can harvest.

Yahweh repeats the requirements of celebrating the other two big festivals of the Israelites: the Festival of Harvest, or Pentecost, and the Festival of Ingathering, or the Festival of Tabernacles. The Festival of Tabernacles is also called the Festival of Shelters, or the Festival of Booths. Yahweh generously aligned these festivals to happen during the harvest seasons. Passover took place in early spring during the birth of lambs and the barley season. This allowed the Israelites to choose the firstborn lambs for sacrifices to Yahweh. Pentecost followed the wheat harvest fifty days later; and the Festival of Tabernacles followed the olive and grape harvest in the fall. During these three times of year, Yahweh expected all of the Israelite men to appear in front of the Sovereign Yahweh, or Master Yahweh, who is the God of Israel. Once they arrived at the place of worship, they would offer sacrifices to Yahweh on behalf of their families.

In response to Moses' earlier plea for Yahweh to accompany the Israelites in person to the promised land, Yahweh says he will be the one who drives out the people groups already living there. Yahweh says he will expand their territory. Yahweh is most likely referring to continuing to give the Israelites victories over the people groups after they enter the land of Canaan. Yahweh comforts the Israelites by saying that if they obey his laws and travel to the place of worship to celebrate the three festivals each year, then He will be faithful to protect their families and land while they are gone.

Yahweh again talks about the animals the Israelites kill and offer as sacrifices to him. They would usually offer bread along with the animal. People would eat part of the animal and the bread. However, the Canaanites would drink the blood of the animal. Here, Yahweh is telling the Israelites two things: He is telling them to not drink the blood of the animal they sacrifice to him. Yahweh is also telling them that when they offer bread with this animal, it should be bread without yeast, to remind them of the Festival of Passover. Yahweh does not allow the Israelites to keep any part of the Passover sacrificial meal for the next day. Yahweh reminds them that the Israelite farmers must bring the best of their first harvest as a sacrifice to Him at the house of God. The house of Yahweh, or the house of God, is the tent that moved from place to place where the Israelites were and where they worshiped Yahweh. The Israelites have not yet made this tent, called the tabernacle.

Finally, Yahweh tells them that they are not to cook a young goat in its mother's milk. This probably refers to the rituals during the Feast of Tabernacles. Yahweh most likely wanted to distinguish the celebrations of the Israelites from those of their neighbors. Also, it may reflect the principle that what is designed to give life, a mother's milk, should not become a means of death, or a way to cook the young goat.

As you remember, Yahweh has already mentioned most of these laws as a part of the first covenant. Only now, Yahweh is restating them with shorter or longer descriptions. Yahweh is likely emphasizing certain

requirements that make it clear to the Israelites that they need to be set apart, or different, from the Canaanites and be completely loyal to Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How are believers set apart or different from cults or false religions where you live? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh comes to the end of the covenant and instructs Moses to write down everything Yahweh has told him. We know that Moses stayed on top of Mount Sinai for forty days and forty nights and that he fasted, or did not drink nor eat. This was the second time Moses stayed in Yahweh's presence for 40 days, the last time being when Yahweh made the first covenant with the Israelites.

While Moses wrote the detailed terms of the new covenant, it is most likely that Yahweh himself wrote the 10 commandments on the stone tablets. These were the same 10 words or commandments as the first covenant and did not include all the divine instructions Yahweh just gave to Moses. It is possible Moses wrote down the other instructions of the new covenant in another place. This was the end of Yahweh giving Moses the new covenant. Yahweh restores the Israelites as his chosen people.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 34:18–28 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has four scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh continues to make a new covenant with Moses on Mount Sinai. Yahweh repeats his commandment of celebrating the Festival of Unleavened Bread to Moses. Also, Yahweh reminds Moses that all firstborn animals and humans belong to him. Yahweh explains how the people can redeem or buy back their firstborns. Yahweh says no one can appear before Yahweh without an offering.

In the second scene: Yahweh reminds Moses of the Sabbath, or the day of rest. Yahweh explains that even during harvest or planting season, the Israelites need to rest on the seventh day. Yahweh tells them to celebrate the Festival of Harvest and the Festival of Tabernacles. Yahweh promises that he will cast out his people's enemies if they keep going three times a year to worship and celebrate Yahweh.

In the third scene: Yahweh gives Moses restrictions for sacrificial meals. Yahweh also requires farmers to bring their first fruits as a sacrifice to Him. Yahweh tells Moses that the Israelites cannot cook a young goat in its mother's milk.

In the fourth scene: Yahweh tells Moses to write down this covenant. Moses writes the new covenant and stays with Yahweh on Mount Sinai for 40 days and 40 nights without eating or drinking. Yahweh writes the 10 Commandments on the stone tablets.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- The Israelites

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Moses is at the top of Mount Sinai meeting with Yahweh. Yahweh has already told Moses he will make a new covenant with the Israelites. Yahweh continues to tell Moses the terms of the covenant. Yahweh says that the people should keep the Passover on the month that they came out of Egypt.

Yahweh tells Moses that every firstborn belongs to Yahweh. It is important to notice that Yahweh uses the expression "all that open the womb" to mean the first one that comes out of the mother's womb, or the firstborn. Although the term "firstborn" does not mention a specific gender, most translations interpret this to be the firstborn of the sons.

Yahweh tells Moses that every firstborn animal and human belongs to Yahweh. But Yahweh gives his people a way to redeem the firstborn. Redeem means to repurchase, or to buy back. For example, a person could redeem, or buy back, their firstborn donkey by giving Yahweh a lamb instead. But if they did not redeem the donkey, then Yahweh required them to break its neck as a payment instead.

Yahweh says that no one should come empty-handed when they appear at the festivals to worship him. This means that everyone should have something to offer to Yahweh when they come to worship him.

Yahweh reminds his people to keep the Sabbath, or the day of rest. Specifically, Yahweh wants his people to continue keeping the Sabbath during the busy harvest and plowing seasons. This would have been especially difficult for the farmers who knew not tending to their fields even for a day could mean producing less crops.

Yahweh says that blood sacrifices, or sacrifices where they kill an animal, cannot be mixed with anything leavened, or with yeast. Not using yeast in bread, or eating unleavened bread, was a reminder of the Passover for the Israelites. Not eating blood is another commandment of Yahweh that sets the Israelites apart from the Canaanites. Yahweh also said that the sacrifices made for the Passover feast cannot remain uneaten until the next morning.

Yahweh says that farmers must bring their best first fruits to the house of Yahweh, or the tabernacle. This was a command for the future since the Israelites have not yet built the house of Yahweh.

Yahweh also said that they should not boil a young goat in its mother's milk.

It is important to remember that Yahweh said that He himself would write the covenant. So when it says "he wrote" it most likely means that Yahweh wrote the 10 commandments on the stone tablets. Moses wrote everything else that Yahweh told him as part of the new covenant with the Israelites.

Moses stays for 40 days and 40 nights on top of Mount Sinai without eating or drinking anything. The Israelites wait below for Moses' return.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 34:18-28 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has four scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- The Israelites

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Act out Yahweh on Mount Sinai with Moses. Yahweh is making a new covenant with Moses and the Israelites. Yahweh repeats his commandment of celebrating the Festival of Unleavened Bread to Moses. Also, Yahweh reminds Moses that all firstborn animals and humans belong to him. Yahweh explains how a person can redeem, or buy back, their firstborn. Yahweh says no one can come to Him without an offering.

Pause the drama.

Act out Yahweh reminding Moses of the Sabbath, or the day of rest. Yahweh explains that even during harvest or planting season, the Israelites need to rest on the seventh day. Yahweh tells them to celebrate the Festival of Harvest and the Festival of Shelters. Yahweh promises that he will cast out his people's enemies if they keep going three times a year to worship and celebrate Yahweh. Yahweh promises that no one will take their land when they are away from home to worship Yahweh.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Thankful. I'm glad Yahweh promised to take care of our families while we travel," or "Curious. I wonder where the place of worship will be in the new land and how long it will take to travel there," or "In awe. Yahweh provides for everything." [!end] Continue the drama.

Act out Yahweh giving Moses restrictions for sacrificial meals. Yahweh also requires farmers to bring their first fruits as a sacrifice to Him. Yahweh tells Moses not to cook a young goat in its mother's milk.

Pause the drama.

Act out Yahweh telling Moses to write down the new covenant. Moses writes the covenant and stays with Yahweh on Mount Sinai for 40 days and 40 nights without eating or drinking. Yahweh writes the 10 Commandments on the stone tablets.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 34:18–28 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Yahweh is making a covenant with Moses and the Israelites. **Yahweh** is the personal name for God, and it is used throughout this passage. Use the same name for Yahweh that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

One part of the covenant is that the Israelites should celebrate the **Festival of Unleavened Bread**, or the Passover. They are not to eat bread with yeast for seven days and they are to celebrate this in the month of Abib because that is when they came out of Egypt. The Feast of Unleavened Bread is a remembrance of when Yahweh brought them out of Egypt and there they ate unleavened bread. Use the same words for Feast or festival of Unleavened Bread that you have used in previous passages. For more information on the Festival of Unleavened Bread, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh reminds the Israelites that all firstborns belong to him. However, the people may **redeem** the firstborns. Redeem means to set free. Here, setting free a firstborn would mean paying Yahweh by sacrificing something else to Yahweh in place of the firstborn. Use the same word for redeem that you have used in previous passages. For more information on redeem, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh says that during the three religious festivals that no one should come to worship him empty handed but instead they should bring an offering. An **offering** is a gift or sacrifice offered to Yahweh in a ritual usually at a place of worship or special altar. Use the same word for offering that you have used in previous passages. For more information on offering, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh says all of the Israelite men should appear before the Sovereign Yahweh, the God of **Israel**, three times a year. **Sovereign** means master or lord and Yahweh is the personal name of God. Israel refers to the people group made up of the descendants of Abraham. Be sure to translate the title "Sovereign Yahweh" and Israel the

same way you have in previous passages. For more information on sovereign, Yahweh, or Israel, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh instructs the Israelites to celebrate the Feast of Weeks, also called the Pentecost. **Pentecost** follows the wheat harvest fifty days after the Passover. It means "fiftieth." It is a holy day set apart by the Israelites to worship Yahweh. Yahweh also commands them to celebrate the **Festival of Tabernacles**, or booths. The festival reminds the Israelites of how they lived in tents while they were wandering in the desert after Yahweh rescued them from slavery in Egypt. Use the same words for Pentecost and the Festival of Tabernacles, or booths, that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Pentecost or the Festival of Tabernacles, or booths, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh speaks about driving out the **nations**, or people groups, already living in the promised land. Nation refers to a group of people who belong together, speak the same language, and have the same ruler. Use the same word for nation that you have used in previous passages. For more information on nation, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh gives restrictions for the **sacrifices** his people will make to Him. A sacrifice is a gift that people offer to Yahweh. A sacrifice could involve killing an animal, which would then be burned on the altar. The gift could also be food items, oil, or sweet-smelling spices. Use the same word for sacrifice that you have used in previous passages. For more information on sacrifice, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh commands the Israelite farmers to bring their first fruits, or the best of their first harvest, as a sacrifice to him in the house of Yahweh. The house of Yahweh, or the **house of God**, is the tent that moved from place to place where the Jews were and where they worshiped Yahweh. Israelites called it the tabernacle, and it was where the presence of Yahweh dwelt. It would later become the temple in Jerusalem. Use the same words for House of God that you have used in previous passages. For more information on House of God, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh writes the **words** of the covenant on the stone tablets. Here, "the words" refer to Yahweh's commandments, or the rules, that he gave to his people. Your translation can say "words that Yahweh wrote," or "commandments." Use the same word for commandments that you have used in previous passages. For more information on commandments, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses that all of these requirements are a part of the new **covenant** He is making with Israel. A covenant is a binding promise. Both parties of the covenant agree not to break the agreement. People who make a covenant want a good relationship with each other. Use the same word for covenant that you have used in previous passages. For more information on covenant, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 34:18–28

Audio Content

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Exodus 34:29–35

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 34:29–35 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 34:29–35 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 34:29–35 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Moses has been meeting with Yahweh on top of Mount Sinai. Previously, Yahweh renewed his covenant, or binding promise, with the Israelites and accepted them once more as his chosen people. Yahweh wrote the same words as before on two new tablets of stone. After spending 40 days and 40 nights on the mountain with Yahweh, Moses finally comes down the mountain to tell the Israelites the good news.

Moses brings the two stone tablets down the mountain. As you remember, Yahweh wrote the same 10 commandments on the tablets as a part of his new covenant with the Israelites. The Israelites call these tablets the tablets of the testimony, or tablets of the covenant law. This means the stone tablets are proof and a reminder of what Yahweh has said and done; especially that he has restored his relationship and covenant with the Israelites. The Israelites will eventually place these tablets into a special box called the ark of the testimony. This ark will come to represent the very presence of Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, how do you show that two groups or people have made a binding, official agreement? How can you be sure that both people will remember and honor that agreement? Pause this audio here.

When Aaron, the brother of Moses, and the leaders of the Israelites see Moses coming back from the mountain, they are afraid of him because his face is shining with rays of brilliant light. Yahweh's glory was so brilliant and awesome that it reflected on Moses's face. Moses did not know that his face was shining from being in the presence of Yahweh.

Moses' face shining shows that Yahweh chose him to lead the Israelites. Moses' leadership was something the Israelites had not always accepted. But now, his shining face was visible proof that Moses had been in the presence of Yahweh and left no doubt that he was Yahweh's chosen leader. Moses' face physically reflected Yahweh's greatness to the people. Just as the people were afraid of Yahweh's presence in the cloud on top of Mount Sinai, they are now afraid to come near Moses. As you remember, Yahweh warned the people before Moses met with him that they should not come near the mountain or they would die. This fact, together with Moses' unusual appearance, might explain their understandable fear.

Moses calls out to Aaron and the tribal leaders of Israel and asks them to come closer to him. Moses most likely reassures the leaders that it is safe for them to come closer and that Yahweh would not harm them. Before, the people questioned Moses' leadership. Now, after seeing Moses' shining face, Aaron and the Israelite leaders have no doubt that Moses is Yahweh's chosen leader for his people.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How can you visibly see in the lives of church leaders that God chose them? What makes church leaders different from other types of leaders where you live? Pause this audio here.

After Moses tells Aaron and the community leaders what happened, they gather the people of Israel around Moses. Moses tells them the words of Yahweh that he received on top of Mount Sinai. Moses is Yahweh's prophet, or chosen messenger, and he acts as Yahweh's representative to the Israelites. This means that Moses shares Yahweh's instructions with the Israelites and tells the Israelites to obey all of Yahweh's commands.

This marks an important shift in the narrative of Exodus. The Israelites, who now have a restored covenant with Yahweh, will now begin to fulfill, or carry out, all of the commands Yahweh has given them through Moses.

Moses tells us that after he explained Yahweh's covenant to the people, Moses begins to use a veil, or a thin piece of cloth that Moses can see through, to cover his face. This brings an end to Moses' narrative of the covenant restored.

Then Moses describes the practice of taking the veil off whenever he talked with Yahweh. Moses uses a veil for the people's sake, since it was hard for them to look at him. This could have been because it caused them terror or because his face was so bright that it was unbearable to look at.

Stop here and look at a picture of a veil as a group. Pause this audio here.

Moses continues to meet with Yahweh in the Tent of Meeting, or the tent set apart from the Israelite camp specifically used for Moses' meetings with Yahweh. Every time Moses enters into Yahweh's presence, he takes the veil off and his face begins to shine again. Whenever Moses leaves Yahweh's presence, he goes to the people to tell them what Yahweh has commanded, and after doing so he puts the veil back on again. In this way, Yahweh confirms Moses again and again as Yahweh's chosen representative for his covenant people.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 34:29–35 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has three scenes.

In the first scene: Moses comes down from Mount Sinai carrying the stone tablets. Moses' face is shining because Moses talked to Yahweh. Aaron and all the Israelites are afraid to come close to Moses because of his appearance.

In the second scene: Moses calls out to Aaron and all the leaders of Israel. They all come to Moses and Moses talks to them and then the rest of the people. Moses explains that Yahweh restored the covenant with them and gives them Yahweh's commandments. When Moses finishes talking to the people, he covers his face with a veil or cloth.

In the third scene: Every time that Moses talks to Yahweh, he takes the cloth off of his face. Whenever Moses comes back from talking to Yahweh and finishes communicating his words to the Israelites, he puts the veil on again until he meets Yahweh again. Moses keeps himself covered with the veil until the next time that he talks to Yahweh.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Aaron
- Community leaders of Israel
- The other Israelites
- Yahweh

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It is important to remember that Moses has already spent 40 days and 40 nights away from Aaron and the Israelites on Mount Sinai.

It is important to remember that Moses went up to the mountain with two tablets made out of stone. These tablets were blank. Moses is bringing these tablets with Yahweh's writing back down the mountain. The Israelites are waiting for him at the bottom of the mountain.

Moses doesn't know that his face is shining as a result of talking with Yahweh. This implies that Moses's face shining was not painful for him.

When Aaron and the rulers or community leaders of Israel see Moses, they see that Moses's face is shining and they are afraid. Moses calls to them and tells them it is safe to come close to him. So Aaron and the leaders come to Moses. Moses tells them everything that happened on the mountain. Then all the people of Israel gather around Moses and he tells them all the instructions Yahweh gave him for the Israelites.

Moses finishes talking to the Israelites and covers his face with a veil, or a thin piece of cloth, that Moses can see through.

It is important to notice that the narrative describes the end of how Yahweh renewed his covenant with the Israelites. Now, Moses describes the practice of taking the veil off when Moses talked with Yahweh. This was an action that happened over and over again. Most likely, these conversations happened in the Tent of Meeting, or a tent that was set apart from the Israelite camp. Whenever Moses comes back from talking to Yahweh and finishes communicating his words to the Israelites, he puts the veil on again until he meets Yahweh again. In this way, Moses' shining face was a reminder that he had been in Yahweh's presence and was truly Yahweh's chosen leader for the Israelites.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 34:29–35 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has three scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Aaron
- Leaders of Israel
- The other Israelites
- Yahweh

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Act out Moses coming down from the mountain carrying the stone tablets. Moses' face is shining because Moses was in the presence of Yahweh. Aaron and all the Israelites are afraid to come close to Moses because his face is shining.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like "Confused. Why are they backing away?" or "Excited. I want them to come close and hear what Yahweh said," or "Curious. Why are they afraid? I have good news to tell them." [!end] Continue the drama.

Act out Moses calling Aaron and all the leaders of Israel close to him. They all come to Moses and Moses tells them what happened on the mountain. They gather the rest of the Israelites together around Moses. Moses repeats the commandments that Yahweh gave to him on Mount Sinai. When Moses finishes talking to the people, he covers his face with a veil.

Pause the drama.

Act out Moses walking away from the camp of the Israelites to talk to Yahweh. In Yahweh's presence, Moses takes off the cloth from his face.

Pause the drama.

Act out Moses coming back from talking to Yahweh. Whenever Moses finishes communicating his words to the Israelites, he puts the veil on again until he meets Yahweh again.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 34:29–35 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Moses comes down from Mount Sinai after meeting with Yahweh. He is carrying the **Tablets of the testimony**. Some translations call this the **Tablets of the covenant law**. Testimony means that someone bears witness to or declares the truth about something from their own experience. Yahweh wrote the ten commandments on the stone tablets, so the tablets were proof of the covenant, or binding promise, between Yahweh and the Israelites. The Israelites will eventually place these tablets into a special box called the ark of the testimony. This ark will come to represent the very presence of Yahweh. Use the same word or phrase for testimony as you used in previous passages. For more information on testimony or covenant, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses' face is shining because he was in Yahweh's presence. Remember, **Yahweh** is the personal name for God, and it is used throughout this passage. Use the same name for Yahweh that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

But Aaron and the Sons of Israel are afraid of Moses because his face is shining. **Sons of Israel** refer to the descendants of Jacob, or the Israelites. This people group is now the chosen people of Yahweh. Use the same word for Israel that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Israel, refer to the Master Glossary.

The leaders of the community are the leaders of the different tribes of Israel. These men helped lead and govern the people. They probably passed messages to the people from Moses when necessary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 34:29–35

Audio Content

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Exodus 35:1-19

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 35:1-19 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 35:1-19 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 35:1-19 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

God has been giving Moses instructions on how to serve God in a way that is good and right. Some of those instructions were plans to build a place of worship called the tabernacle. In the previous sections, God has written his instructions on the stone tablets and Moses has come down from the mountain where God was speaking to Moses. Now Moses will give the people the instructions that God has given to Moses. Moses will start with instructions for the Sabbath, or rest day, then will tell the people what they will need to build the tabernacle.

Moses tells all the people of Israel to come together so Moses can speak to them, just as God has told Moses to do. Moses begins by saying, "These are the things Yahweh has commanded you Israelites to do." Moses uses

God's personal name, Yahweh. Moses is clarifying that these instructions are not from Moses, but from Yahweh, who is Israel's God. God has said earlier that the people belong to Yahweh, so the people should do what Yahweh says.

Moses repeats the instructions that God gave to Moses. Moses begins with the Sabbath rest day to show how important it is. The Israelites have six days of the week in which they can work, but the seventh day will be a holy day, or a day that is set apart, for Yahweh. This will be a rest day, which the Israelites called Sabbath. On this day, the Israelites would worship Yahweh and rest. It was a sign that the Israelites are God's special people, that they are set apart and different from the nations around them. By resting each seventh day, the people learned that they could trust God for all their needs. They did not need to be working all the time, because God was taking care of them.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Think about a group or community that you belong to. What do you do that shows that you are a part of this group? What kind of special days or events do you have because you are a part of the group? What do you do at these events? Pause this audio here.

The punishment for anyone who works on that day is death. This punishment shows how important this command is. Moses is about to give the people the instructions for building the tabernacle. Even though the tabernacle is holy, the people cannot break the Sabbath rest command, even for good things like building the tabernacle.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about holy days or holidays that you celebrate in your culture. What are some things that you cannot do on that day? Why shouldn't you do those things? What are things you can do on those days? Why should you do those things? Pause this audio here.

The Israelites should not even light a fire in any of their homes on the Sabbath day. Some translations say "in their dwellings," which is another word for a home. Lighting a fire was one of the simplest tasks, which people did especially before cooking a meal. No fires means no cooking. This way the women and servants who cooked the food could have a rest day too. The Israelites were allowed to eat on the Sabbath rest day, but must eat food that they prepared the day before. This command is specifically for the people's own homes, as the priests would still use fires to give offerings as worship to Yahweh in the tabernacle.

Next, Moses gives instructions for gathering materials to make the tabernacle. Again, he says that these instructions are from Yahweh, not Moses. Everyone who is willing can give certain materials. In the original language, it says everyone whose heart or spirit moves them. This means everyone who was willing and eager to give. These materials will be an offering, or a gift, to Yahweh. People can make offerings for many reasons, including to give thanks. This offering is not a tax or a requirement; it is a way for the people to thank God for everything he has given to them. It was an honor to give things that the priests would use to worship God.

Moses gives the specific list that Yahweh gave to Moses. These are all items that the Israelites would have with them. When the Israelites left Egypt, Yahweh told the Israelites to ask the Egyptians for precious metals, clothes, and other fine items. The Egyptians gave these things to the Israelites. The first three items are several precious metals: gold, silver, and bronze.

Stop here and look at pictures of gold, silver, and bronze as a group. Pause this audio here.

The next group of items are materials, probably yarn made from wool, that people have dyed, or colored, to be blue, purple, and scarlet, as well as fine linen and goat hair. The dyes were very similar to each other. The blue would be dark and very close in color to the purple. Scarlet is a dark, deep red color. These dyes were very expensive and often symbolized royalty.

Stop here and look at pictures of blue, purple, and scarlet yarn as a group. Pause this audio here.

Linen was common in Egypt. It was a soft material, like cotton, that people made from a plant called flax. The linen for the tabernacle should be the nicest, softest linen.

Stop here and look at a picture of linen as a group. Pause this audio here.

People made goat hair into yarn and wove it into fabric to keep things dry from rain. The Israelites used it for their tents and they will use it for Yahweh's tabernacle tent as well. Moses says to bring ram skins that are red. It is possible that people either dyed the skins or that they tanned the skins. Tanning a skin means making the

skin of an animal into leather, so that people could use it for things like bags or tents. Sometimes, when people tan an animal skin, the skin becomes a reddish color.

Stop here and look at a picture of tanned skin as a group. Pause this audio here.

The other skin that the people should bring was the skin of a water animal, which could have been a dolphin or a manatee, which is sometimes called a dugong. Skilled workers will use this skin, as well as the ram skins, to make the tabernacle tent.

Stop here and look at a picture of a dolphin, as well as a picture of a manatee as a group. Pause this audio here.

The people can also bring wood from an acacia tree. This is a hard and durable wood. The trees grew in the area the Israelites were in, so it is possible the Israelites cut down the trees as they needed them.

Stop here and look at a picture of the acacia wood as a group. Pause this audio here.

People made olive oil by pressing olives with a large stone to squeeze out the oil. People would use this oil for cooking as well as for fuel in their lamps.

Stop here and look at a picture of olive oil together as a group. Pause this audio here.

Moses tells the people to bring spices for the anointing oil and the fragrant incense. Anointing oil was a special mix of olive oil and precious and sweet smelling spices. People would pour or rub a little of this oil on someone or something to anoint them. This showed that God was appointing, or dedicating, this person or thing to a special place, service, or function in the purpose of God. Incense is a mix of natural materials like spices and gums that smells good when people burn it. The priests will burn a special mix of incense on an altar in the tabernacle.

The people should bring onyx and other precious stones. Onyx is a dark stone that has some white streaks. The skilled workers would put the onyx and other precious stones on the ephod and the breastpiece. An ephod was an apron-like garment that the high priest wore. The breastpiece was a special pocket that fastened to the ephod and hung over the chest of the high priest.

Stop here and look at a picture of onyx as a group. Look at the illustration of the ephod and breastpiece of the high priest. Pause this audio here.

Now Moses gives an overview of everything that Yahweh commanded the people to make for the tabernacle. This is the place of worship where priests will make sacrifices on behalf of the people. The skilled workers will use the materials that Moses just listed to make everything Moses describes. Again, Moses emphasizes that these commands and designs come from Yahweh, not Moses; Moses is just repeating what Yahweh said. Yahweh has already given people the skills to make beautiful things. Yahweh has said to Moses that he will use their skills to make the tabernacle especially beautiful.

The skilled workers will make the tabernacle, which is a tent and a courtyard separated from the rest of the camp by a cloth wall. The workers will make the covering over the tent, which keeps out the rain, along with the clasps, or fasteners, that hold the tent on the frame.

Stop here and look at a picture of the outside of the tabernacle tent together as a group. Pause this audio here.

They should also make all the frames, posts, and cross pieces that hold up the tent as well as the bases for the frames.

Stop here and look at a picture of the frames of the tabernacle tent together as a group. Pause this audio here.

The workers will make all the items in the tabernacle tent. A curtain divided the tabernacle tent into two parts. These parts are called the Most Holy Place and the Holy Place. In the Most Holy Place was an ark, which is the ark of the covenant. This was a chest of acacia wood covered in gold with a gold lid that was sometimes called the atonement cover. This ark had poles that the priests would put through the rings on the side to carry it. This ark was holy because it symbolized God's presence, so it was behind a curtain to show it was set apart from everything else. The workers will make this ark and the curtain as well.

Stop here and look at a picture of the Most Holy Place with the ark together as a group. Pause this audio here.

The workers will make three items for the other room in the tent, which is called the Holy Place. They should make a table of wood covered with gold. This table also had poles that the priests would put through the rings on the side to carry it. The table had special gold dishes on which priests put special bread called Bread of the Presence and dedicated it to Yahweh.

They should make the lampstand, which had seven lamps on it. These lamps were bowl shaped, filled with oil, and had a piece of cloth called a wick in the bowl. The wick would soak up the oil and people would then light the wick. They should also make all the tools that the priests would need to light, clean, and take care of the lamps.

They should make the altar of incense, which was a rectangular wooden box covered in gold. The priests would burn incense on the top of it. This altar also had poles that the priests would put through the rings on the side to carry it. The skilled craftsman would mix together the spices for the fragrant incense that the priests will burn on the altar. They will also mix the spices and oil for the anointing oil.

Stop here and look at a picture of the Holy Place, with the table, lampstand, and altar of incense in it as a group. Pause this audio here.

The workers should make a curtain that will hang down from the top of the tent to the ground to cover the entrance to the tabernacle like a door. The workers will make the altar of burnt offering, which is a large wooden box covered with bronze and with a bronze grate. The priest will burn offerings, such as animals, on this altar. This altar also had poles that the priests would put through the rings on the side to carry it. The workers should also make all the tools that the priests would need to use at the altar. The workers will make the bronze basin, or large bowl, with its stand. This will hold water for the priests to wash with.

The workers should make the cloth walls that separate the courtyard from the rest of the camp, as well as curtains that can open as a doorway. They will make posts and bases to hang the cloth walls on, as well as the tent pegs and ropes for the whole tabernacle.

Stop here and look at a picture of the tabernacle courtyard with the altar of burnt offering and the bronze basin as a group. Also look at a photo of the posts, bases, tent pegs, and ropes for the tabernacle courtyard walls as a group. Pause this audio here.

The workers will make the clothes that the priests and the high priest will wear for ministering, or serving Yahweh, in the sanctuary. Sanctuary can mean holy place, which is the tabernacle. The high priest's clothes are sacred, or holy, so each high priest will continue to wear these same clothes.

Stop here and look at illustrations of the priests' clothes and the high priest's clothes as a group.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 35:1-19 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Moses talks to all the people of Israel and tells them Yahweh's instructions for the Sabbath rest day.

In the second scene: Moses lists the materials that the willing people can give to Yahweh to make the tabernacle.

In the third scene: Moses lists all the parts of the tabernacle that the skilled workers will make.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- The people of Israel
- God, whose personal name is Yahweh
- The skilled workers of Israel
- Aaron and his sons

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Yahweh has given Moses a lot of instructions for how to worship Yahweh in a way that is right. Now Moses will begin to give those instructions to the people. Though these instructions are also in earlier passages when Yahweh told them to Moses, it was a custom in those times to repeat instructions to show their importance and to show that Moses and the people followed the instructions. All of the people of Israel come together to listen to Moses. Once Moses finishes telling the people the first set of instructions, the people will do what he says.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story about a time you told someone how to do a task they had never done before. How did you help the person remember what to do? How did you show that the instructions were important? Pause the audio here.

In the first scene, Moses speaks to all the people. He may have had other people in the crowd repeat what he said so that the people in the back could hear. Moses says clearly that these instructions are commands from Yahweh. Moses says that the Israelites have six days in which to do their work, but the seventh day of the week, Saturday, will be a rest day, or the Sabbath. This command is important. The punishment for working on the seventh day is death. The Israelites should not even light a fire, so that everyone can rest that day—even the women, hired workers, and slaves.

In the second scene, Moses gives a list of materials for the tabernacle. Again, Moses says this is what Yahweh has commanded. Moses repeats this because it is important for the people to remember that these commands are not Moses's commands. They are the commands of Yahweh, Israel's God, so the people should follow them very carefully.

Moses says that anyone who is willing, anyone who wants to, can give these items. Moses will not force anyone to give anything. The items are:

- Gold, silver, bronze
- Blue, purple, and scarlet thread
- Fine linen and goat hair
- Tanned ram skins and skins from a water animal
- Acacia wood
- Olive oil and spices
- Onyx and other gemstones.

These are all items that the Israelites would own. The people will not go get these items until after Moses finishes speaking.

Stop here and discuss as a group: As an activity, list all the materials you would need to make something, like a building or a big meal. Describe the materials that are specific or that you think your listeners may not know. Listen for the way they order the list, how they explain what certain items are, or what they will be used for. Pause this audio here.

In the third scene, Moses tells the skilled workers what they will make for the tabernacle. This is a short overview of the project so people know what they are bringing the materials for and so that the skilled workers will know what all they will need to work on. Moses will give detailed instructions to the skilled workers later.

Again, Moses says that these are commands and designs from Yahweh, not Moses. The skilled workers will need to make the tent with its covering, fasteners, frames, cross-bars, pillars, and bases.

Stop here and discuss as a group: As an activity, describe a tent or temporary shelter and all its parts. Then look at the picture of the tabernacle tent with all its parts as a group. How is the tent similar to the tent you described? How is it different? Pause this audio here.

The skilled workers will also need to make the items inside the tent. They will need to make:

- The ark of the covenant
- The curtains for the middle of the tent and the door
- The table and all its accessories
- The lampstand and its tools and oil
- The altar of incense
- The anointing oil and special incense mix that the priests will use in the tent.

They will also make the altar of burnt offering and its tools, the bronze basin on a stand, and all the parts for the cloth wall of the courtyard.

Stop here and look at the pictures of the tabernacle tent and the courtyard again as needed. Pause this audio here.

The skilled workers will make the clothes that the high priest (Aaron) and priests (Aaron's sons) will wear when serving Yahweh in the tabernacle.

Stop here and look at illustrations of the priests' clothes and the high priest's clothes as a group. Pause this audio here.

The skilled workers will not start work on all of these things until after the people bring the materials and Moses gives them more instructions.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 35:1-19 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- The people of Israel
- God, whose personal name is Yahweh
- The skilled workers of Israel
- Aaron and his sons

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

All the people of Israel have come to listen to Moses. Moses says, "All these instructions I will give you are commands from Yahweh. You have six days to do your work, but on the seventh day you will have a rest day called the Sabbath, which is dedicated to Yahweh. Do not work on this day. The punishment for working on the Sabbath is death. Do not even light a fire on the Sabbath."

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the people of Israel, "What are you feeling or thinking?" They might answer things like, "This must be a serious command if the punishment is death!" or "I see that Yahweh is kind since he makes sure everyone has a day to rest and the time to worship Yahweh," or "I will listen closely to Moses since these instructions are from Yahweh." [!end] Continue the drama.

Moses says again, "All these instructions are from Yahweh. Anyone who is willing can give materials to make the tabernacle as a gift to Yahweh. The materials are: gold, silver, and bronze; blue, purple, and dark red wool yarn; fine linen and goats hair; animals skins from rams and water animals; acacia wood, oil for the lamps, spices for the anointing oil and good-smelling incense mix; onyx and other precious stones for the high priest's ephod and the breastpiece."

Pause the drama.

Then Moses says to the skilled workers, "These are all the parts that Yahweh has commanded you make for the tabernacle: the tent and its covering, hooks, frames, cross-bars, pillars, and bases; the ark with its poles and cover; the curtain that divides the tabernacle tent; the table with its poles, tools, and special bread; the lampstand with its tools, lamps, and oil; the altar of incense with its poles; the oil for anointing; the good-smelling incense mix; the curtain that covers the entrance of the tabernacle tent; the altar of burnt offering with its bronze grating, poles, and tools; the bronze washing basin and its stand; the cloth walls of the courtyard with its pillars and bases; the curtain for the entrance of the courtyard; the pegs and ropes for the whole tabernacle. You should also make the special clothes for the high priest, Aaron, and his sons, the priests, which they will wear when they serve Yahweh."

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 35:1-19 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Moses specifically uses God's unique name, **Yahweh**, several times. Yahweh is God's proper name. Yahweh is a unique name-no other religion in the land around Israel used a name like this for their god. Moses says these instructions are Yahweh's commands, so the people should follow them closely. Moses says that the Sabbath is dedicated to Yahweh, which means that it is set apart for Yahweh's purposes. The people will dedicate their gifts of materials to Yahweh, so these materials will be for Yahweh's holy tabernacle. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for Yahweh as you used in previous passages.

The **Sabbath** is the seventh day in the week for the Israelites. It is a day of rest and worship to God. By keeping this day of rest, people from other countries could see that the Israelites were different. It was a sign that the Israelites were God's special people. For more information on Sabbath and Israelites, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same words or phrases for Sabbath and Israelites as you used in previous passages.

The Sabbath day is **holy**, or dedicated to Yahweh. Holy means set apart. If something is holy, it means that it is set apart for God's special purposes. Since the Sabbath is holy, the people cannot do ordinary work, but can

only worship God and rest. For more information on holy, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for holy as you used in previous passages.

Moses says that whoever is willing should bring certain materials as a contribution, or an **offering** to Yahweh. An offering is a gift dedicated to God. People can make offerings for many reasons, including to give thanks. The workers will use this offering to build the tabernacle as Yahweh has instructed. For more information on offering, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for offering as you used in previous passages.

Moses tells the people a list of materials. These materials are:

- **Gold, silver, bronze:** These are precious metals that workers can melt and shape. Bronze is a brownish mix of copper and tin.
- Blue, purple, and scarlet **materials:** These are probably wool yarn or string that people dyed, or colored.
- Fine **linen:** A soft cloth that people made from the flax plant.
- **Goat hair, ram skins** colored red, and the skin of a **water animal:** This water animal may be a dolphin or manatee.
- **Acacia wood:** This is wood from the acacia tree, which is a hard and durable wood.
- **Oil for the lamps:** This is olive oil, which the priests put in the bowl-shaped lamps in the tabernacle. A piece of cloth, called a wick, would soak up the oil in the bowl and the priests would then light the wick.
- Spices for the **anointing oil:** Anointing oil is a special mix of oil and spices. People poured anointing oil over a person or object to show that they were holy, or set apart for a special task.
- Spices for the fragrant **incense:** Incense is a mix of natural materials like spices and gums that smells good when people burn it.
- **Onyx** and other precious stones for the **ephod** and **breastpiece.** Onyx is a dark stone that has some white streaks. The skilled workers would put the onyx and other precious stones on the ephod and the breastpiece. An ephod was an apron-like garment that the high priest wore. The breastpiece was a special pocket that fastened to the ephod and hung over the chest of the high priest.

For more information on bronze, anoint, oil lamps, and ephod refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for the items on this list as you used in previous passages.

Stop here and look at the pictures of these items as a group as needed. Pause this audio here.

Moses then gives a list of all the items the skilled workers will need to make for the **tabernacle**. This was a large tent the Israelites moved from place to place where the Israelites worshiped God. The tabernacle tent had a courtyard around it and cloth walls separated the courtyard from the rest of the camp. There were special objects in the tent and courtyard that the priests used to serve God. For more information on the tabernacle, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for tabernacle as you used in previous passages.

Stop here and look at a picture of the tabernacle courtyard again as a group. Pause this audio here.

The workers should make the **ark of the covenant** which is sometimes called the **ark of the testimony**. This is an oblong chest of acacia wood covered in gold with a gold lid called the atonement cover and carrying poles on the sides. This ark symbolized God's presence. For more information on ark of the covenant, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for ark of the covenant as you used in previous passages.

They should make the **altar** of incense and the altar of burnt offerings. An altar is a place where people present gifts and burn them as an offering to God. The altar of burnt offerings is a large bronze-covered wooden box where the priests would burn animal and food offerings. The altar of incense is a smaller, gold-covered wooden box where the priests would burn incense.

For more information on altar, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same words or phrases for these altars as you used in previous passages.

The skilled workers will make the table for the **Bread of the Presence**. The priests dedicated this bread to Yahweh, but it was not food for Yahweh. These twelve loaves of bread probably symbolized the people of Israel and was a reminder of how Yahweh provides for the Israelites. Use the same words or phrase for Bread of the Presence as you used in previous passages.

The skilled workers should also make the special clothes for the **priests**. Priests were people who worked in the tabernacle. Priests were responsible for offering sacrifices to God on behalf of the people. There was one high priest who had special tasks. The first priests were Aaron and his sons. God gave instructions for making special clothes for the priests to wear when they served Yahweh. For more information on priest, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for priest as you used in previous passages.

Stop here and look at a picture of the priests' and high priest's clothes again as a group.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 35:1-19

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Exodus 35:20–29

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 35:20–29 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 35:20–29 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 35:20–29 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In previous passages, God gave Moses a list of materials and plans for the tabernacle, which will be a place for the Israelites to worship Yahweh. Moses has just finished telling the Israelites the materials as well as an overview of the items the skilled workers will need to build. Now the Israelites all leave Moses, or Moses's presence and go back to their homes to gather the materials. In the original language, it says that everyone who felt a stirring or move in their hearts and spirits brought the materials. This means everyone who was willing, eager, and ready to give. This was not a forced giving, but joyful voluntary giving.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a time you were part of a group who was excited to start a project, such as building a building or making a new food. Listen for the ways that people showed they were excited and ready to help with the project. Pause this audio here.

The Israelites brought these materials as an offering to Yahweh. An offering is a gift people dedicate, or give, to God. Yahweh is God's personal name. These people are bringing a special gift to dedicate to Yahweh alone. The skilled workers will use the gifts to make the tabernacle, which is where Yahweh's presence will be and where the priests will lead the people to worship Yahweh.

The Israelites brought everything that the skilled workers would need to make the tent of meeting, which is another name for the tabernacle, as well as everything for its service, which means everything inside it that the priests would use to worship Yahweh. The Israelites also brought everything for the sacred garments, or clothes, which the priests would wear when serving Yahweh. The author of this section clearly says that both men and women willingly brought the materials, showing that the whole community was involved.

Stop here and look at a picture of the tabernacle as a group. Pause this audio here.

For gold, the Israelites brought all sorts of jewelry. This may have included finger rings, earrings, bracelets, clothing ornaments, and necklaces, most of which the women likely gave. They presented their gold as a special offering to Yahweh. Some translations say "as a wave offering." For a wave offering, people would raise and lower items several times to show that these items are dedicated to Yahweh. It's possible they presented the offering this way, but they definitely gave these gifts to Yahweh specifically.

Stop here and look at the picture of gold jewelry as a group. Pause this audio here.

Those who were willing brought blue, purple, and scarlet, or dark red, cloth materials. This was probably wool yarn or thread. They brought fine linen, which is a cloth made from the flax plant. They brought goat hair to twist into thread, tanned or prepared ram skins, and a water animal's skins, which may have been from a dolphin or a manatee. They also gave silver and bronze as a special offering to Yahweh. They brought wood from the acacia tree to use for building. These items were all useful and valuable materials to build with.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a time when you were making a special item, such as wedding clothes or an important gift. What kind or quality items did you use? Why did you use these kinds of items? Pause this audio here.

All the women who were skilled in sewing and spinning by hand prepared the materials. This could mean that these women prepared the materials before they brought the items to Yahweh, or that they worked on the materials which people had already dedicated to Yahweh. Spinning means twisting together fibers to make yarn or thread. In this culture, the women had the important task of spinning yarn and thread. The skilled women prepared the blue, purple, and scarlet thread and the good linen. They twisted the goat hair into yarn. It is likely that the women also dyed the fabric too.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, how do people prepare, or make, cloth materials to make items like clothes, blankets, or curtains? What kinds, or groups, of people are in charge of this job? Pause this audio here.

Moses had chosen certain men to be leaders, to help judge when people had disagreements or problems. These leaders brought onyx and other precious stones for the ephod and breastpiece. Onyx is a dark stone that has some white streaks. An ephod was an apron-like garment that the high priest wore. The breastpiece was a special pocket that fastened to the ephod and hung over the chest of the high priest.

Stop here and look at a picture of the high priest's clothes as a group. Pause this audio here.

The leaders also brought the olive oil that the priests will use as fuel for the lamps, as well as spices. The skilled workers will mix the olive oil with the spices to make the anointing oil. People rubbed or smeared this special oil on things or people to show they were set aside for a special task. The workers will also use the spices to make the special good-smelling incense, which the priests will burn before Yahweh as a good smell.

This passage ends by saying again that all the people who were willing brought offerings to Yahweh. Moses had told the people what Yahweh wanted them to do and many of them, both men and women, brought their gifts.

Some translations say the gifts were a freewill offering. This is an offering that people brought willingly, not because God required or demanded it.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 35:20–29 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has one scene.

In this scene: The people of Israel bring materials for the tabernacle as an offering to Yahweh.

The characters in this passage are:

- The men and women of Israel
- Moses
- God, whose personal name is Yahweh
- The women skilled in spinning and sewing
- The leaders of Israel

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In the previous passage, all of the people of Israel had come together to hear Moses speak. Moses gave them the list of materials that the skilled workers will need to build the tabernacle. He also gave them an overview of all the parts of the tabernacle. Now all of the people who are willing leave Moses, go back to their tents, and find the materials Moses listed. They give these materials as an offering to Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about a time when people made a place that would be dedicated to a person, such as a gathering place. How did the people show this was a special project? How did they gather the materials to build this place? How did people help out with the project? Pause this audio here.

The passage repeats several times that everyone who felt a stirring or move in their hearts and spirits brought the materials. This means everyone who was willing, eager, and ready to give. Yahweh was not forcing the people to give or cruelly taking too much. He asked for materials only from people who wanted to give. The people were excited and honored to be a part of this project. This passage also repeats that both men and women gave these materials as gifts, also called offerings, showing that everyone was involved.

The Israelites brought their offerings to Yahweh, or to Yahweh's presence. Yahweh's presence was at the tent of meeting, which was a smaller tent where Yahweh would talk with Moses. So the people probably brought their offerings and presented them at the tent of meeting, to show that they were giving these offerings to Yahweh alone. The skilled workers will use these materials to make the tabernacle to replace the tent of meeting, so the tabernacle is sometimes called the tent of meeting. Yahweh's presence will then be at the tabernacle.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about when people give taxes to their ruler, or give gifts to an organization that helps people. Often the ruler or organization are not near the people. How do people show that they are giving, or dedicating, these items to the person or group? What kind of place do they go to, or send these items to? Pause this audio here.

Everyone who had the items on the list for the tabernacle brought the items willingly. The Israelites brought gold jewelry, silver, and bronze. The people gave the gold as a wave offering, which means they may have raised and lowered the gold as well to show that the gold was dedicated to Yahweh. They brought blue, purple, and scarlet materials or yarn, fine linen, goat hair, tanned skins from rams and water animals, and wood from acacia trees.

As Moses lists the things that people brought, he stops the list to explain that all the women who were skilled in sewing and spinning prepared the colored materials, linen, and goat hair. This can mean that before they

brought the items, the women prepared them. Or this can mean that once all the people dedicated the items to Yahweh, the women prepared the items for building the tabernacle. Either way, the skilled women helped prepare the materials, such as spinning, which is twisting the hair between their fingers to make thread as well as cutting and sewing the cloth.

The leaders of the people brought onyx stones and gemstones. They also brought spices and olive oil. The section ends by repeating again that all of the Israelite men and women who were willing brought the materials as a special offering, which is sometimes called a freewill offering, for all the work that Yahweh had told Moses about.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Moses repeats that the people were willing to emphasize that the Israelites very much wanted to bring these offerings. Tell a story about a time when someone had a strong emotion at an important event. Listen for the ways the storyteller shows that certain pieces of information are very important. Listen also for when they mention the emotions the person has. Pause this audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 35:20–29 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has one scene.

The characters in this passage are:

- The men and women of Israel
- Moses
- God, whose personal name is Yahweh
- The women skilled in spinning and sewing
- The leaders of Israel.

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

After Moses finished giving instructions for the tabernacle, all of the Israelites left and went to their tents. Everyone who was willing and eager brought materials for the tabernacle as an offering to Yahweh. Both men and women brought all the materials for building the tabernacle and for everything the priests would use in worship. They brought all kinds of gold jewelry: clothing ornaments, necklaces, finger rings, bracelets. They all presented their gold as an offering to Yahweh.

Pause the drama.

Everyone who had these things brought them: blue, purple, and dark red cloth materials; fine linen, goat hair, ram skins colored red, and other water animal skins. People brought their silver and bronze and gave it as an offering to Yahweh. They also brought wood from the acacia tree.

Pause the drama.

All the skilled women spun with their hands and prepared the blue, purple, and dark red weaving materials. Every skilled woman who was willing spun the goat hair.

Pause the drama.

The leaders of Israel brought onyx and other precious stones for the ephod and the breastpiece. The leaders also brought spices and olive oil for the lamps, the anointing oil, and the good-smelling incense.

Pause the drama.

Moses had told the people what Yahweh wanted them to do, so all the Israelite men and women who were willing brought offerings freely to Yahweh.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 35:20-29 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Everyone who was **willing** brought materials as an offering. Willing can mean excited and ready.

The people brought these materials as an **offering** to Yahweh. An offering is a gift dedicated to God. People can make offerings for many reasons, including to give thanks. The workers will use this offering to build the tabernacle as God has instructed. For more information on offering, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for offering as you used in previous passages.

Some translations say that the people brought the gold as a **wave offering**. For a wave offering, people would raise and lower their gift in front of the place that symbolized Yahweh's presence to show they were dedicating the gift to Yahweh. Use the same word or phrase for wave offering as you used in previous passages.

This section specifically uses God's unique name, Yahweh, several times. Yahweh is God's proper name. Yahweh is a unique name-no other religion in the land around Israel used a name like this for their god. Several times, the passage clarifies that the people give their gifts of materials to Yahweh. Though the people may give the materials to the skilled workers, the materials were for Yahweh, for building his holy tabernacle. Yahweh is the one who told Moses what the people should bring for this project, so he deserves the honor of designer. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for Yahweh as you used in previous passages.

These materials were for the **tabernacle**, which is sometimes called the tent of meeting. The original tent of meeting was a smaller tent where Yahweh would speak to Moses. Yahweh gave Moses instructions to build a larger tent where the people would bring offerings to Yahweh and the priests would serve Yahweh. This new tent will be the tabernacle, though some still called it the tent of meeting. For more information on the tabernacle, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for tabernacle as you used in previous passages.

Stop here and look at a picture of the tabernacle as a group again as needed. Pause this audio here.

The Israelites also brought materials for the sacred, or **holy**, garments. Garment is another word for clothes. Holy means set apart for God's special purpose. The priests would wear these special clothes when they were serving God. For more information on holy, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for holy as you used in previous passages.

The people brought all the materials that Moses listed in the last section. They brought **gold jewelry, silver, bronze**, which is a brownish mix of copper and tin; Blue, purple, and scarlet cloth **materials**, which probably were wool yarn or string; Fine **linen**, which is a soft cloth; **goat hair, ram skins** colored red, and the skin of a **water animal**. This water animal may be a dolphin or manatee.

The Israelites brought wood from the **acacia** tree, which has a hard and durable wood. For more information on bronze refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for the items on this list as you used in previous passages.

The women who were skilled in **spinning** prepared all the cloth materials. Spinning means twisting together fibers to make yarn or thread.

The leaders of Israel brought **onyx**, which is a dark stone, and other precious stones for the **ephod** and **breastpiece**. An ephod was an apron-like garment that the high priest wore. The breastpiece was a special pocket that fastened to the ephod. For more information on ephod, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for these items as you used in previous passages.

Stop here and look at a picture of the high priest's clothes as a group again as needed. Pause this audio here.

They also brought olive **oil** for the tabernacle's **lamps**, which were bowl-shaped with a piece of cloth, called a wick, that would soak up the oil in the bowl. The priests would then light the wick. For more information on lamps refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for oil and lamp as you used in previous passages.

The leaders also brought spices for the **anointing oil**, which was a special mix of oil and spices. People poured anointing oil over a person or object to show that they were holy, or set apart for a special task. For more information on anoint refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for anoint as you used in previous passages.

They also brought spices for the fragrant **incense**, which is a mix of natural materials like spices and gums that smells good when people burn it. Use the same word or phrase for incense as you used in previous passages.

The people brought their gifts as a **freewill offering**. This is an **offering** that people brought willingly, not because God required them to bring it.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for freewill offering. Look up offering in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 35:20–29

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (3041561 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Exodus 35:30–36:7

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 35:30–36:7 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 35:30–36:7 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 35:30–36:7 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In previous passages, Yahweh gave Moses instructions on how to build the sanctuary, or tabernacle, which will become a place for the Israelites to worship Yahweh. After Moses told the Israelites what materials they would

need, the Israelites gathered the materials and brought them back to Moses. Now, Moses tells the Israelites who Yahweh chose as craftsmen and the people bring more than enough offerings to build the tabernacle.

As you remember, Yahweh has already told Moses on Mount Sinai that he gave special abilities to Bezalel and Oholiab to be skilled craftsmen for the tabernacle, or sanctuary. Moses repeats these instructions for all of the Israelites to hear. Moses says that Yahweh specially chose a man named Bezalel, who is the son of a man named Uri and the grandson of a man named Hur. Bezalel was from the tribe of Judah, which was one of the twelve tribes of the Israelites.

Moses tells the Israelites that Yahweh filled this man, Bezalel, with the Spirit of God. Only Yahweh can fill someone with His Spirit; it is not something that people can make happen. When Yahweh fills a person with His Spirit, that person receives from Yahweh a special power or ability, such as physical strength or wisdom. In this case, Yahweh gave Bezalel special knowledge, understanding, and skill. Yahweh says that Bezalel is to use this knowledge, understanding, and skill to make all kinds of crafts, or works of the hand.

Moses explains that Yahweh gave Bezalel the abilities and knowledge to do several things: to take gold, silver, and bronze objects and put artistic designs or patterns on those objects; to engrave or carve things into precious stones or jewels, and to place the precious stones or jewels into other objects; and to make things with wood. Because Bezalel is full of the Spirit of Yahweh, he can make every item perfectly, exactly the way Yahweh wants it to be made.

Stop here and look as a group at a picture of an artistic design or pattern made on a metal object, a picture of an engraving carved into a precious stone, and a picture of an item carved out of wood. Pause this audio here.

Moses says that Yahweh not only gave these skills to Bezalel but also to a man named Oholiab, who was the son of a man named Ahisamach. Oholiab was from the tribe of Dan, which was another of the twelve tribes of the Israelites. As you remember, Yahweh chose Oholiab to be Bezalel's assistant, or helper. Though Yahweh specially chose Bezalel and Oholiab and gave them special knowledge and skills, Yahweh also gave them the ability to teach others. This means Bezalel and Oholiab taught other craftsmen their knowledge and skills so that all of the work for the tabernacle would be of the best quality possible.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Describe someone you know who Yahweh gave a special gift or ability to. How does their work or life bring honor to God? Pause this audio here.

Moses says Yahweh also gave Bezalel and Oholiab the ability to work as engravers, designers, embroiderers in blue, purple, and scarlet yarn and fine linen, and weavers. Embroiderers and weavers refer to people who work with colored threads.

Stop here and look as a group at a photo of a weaver working with colored thread. Pause this audio here.

Though Bezalel and Oholiab were in charge of the tabernacle work overall, they still needed help from other skilled workers and designers. When completed, the tabernacle would not be the result of human hands but a divine result of Yahweh gifting and guiding the craftsmen he chose. Moses gathers all of the craftsmen whom Yahweh gave special skills and abilities to and tells them to do the work Yahweh commanded them to do.

Bezalel, Oholiab, and the other craftsmen eagerly begin to work on the tabernacle. Moses collects the offerings and materials from the Israelites before passing them on to the builders. This was probably so that Moses could inspect the materials to ensure their quality before devoting them to the tabernacle. The Israelites are so eager to fulfill Yahweh's commands that they bring freewill offerings every morning. Freewill offering means everyone who brought offerings was willing, eager, and ready to give. This was not a forced tax, but joyful voluntary giving. The Israelites give so abundantly that eventually, the builders tell Moses that they have more than enough materials to build the tabernacle. So Moses orders everyone in the Israelite camp not to bring any more offerings for the tabernacle because the workers had sufficient materials to complete the work Yahweh tasked them to do.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Describe a time when believers came together in your area to work on a project to bring honor to God. How did the believers feel about working together? How did they show that they were eager to work on the project? Describe what kind of project would get your people so excited that they would give more than enough to finish the project. Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 35:30–36:7 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has three scenes.

In the first scene: Moses tells the Israelites what Yahweh told him about the builders of the tabernacle, Bezalel and Oholiab. Moses says that Yahweh specifically gave them the ability to both build the tabernacle and also to teach others their skills.

In the second scene: Moses gathers Bezalel, Oholiab, and all the skilled workers to come and receive the materials. Moses gives the materials donated by the Israelites to Bezalel, Oholiab, and the other skilled workers. The Israelites eagerly keep donating materials and offerings every morning. The builders have to leave their work to go and tell Moses that they have more than enough materials to complete the tabernacle.

In the third scene: Moses sent a message to all the Israelites not to send more gifts because they had enough already. The Israelites stop bringing gifts.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- The Israelites
- Bezalel
- Oholiab
- All the other skilled workers of the Israelites

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It is important to remember that in the last passage the Israelites went home and collected the things Moses asked for.

It is important to remember that Moses is giving the Israelites the same instructions that Yahweh gave to Moses on Mount Sinai. It is important to notice that Moses is talking about Bezalel when Moses says, "He is a master craftsman." As well when Moses says "him and Oholiab," Moses means Bezalel and Oholiab.

It is important to notice that to make it clear who the craftsmen are, Moses not only mentions their names, but also the names of their fathers and tribes. Bezalel belonged to the tribe of Judah and Oholiab was from the tribe of Dan.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture name a specific person to avoid confusing them with other people? In your culture when a leader chooses a person for an important task, how does the leader present, or introduce, that person to the whole community? How similar or different would that introduction be to how Moses introduced the chosen workers? Pause this audio here.

It is important to notice that it is Yahweh who gives his Spirit, skill, and ability to Bezalel. The story does not mention that Yahweh gives his Spirit to Oholiab, but it does say that Yahweh gives skills to Oholiab. Yahweh put in the hearts of Oholiab and Bezalel the desire to teach. This means that Yahweh gives them both the ability and skills to teach others. In that way Yahweh provided helpers for Oholiab and Bezalel to finish the task given.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How does someone in your culture gain an ability, or skill, to do crafts? Pause this audio here.

Moses gathers the craftsmen "whose heart stirred them" to come do the work. This means they not only had the ability to work but they were also willing and eager to work. It also implies that there were some skilled

workers who did not come. Moses gives the workers the offerings that the Israelites contributed towards the construction project.

The Israelites keep bringing offerings and gifts for the construction project every morning.

The craftsmen stop their work and go to Moses to tell him to stop the offerings because they have more than enough.

Moses sends a message through the camp of the Israelites saying that they have enough gifts and not to send more. The Israelites stopped sending gifts. All of the Israelites' offerings were more than enough to finish the project.

It is important to notice that the passage doesn't mention how the message spread out to all the Israelites. That message was a proclamation, or formal statement. One way that the message could have spread is by sending messengers to the community leaders and then to the leaders of the main families. These leaders then told all of their family members.

Stop here and as a group describe how your people communicate an important message to the community. How is it different when there is a large or small community? Pause this audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 35:30–36:7 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has three scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- The Israelites
- Bezalel
- Oholiab
- All the other skilled workers of the Israelites

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Moses tells the Israelites that Yahweh has specifically chosen Bezalel, son of Uri, grandson of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. Yahweh gave his Spirit to Bezalel and Yahweh gave him wisdom, ability, and skill in all kinds of crafts. Bezalel has knowledge and skill in every craft.

Pause the drama.

Moses continues telling the Israelites that Yahweh has given Bezalel and Oholiab the ability to teach their skills to others. Yahweh has gifted Bezalel, Oholiab, and the other skilled craftsmen with wisdom and ability to do everything necessary to build the tabernacle.

Pause the drama.

Moses calls all the craftsmen together and gives them the materials that the Israelites gave to build the tabernacle. But the Israelites bring more gifts each morning. The craftsmen stop working and come to Moses saying that the Israelites brought more than enough gifts to finish the work that Yahweh commanded.

Pause the drama.

So Moses gave the command, and this message was sent throughout the camp: "Men and women, don't prepare any more gifts for the sanctuary. We have enough!" So the people stopped bringing their offerings to Yahweh. Their offerings were more than enough to complete the whole project.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 35:30–36:7 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Moses stands before the **Israelites** and repeats the instructions given to him by Yahweh. Israelites refers to the people who are the descendants of Abraham. They are Yahweh's chosen people. **Yahweh** is the personal name for God, and it is used throughout this passage. Use the same word or phrase for Israelites and Yahweh that you have used in previous passages. For more information on the Israelites or Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses says Yahweh filled Bezalel with the **Spirit of God**. In the text, Moses uses the general words for "God" and "Spirit." When Yahweh fills a person with His Spirit, that person receives a special power or ability. In this case, Yahweh gave Bezalel special knowledge, understanding, and skill for making crafts. Although "spirit of God" is the general word for God's spirit, you can refer to the Holy Spirit in the Master Glossary to hear more about the work of God's Spirit in the Old Testament.

All of the knowledge and skill Yahweh gives to the craftsman is to build the **sanctuary**, or **tabernacle**. The sanctuary means the place where God lives, and here it refers specifically to the tabernacle. Like the tabernacle, the sanctuary may refer to just the large tent moved from place to place by the Israelites, or it may refer to the entire area that included the courtyard where priests made sacrifices. This was the place where priests made sacrifices on behalf of the people before David's son built the temple. Use the same word or phrase for the sanctuary that you have used in previous passages. For more information on the sanctuary, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and look as a group at an illustration of the tabernacle. Pause this audio here.

The Israelites bring their **offerings** to Moses for the building of the tabernacle. Offering refers to a gift offered to God. In this case, it was materials that the people offered willingly to God to help build the tabernacle. Use the same word or phrase for offering that you have used in previous passages. For more information on offering, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 35:30–36:7

Audio Content

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Exodus 36:8–19

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 36:8–19 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 36:8–19 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.

4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 36:8–19 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last passage, Moses tells the people to stop bringing gifts because there is now enough materials for building the tabernacle, or tent, and furnishing it. Then Moses ordered Bezalel and Oholiab, along with all the other most skillful workers, that they must follow Yahweh's instruction very carefully in building the tabernacle, or tent.

In this passage, Moses started following Yahweh's instructions. He commanded Bezalel and all the most skilled among the workers to construct the tabernacle, or tent, of Yahweh's presence. Bezalel and the skilled workers followed the instructions that Moses gave them to make the ten curtains of the tent. They used ten pieces of the finest linen that was blue, purple, and scarlet in color. Perhaps people wove the cloth with blue, purple, and scarlet thread, or perhaps people dyed the cloth after they wove it. Then the skilled workers decorated the cloth with images of cherubim, a type of spirit being. We do not know if people wove images of the cherubim into the cloth itself, or if people embroidered the cherubim into the cloth with a needle and blue, purple, and scarlet thread. In any case, only skilled artists could do this type of work. These Cherubim are supernatural creatures that probably have the body of a lion, the wings of a bird, and the face of a human. Cherubim are often symbols of Yahweh's presence to protect the Israelites as they travel from one place to another after they left Egypt.

Show the pictures of the tabernacle and the cherubim again if needed. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story of how craftsmen or a skilful worker with his team works in building a special or important building in your community? Discuss in your culture the kind of materials that builders use in building these buildings. Pause this audio here.

So each curtain, or fabric, was 28 cubits long by 4 cubits wide. A cubit is about 46 centimeters. So 28 cubits is 12.9 meters and 4 cubits is 1.8 meters. Then Bezalel and the most skilful and intelligent workers connect the first five curtains together to form one set and then sew the other five curtains together to form the other set. There were two units of curtains now. Then they used the 50 gold clasps and 50 loops in the two sets of curtains to join them together. Then all the curtains became one unit. The whole unit now measures 40 cubits, which is 18.4 meters, by 28 cubits, which is 12.9 meters.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Discuss in your culture how you measure fabric and building materials. Tell a story about measuring the materials for building a special building. Pause this audio here.

Then Bezalel and his most skilful workers made eleven goat's hair curtains altogether as a covering, or protective layer, and covered the tent of the tabernacle. The goat's hair cloth is a less valuable material, but is a strong material. All the eleven curtains were the same size of 30 cubits, or 13.8 meters long and 4 cubits, or 1.8 meters wide. After that, Bezalel and the workers connected five of the curtains into one set and the other six curtains into another set. Then they made fifty loops along the edge of the end curtain into one set and fifty loops along the edge of another curtain into one set. They made fifty bronze clasps to connect the curtains all together as one unit.

Then the skilled workers made a third layer of the tent. They made a covering of ram's skin which was dyed red to cover the tent. They made a fourth layer, which was a covering of a strong leather on it. This leather was most likely made from the skin of a sea animal, so it would be very thick and not let any water get through. This final layer is what people could see most of the time on the outside of the tabernacle. It is also the layer that protects the tabernacle from all kinds of weather such as the hot sun, sand, rain, and snow. It needed to be strong for all of the times they would take down and set up the tabernacle every time they moved from one place to another.

Show the picture of a tanned ram skin and a picture of leather. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Discuss in your culture the kind of materials used in roofing a house. What do you use to make sure that the roof keeps the water away from the inside of the house?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 36:8-19 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has three scenes.

In the first scene: The workers made the curtain of the tent of the tabernacle with linen made up of blue, purple, and red woven with the Cherubim. The skilled workers wove the curtains of the tabernacle according to the same measurements Moses gave to Bezalel and his most skillful workers.

In the second scene: They joined the curtains together using the loops and the gold clasps.

In the third scene: Then workers made the second layer of goat's hair curtains and joined them together, the third layer of ram's skin curtains and the fourth layer of leather coverings as protective layers to cover the fourth layer of the tent or tabernacle.

The characters in this passage are:

- Bezalel
- Skilled workers

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

You may want to listen to your translation of Exodus 26:1-14 before listening to this script to remember the instruction Yahweh gave Moses, and to remember the words you used in your translation. If you do, pause this audio here to listen to your translation.

If needed, continue to listen to this script for more information.

In the first scene, the skilled workers made the tabernacle curtains of finely woven, or twisted, linen. This probably means that someone twisted two linen threads together to make a stronger thread. Although Bezalel is not mentioned in this passage, we know that he worked as the leader, and his team worked together with him. The "curtains" are ten pieces of cloth. The word for curtain refers to material used for making a tent. The workers decorated the interior, or inner layer, of the tabernacle with blue, purple, and scarlet colors and images of cherubim.

In the second scene, Bezalel and all his most skillful and intelligent workers made sure that five strips of the cloth were joined, or sewn, to one another and the other five were sewn together to make a second curtain. Each curtain was 28 cubits long by 4 cubits wide. 28 cubits is 12.9 meters and 4 cubits is 1.8 meters. When they joined together the two sets of five curtains, each set measured 20 cubits (or 9 meters) wide and 28 cubits (or 12.9 meters) long. They made loops in the cloth along the long side of each of the curtains. They made gold hooks, or clasps, like a U-shape that joined the loops to one another. The whole unit now measures 40 cubits, which is 18.4 meters, by 28 cubits, which is 12.9 meters.

Show a photo of the gold hooks, or clasps. Pause the audio here.

After that, Bezalel and his most skilful and intelligent workers made the second layer using goat hair for the tabernacle to protect the inner layer. They made eleven curtains of thirty cubits, or 13.8 meters long and 4 cubits, or 1.8 meters wide. After that, Bezalel and the workers connected five of the curtains into one set and the other six curtains into another set. Then they made fifty loops along the edge of the end curtain into one set and fifty loops along the edge of another curtain into one set. They made fifty bronze clasps to connect the curtains all together as one unit. Then the workers made the third layer of covering for the tabernacle, or tent, from ram skins dyed red. They made a top covering, or fourth layer, from strong leather.

Now, the group could use some materials to make a model of the tabernacle with its layers. Or, the group could storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 36:8–19 in the easiest to understand translation.

In this step, the team will dramatize the story.

This passage has three scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Bezalel
- Skilled workers

Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the story. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the story. Help each other remember every part of the story.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then restart the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

In the first scene, Moses was following Yahweh's instructions and he commanded Bezalel and all the workers who are most skilful and intelligent among those working to construct the tabernacle, or tent of Yahweh's presence, with ten pieces of curtains, or fabrics. So, Bezalel followed the instructions that Moses gave him and made the curtains of the tabernacle, or tent of Yahweh's presence, with fine blue and purple and reddish thread. Skilled workers embroidered them with Cherubim.

Pause the action.

Ask the people playing Bezalel and his skillful workers, "How are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "I believe that Moses will really appreciate the work of our hand and even recommend that we should make more things. That would be a great business opportunity for us." [!end] Continue the drama.

In the second scene, each curtain, or fabric, was 28 cubits long by 4 cubits wide. So, Bezalel and the most skilful and intelligent workers joined, or sewed, five tent curtains, or fabrics, with one another and the other five curtains were sewn to one another. The curtains, or fabrics, were narrow lengths of twisted thread woven together. So, they made the hooks joined to one another and all the curtains in the tabernacle had the same measurements, or became one unit.

Pause the action.

Ask the people playing Bezalel's most skillful workers, "How are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Well! We are so confident of your instructions to us and we wouldn't want to take a wrong measure because this is Yahweh's house we are trying to build." [!end] Continue the drama.

In the third scene, Bezalel and his most skillful workers made 11 curtains of goat hair, and then joined together 5 curtains and 6 curtains so that there were two curtains of goat hair. They made fifty loops on one set of the curtain and another fifty loops on the other set of the curtain opposite each other. After that, Bezalel and his most skilful and intelligent workers made fifty bronze, small metal objects to join the tent together as a unit. Then the tabernacle was covered with ram skins dyed red for the third layer and made another covering for the fourth layer from a strong leather.

Pause the action.

Ask the people playing Bezalel's most skillful workers, "How are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "We so much respect you dear Bezalel, and you truly have the fear of Yahweh. That could be the reason you are so much filled with the spirit of God." [!end] Continue the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 36:8–19 in the easiest to understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

You may want to listen to your translation of Exodus 26:1–14 again before listening to this script to remember the instruction Yahweh gave Moses, and to remember the words you used in your translation. If you do, pause this audio here to listen to your translation.

If needed, continue to listen to this script for more information.

Moses started following Yahweh's instructions and he commanded Bezalel and all the workers who are most skillful among those working to construct the **tabernacle**, or tent of Yahweh's presence. The tabernacle is the House of God, or a large tent, that was moved from place to place where the Jewish ancestors worshiped God. This was a place where priests made sacrifices on behalf of the people. Translate tabernacle in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that tabernacle is in the Master Glossary.

Use the same systems of measurement for this passage as you have in previous passages.

So, Bezalel followed the instructions that Moses gave him and made the curtains of the tabernacle with fine blue, purple, and scarlet thread and embroidered them with **Cherubim**. Cherubim are guardians of sacred places. They are often symbols of Yahweh's presence. They have the body of a lion, the wings of a bird, and the face of a human. Translate Cherubim in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that Cherubim is in the Master Glossary. Describe the blue, purple, and scarlet thread, fine twisted linen, curtains, loops, and clasps in the same way you have in previous passages.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in their own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 36:8-19

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Exodus 36:20–34

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 36:20–34 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 36:20–34 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 36:20–34 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The Israelite craftsmen have been eagerly following Yahweh's instructions for building the tabernacle, or the place where Yahweh will live among his chosen people. Led by Bezalel, to whom Yahweh gave special knowledge and skills, the craftsmen have already made the tabernacle's curtains. Now, the craftsmen make the framework of the tent.

As you remember, on Mount Sinai Yahweh gave Moses specifications for building the tabernacle. Now, Bezalel and the other Israelite craftsmen fulfill Yahweh's instructions and make the framework, or wall supports, for the tabernacle out of acacia wood. Acacia wood was durable and abundant in that area. The workers make the boards 10 cubits, or 4.6 meters, long and 1.5 cubits, or 66 centimeters, wide. A cubit is the length of the average

forearm of an adult male, so this was about 45 centimeters. Bezalel makes two tenons, or pegs, at the bottom of each frame to slot into its silver base. We don't exactly know what these looked like, but they stuck out from the frames at the bottom and helped connect the frame to the base. There were two on each frame that matched, or were parallel across from, each other.

Stop here and look at a diagram of the frames as a group. Pause this audio here.

Bezalel and the workers make 20 frames for the south side of the tabernacle. This means the full length of the south side was around 30 cubits, or 13.7 meters. Since the Israelites always set up the tabernacle with the entrance facing the east, the south side is on the left as you look at the entrance of the tabernacle from the outside. They make forty bases out of silver to go under the twenty frames. Silver is a precious metal. People made the silver bases by making a hollow mold and then pouring hot liquid silver into the mold. Once the silver cooled down it became solid and took the shape of the mold. There are two bases for each frame, one base for each one of the "tenons," or "pegs," that stick out of the frame.

Stop here and look at a picture of the silver bases as a group. Pause this audio here.

Then the workers make six frames for the west side of the tabernacle and they use two frames to double the strength of the back corners of the tabernacle. They make these extra back corner frames separate at the bottom and join them at the top by a ring. This part of the tabernacle's design most likely added stability. With the added corner frames, there are a total of eight frames and 16 silver bases on the back, or west side, of the tabernacle.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do workers where you live ensure a structure is stable? Pause this audio here.

Then the builders make the cross beams out of acacia wood for the tabernacle. We do not know exactly what these beams looked like, whether they were single beams or more like ladder structures. They make 15 beams for the three sides of the tabernacle, five on each side. The front, or east end, of the tabernacle had none of these supports because the workers designed it to be open for entrance by the priests during worship.

Finally, the workers make the center crossbars so that they stretch from end to end in the middle of the frames. They overlay the frames with gold and make gold rings to hold the crossbars. They also cover the crossbars with gold.

In total, the tabernacle included 48 frames and when someone viewed it from the outside, it would look more or less like a rectangle. As you remember, the workers made the tabernacle to be easy to transport and rebuild at the next location.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Describe a building project in your culture that builders had to make knowing that it would need to be disassembled and reconstructed many times. How did this change the building process for the workers? Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 36:20–34 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 2 scenes.

In the first scene: Bezalel and the workers build the frames of the tabernacle to support the curtains. They build silver bases to support the frames, two for each frame. They also build corner frames to make the framework more stable.

In the second scene: Bezalel and the workers build the crossbars for the two sides and the rear of the tabernacle. They also make the center post and gold rings for it to go through. Bezalel overlays the frames and the crossbars with gold.

The characters in this passage are:

- Bezalel
- Other Israelite craftsman

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Moses continues to describe how the Israelites fulfilled Yahweh's specific instructions for building all the parts of the tabernacle.

You may want to listen to your translation of Exodus 26:15–30 before listening to this script to remember the instruction Yahweh gave Moses, and to remember the words you used in your translation. If you do, pause this audio here to listen to your translation.

It is important to remember that Bezalel previously finished the curtains of the tabernacle. Though Bezalel's name is not mentioned here, we know that Bezalel was leading the workers. Bezalel and the other workers are building the wooden frames that will hold the curtains.

Bezalel builds frames for the curtains. All of the frames are identical. Twenty of the frames will hold the curtains on the south side of the tabernacle. This is on the right side of the tent. Bezalel builds 40 silver bases to support these frames, two per frame. He most likely melted down silver and then used a mold to create the bases.

Bezalel also builds another 20 frames and 40 bases for the north side of the tent. Bezalel builds six frames for the rear of the tabernacle that faces west. Bezalel reinforces the rear corners of the tabernacle by adding a frame to each corner. Those two extra frames placed on each corner will join with each frame on the sides to make a corner piece on each side. Bezalel builds in total eight frames for the rear of the tabernacle. Bezalel builds 16 silver bases, two for each frame on the rear end.

It is important to notice that there is no difference between the frames or the bases built for the south and the north sides of the tabernacle. This gives a rectangular shape to the tabernacle.

It is important to remember that repetition is a way to emphasize the importance of the instructions.

It is important to notice that all the frames will hold the curtains on the three sides of the tabernacle. The ladder-like framework will allow people on the outside of the tabernacle to see the curtains covering the frames and people on the inside to see the golden frames and the curtains.

Bezalel makes five crossbars for each side. Bezalel makes the middle crossbar to attach in the middle of the frames going from one end to the other end of the tabernacle.

It is important to notice that the length of the middle crossbars was the full length of the tabernacle. Bezalel makes golden rings for the center bars to slide through on the three sides of the tabernacle.

Bezalel covers the frames and the crossbars with gold.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 36:20–34 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has two scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Bezalel
- Other Israelite craftsman

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Act out Bezalel and the other workers building the framework of the tabernacle to support the curtains. They build twenty frames for both the north and south sides. Then they create two silver bases for each frame. They create six frames for the back of the tabernacle with two corner frames to make the framework more stable.

Pause the drama.

Act out Bezalel and the workers building the crossbars for the two sides and the rear of the tabernacle. They also make the center posts and gold rings for the posts to go through. Bezalel overlays the frames and the crossbars with gold.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 36:20–34 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

For this passage, you may want to listen to your translation of Exodus 26:15–30 before listening to this script to remember the instruction Yahweh gave Moses, and to remember the words you used in your translation. If you do, pause this audio here to listen to your translation.

Bezalel and the other Israelite craftsmen begin construction on the frames for the tabernacle.

The **tabernacle** refers to the large tent moved from place to place by the Israelites and to the dwelling place of Yahweh. This was the place where priests made sacrifices on behalf of the people before David's son built the temple. Use the same word or phrase for the tabernacle that you have used in previous passages. For more information on the tabernacle, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and look at an illustration of the tabernacle as a group. Pause this audio here.

The workers make the frames for the tabernacle out of **acacia wood**. Acacia wood is a strong wood that is easy to work with. Use the same word for acacia wood that you have used in previous passages.

Each frame was 10 **cubits** high and 1.5 cubits wide. A cubit is the length of a man's arm from his elbow to the tip of his finger if his hand is straight and flat. It is approximately 45 centimeters. Be sure to use the same word or phrase for cubit that you have used in previous passages. For more information, cubit is in the Master Glossary.

The workers build 48 frames in total for the tabernacle.

As you translate this passage, be sure to use the same words that you used in previous passages on this subject.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. *Pause this audio here.*

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 36:20–34

Audio Content

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Exodus 36:35–38

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 36:35–38 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 36:35–38 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.

4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 36:35–38 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The Israelite craftsmen have been eagerly following Yahweh's instructions and building the tabernacle, or the place where Yahweh will live among his chosen people. Led by Bezalel, to whom Yahweh gave special knowledge and skills, the craftsmen have already made the tabernacle's framework. Now, the craftsmen make the special veil for the inside of the tabernacle as well as the entrance curtain.

Bezalel oversees the other skilled Israelite craftsmen. Together they make the special curtain, or veil, that will close off the Most Holy Place, or the Holy of Holies, from the front room of the tabernacle, the Holy Place. As you remember, Yahweh revealed the tabernacle to be a rectangular structure divided into two rooms. The larger room on the east side that was closest to the entrance was called the Holy Place. It was twice the size of the other room. The west side, the smaller side of the tabernacle, was called the Most Holy Place. It will hold the ark of the covenant, where Yahweh's presence will dwell.

Stop here and look as a group at a diagram of the two rooms of the tabernacle showing where the Israelites placed the veil. Pause this audio here.

As you remember, the purpose of this special curtain is to block people from entering the Most Holy Place. The workers make the special curtain to match the interior curtains of the tabernacle in design. They make the special curtain with blue, purple, and scarlet thread and one of the skilled craftsmen uses a needle to weave, or embroider, cherubim figures into the fabric of the veil. As we know, cherubim are guardians of sacred places and are often symbols of Yahweh's presence. They have the body of a lion, the wings of a bird, and the face of a human. The cherubim on the special curtain remind people that sinful people cannot access the immediate presence of the Most Holy God.

Stop here and show your group a picture of cherubim. Discuss how craftsmen in your culture work with cloth. If they do not use a needle and thread, how do they join together and make beautiful designs on cloth? What artistic symbols or emblems do you use in your culture to show something special or remind people of something important? Pause this audio here.

The workers make four posts from acacia wood for the curtain to hang on. As you know, acacia wood was abundant in that area and was very durable. The workers overlay the posts with a thin layer of gold and attach golden hooks to the four posts for the curtain to hang from. Then they make four silver bases for each post to slot into.

Stop here and look at a diagram of the bases used for the curtain posts. Pause this audio here.

Although Yahweh gave Moses more details earlier about the clasps and the furnishings of the tabernacle, Moses does not repeat those instructions here. Moses implies, however, that Bezalel and the workers followed all Yahweh's instructions for the special curtain.

The workers then make the entrance curtain for the tabernacle. The entrance curtain matches the design of the other curtains. The workers weave it from fine linen and embroider it with blue, purple, and scarlet thread. They make five wooden posts and overlay them with gold. Although Moses only mentions the tops and bands of the posts, it is most likely that the workers overlaid every part of the posts with gold.

Stop here and look at a picture of the tops and bands of the wooden posts, if needed. Pause this audio here.

These posts will hold the entrance curtain. Like the veil, the workers attach golden hooks to the posts for the entrance curtain to hang from. The workers cast five bronze bases for each post to slot into.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 36:35–38 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has two scenes.

In the first scene: Bezalel and the Israelite craftsmen make a curtain for the inside of the tabernacle. A skilled craftsman embroiders the curtain with colorful thread and cherubim designs. The workers make four wooden posts to hold the curtain then overlay them with gold. They make four silver bases for each post to slot into.

In the second scene: The workers make a curtain for the entrance of the tabernacle. The workers make the curtain using the same colors as the other curtains. Then they make five wooden posts to hold the curtain and overlay the posts with gold. The workers attach golden hooks to the posts. Finally, they make five bronze bases for the posts.

The characters in this passage are:

- Bezalel
- Other Israelite craftsmen

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It is important to remember that Bezalel and the other workers have already built the structure of the tabernacle that holds the tent that covers the tabernacle. Although Bezalel is not mentioned in this passage, we know that he is supervising and likely working with the other craftsmen to complete the work on the tabernacle.

You may want to listen to your translation of Exodus 26:31–37 before listening to this script to remember the instruction Yahweh gave Moses, and to remember the words you used in your translation. If you do, pause this audio here to listen to your translation.

The craftsmen make the curtain, or veil, of finely woven linen for the inside of the tabernacle. They use blue, purple, and scarlet to decorate the veil. It is important to notice that this is the same pattern of colors as the other curtains of the tabernacle.

A skilled craftsman uses a needle and thread to make a cherubim design on the veil. The craftsmen make four posts of acacia wood with gold hooks to hang the curtain on. They overlay the posts with gold. The craftsmen make four silver bases for each post to slot into.

It is important to notice that Bezalel and the craftsmen are making the curtain exactly as Yahweh commanded.

Bezalel and the craftsmen make a curtain for the entrance to the tent. They use woven linen. They make beautiful designs using a needle and thread on the curtain. They use blue, purple, and scarlet thread.

The craftsmen make five posts with gold hooks to hold the curtain. They overlay each post, including the tops and bands, with gold. The workers make five bases of bronze for each post to slot into.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 36:35–38 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has two scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Bezalel
- Other Israelite craftsmen

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Act out Bezalel guiding the Israelite craftsmen to make a special curtain out of woven linen. They decorate the curtain with purple, blue, and scarlet threads. They use a needle and thread to draw cherubim on the veil. They make four posts of acacia wood and cover them with gold. They attach gold hooks onto the posts for the curtain to hang on. They place the four posts into four silver bases.

Pause the drama.

Act out the craftsmen making another curtain out of woven linen for the entrance of the tent. They use purple, blue, and scarlet thread to design the curtain. The craftsmen make five wooden posts and cover them with gold. They make five golden hooks and attach them to the posts to hang the curtain on. The craftsmen cast five bronze bases for each post to slot into.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 36:35–38 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

For this passage, you may want to listen to your translation of Exodus 26:31–37 before listening to this script to remember the instruction Yahweh gave Moses, and to remember the words you used in your translation. If you do, pause this audio here to listen to your translation.

Bezalel and the Israelite craftsmen continue to make the tabernacle as Yahweh instructed. They make the special curtain, or veil, for the inside of the tabernacle. The workers embroider the special curtain with designs of **cherubim**. Cherubim are guardians of sacred places and are often symbols of Yahweh's presence. They have the body of a lion, the wings of a bird, and the face of a human. Use the same word for cherubim and curtain, or veil, that you have used in previous passages. For more information on cherubim, refer to the Master Glossary.

The workers make the four posts for the curtain out of **acacia** wood. Acacia wood is a strong wood that is easy to work with. Use the same word for acacia wood that you have used in previous passages.

The workers also make a curtain for the entrance of the tent—this refers to the tabernacle. The tabernacle was a sacred tent set apart as the dwelling place of God. The Israelites transported the tent as they journeyed from place to place. It is the place where Yahweh dwelled among his people and where his people worshiped Him.

Finally, the workers make five support posts for the entrance curtain with bronze **bases** for each post. Be sure to use the same word for bases as you have used in previous passages.

The workers overlay the capitals, or the tops, and the fillets, or the bands, of the wooden posts with gold. It is most likely that they covered all of the posts with gold.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 36:35-38

Audio Content

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Exodus 37:1-9

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 37:1-9 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 37:1-9 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 37:1-9 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

On Mount Sinai, Yahweh gave Moses specific instructions for how to build the tabernacle, or the place where the Israelites will worship Yahweh. Moses has been describing how he and the Israelites fulfilled Yahweh's instructions. The craftsmen have already started building the tabernacle. In this passage, Bezalel builds the ark, or the box, where Yahweh's presence will dwell.

As you remember, Yahweh chose Bezalel to be in charge of building the tabernacle. Yahweh filled Bezalel with his Spirit and gave him special knowledge and skills to build the tabernacle exactly how Yahweh wanted it to be. Although Yahweh gave instructions on how to build the ark before He gave instructions for the tabernacle, it is likely that Moses advised Bezalel to finish work on the tabernacle before building the ark. In this way, the curtains of the tabernacle could protect the ark during transportation.

Bezalel obeys Yahweh and builds the ark out of acacia wood. Acacia wood was a strong wood that was easy to shape, and it was abundant in the area of Mount Sinai. The length of the ark measured two and a half cubits. The width of the ark measured one and a half cubits. The ark's height measured one and a half cubits. A cubit was the distance from the tip of a man's middle finger to the end of his elbow when he held his hand flat and straight; about eighteen inches, or 45 centimeters. This means the ark was about 112 centimeters long, 67 centimeters wide, and 67 centimeters high. Bezalel overlays the wood with gold that the Israelites had offered to Yahweh and puts a gold molding, or border, around the entire top of the ark.

Stop here and look at a picture of acacia wood and the gold molding around the top of the ark together as a group. Tell a story of an important construction project that people had to build using exact measurements. What would happen if the people measured wrong? Pause this audio here.

Bezalel then casts, or makes, four rings out of gold and fastens, or attaches, one ring on each foot of the box. The ark Bezalel made had four "feet," though we don't know their size. These feet kept the main part of the ark off of the ground. Bezalel attaches one ring to the side of each foot so that the Israelites can run a pole through the rings on each side. This would give the Israelites the ability to lift and move the ark. Bezalel inserts poles made out of acacia wood through the rings on the side of the box to carry it. Yahweh previously told the Israelites never to remove the poles from the ark so that the Israelites could move it at any time and no one would ever touch the actual ark. The rings on the feet of the ark protected it from any scratches or damage.

Bezalel then makes the cover for the ark out of pure gold. The cover of the ark fit over the ark, so it was the same length and width as the ark. The Israelites called it the atonement cover because it refers to the concept of atonement, or reconciliation. This is the process of people overcoming hostility and distance and becoming true friends, allies, or kin. Some translations call the atonement cover the mercy seat. It represented the fact that Yahweh, the only true God, had in His eternal kindness and love arranged for the Israelites to enjoy reconciliation with Him. The Israelites were not strangers or enemies to Yahweh; they were Yahweh's chosen people.

Stop here and look at the drawing of the ark together as a group. Pause this audio here.

Bezalel makes the atonement cover entirely out of pure gold, not a slab of wood overlaid with gold like the rest of the major surfaces of the ark. At the ends of the ark, Bezalel hammers two pure gold statues of cherubim. We do not know how tall these statues were. Cherubs, or cherubim, were some sort of intelligent, powerful angelic

being. These angelic beings were pictured with wings. One cherub faced the center of the atonement cover from one end and the other cherub faced the center from the other end. The cherubs raised their wings, so as to protect the atonement cover. The cover and the cherubim were all one solid piece of gold. In this way, Bezalel fulfills Yahweh's instructions for building the ark.

Stop here and look at the drawing of the atonement cover along with the attached cherubim together as a group. Pause this audio here.

As you remember, Yahweh told the Israelites to place inside the ark the stone tablets where he wrote the covenant law. These laws were a record of the covenant relationship between Yahweh and the people of Israel. Once the atonement cover was on top of the ark and the tablets were inside, Yahweh would meet with Moses from above the atonement cover, between the two cherubim.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 37:1-9 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has two scenes.

In the first scene: Bezalel builds the ark to Yahweh's specifications. Bezalel takes the Israelites' offerings of gold and covers the ark's outside and inside with gold. Bezalel makes golden rings and attaches them to the feet of the ark for the poles to slide into. Bezalel puts the wooden poles into the four rings so that the Israelites will be able to carry it.

In the second scene: Bezalel makes a cover for the ark of pure gold. Bezalel hammers two cherubims of gold on each side. The cherubim face each other with wings spread to protect the ark.

The characters in this passage are:

- Bezalel

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Moses continues to describe how the Israelites fulfilled Yahweh's specific instructions for building all of the parts of the tabernacle.

It is important to remember that the construction of the ark is after the construction of the tabernacle. When Yahweh gave instructions, Yahweh told Moses how to build the ark first since it was the place where Yahweh's presence would live among the Israelites. Then Yahweh told Moses how to build the tabernacle. Most likely, Bezalel built the tabernacle first so that the Israelites could protect the ark with the finished curtains of the tabernacle.

It is important to notice that the only person mentioned in this passage is Bezalel. Bezalel builds the ark by himself with the special skills and knowledge that Yahweh gave him.

Stop here and listen to your team's translation of Exodus 25:10-22 when Yahweh gives Moses instructions for building the ark. Listen for the words that you used in that passage and remember that in this passage Bezalel is following Yahweh's instructions and building the ark. Pause this audio here.

It is important to notice that Bezalel completes each step of the process in sequence instead of doing all the steps at the same time.

Bezalel makes the ark out of acacia wood. Bezalel covers the ark with gold from inside and outside. Bezalel then makes rings of gold and attaches them to the sides of the ark.

Bezalel makes poles covered with gold to go through the rings so that the Israelites will be able to carry the ark. Finally, Bezalel makes a golden cover for the ark called the atonement cover, or the mercy seat.

Bezalel hammers two angels, or cherubims, of gold and places them on each end of the ark. The extended wings of the cherubim stretch over the mercy seat to protect the ark. The cherubims are facing each other over the

mercy seat, but they are probably looking down at the mercy seat. In this way, Bezalel finishes his work on the ark.

Stop and discuss with the group: Describe a sequence of actions where one thing depends on the thing before it. Notice the connecting words the team uses to describe this process.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 37:1-9 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has two scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Bezalel

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Bezalel begins to build the ark out of acacia wood. He makes the ark to Yahweh's specifications: about 112 centimeters long, 67 centimeters wide and 67 centimeters high. Bezalel puts pure gold over the entire ark, inside and out.

Pause the drama.

Bezalel makes rings for the four feet of the ark. He attaches these rings to the side of the feet of the ark. He makes poles of wood and puts gold over them. Bezalel slides the poles through the rings so that the Israelites can carry the ark.

Then Bezalel makes a cover called the atonement cover, or mercy seat, for the ark. He makes it out of pure gold. He hammers gold into the shape of two cherubs, or angelic beings, onto the cover. These cherubim are on either side of the cover, facing the center of the cover and have their wings outstretched over the center of the cover.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 37:1-9 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Bezalel begins to build the ark as Yahweh instructed. The **ark** is a box that is decorated in an ornate way, which holds the tablets of testimony, and which is where God's presence meets with Moses, and with high priests later. The ark also is called the ark of the covenant. Use the same word for ark that you have used in previous passages. Look up ark of the covenant in the Master Glossary for more information.

Bezalel makes the ark out of **acacia** wood. Acacia wood is a strong wood that is easy to work with. Use the same word for acacia wood that you have used in previous passages.

Bezalel obeys Yahweh and makes the ark to the exact dimensions of two and a half **cubits**, by one and a half cubits, by one and a half cubits. A cubit is the length of a man's arm from his elbow to the tip of his finger if his hand is straight and flat. It is approximately 45 centimeters. Be sure to use the same word or phrase for cubit that you have used in previous passages. For more information, cubit is in the Master Glossary.

Bezalel overlays the inside and outside of the ark with gold and adds a **molding**, or a border, made of gold to the outside edge. This ark will also have feet on the bottom to keep the ark from touching the ground. Bezalel casts, or pours into a mold, four golden rings, then attaches the rings to the outside of each of the feet. Finally, Bezalel makes long wooden poles, also overlaid with gold, to go through the rings. The ark is to be carried by these poles. The poles are not to be removed from the rings.

Bezalel then makes an **atonement cover**, or **mercy seat**, for the ark. He makes the cover out of pure gold and it is the same length and width as the ark. The atonement cover, or mercy seat, is the place where God's presence will rest when He meets with Moses, and later the high priests. It is the place where God grants atonement, or forgiveness, to the Israelites. Use the same word or phrase for atonement cover, or mercy seat, that you used in previous passages. For more information, look up atonement and mercy in the Master Glossary.

Bezalel then hammers gold into the form of two **cherubim**, or angelic beings with wings. He attaches these cherubim on each end of the cover so that the cover and the cherubim are all one continuous piece of gold. The cherubim face the center of the cover, with their wings outstretched over the cover. This cover goes on top of the ark. Use the same word or phrase for cherubim that you have used in previous passages. For more information, look up cherubim in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 37:1-9

Audio Content

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Exodus 37:10–16

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 37:10–16 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 37:10–16 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 37:10–16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Bezalel and the other Israelite craftsmen are continuing to follow Yahweh's specific instructions for how to build the tabernacle, or the place where the Israelites will worship Yahweh. The workers have already finished the tabernacle and the ark, or the box where Yahweh's presence will dwell. In this passage, Bezalel and the workers build another piece of furniture that will be in the front part of the tabernacle: the table.

Stop here and look at a drawing of the tabernacle and where the different pieces of furniture were located. Pause this audio here.

It is likely that other workers helped Bezalel make the table. Yahweh wanted the Israelites to make the table very similarly to the ark. The workers make the table out of acacia wood and then overlay it with gold. The large amount of gold in the tabernacle represented the importance of Yahweh, who would dwell there. Bezalel makes the table two cubits long or 88 centimeters, a cubit wide or 45 centimeters, and a cubit and a half high, or 67 centimeters.

Just as he did with the ark, Bezalel creates a gold molding, or border, around the table. It is likely that this molding is a decorative border around the top part of the table. Since Bezalel made the table with a rim around it, he also made a gold molding around the edge. This rim was a handbreadth, or the width of a man's hand—approximately 10 centimeters. We do not know exactly how Bezalel placed the rim and its molding. One possibility is that it came up from the top of the table, to keep the bread and dishes from falling off of the table. The other likely possibility is that it went down from the table to make the table look deeper.

Stop here and look at an image of the table together as a group. Pause this audio here.

Bezalel then makes four rings and fastens them to the four corners of the table where the legs are. These rings are close to the rim so that, like the ark, the poles can go through the rings to carry the table. Having the rings close to the rim towards the top of the table would make it easy to carry the table when it needed to be moved. This was important since the Israelites would have to move the whole tabernacle as they traveled toward the promised land.

Bezalel makes the poles out of acacia wood and covers them with gold. The Israelites will use these poles like the ones they made for the ark, to carry the table. However, these poles would not stay in the rings when the table was not being moved. This would make it easier for the priests to access the table.

Bezalel makes plates and dishes for the table, as well as pitchers and bowls, just like Yahweh said. He makes all of these special containers out of pure gold. The Israelites would use these plates and dishes for incense, which is a spice that people burned to produce a sweet smell. They would use the pitchers and bowls to pour out the different offerings and sacrifices that the Israelites would bring.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: If people use incense in your culture, why do they use it? How is that different from how the Israelites used incense? Pause this audio here.

As you remember, the only food the Israelites will place on the table will be the bread of the presence, or the bread that was always to be in Yahweh's presence. It is possible that this bread sat on the plates and dishes on the table.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 37:10–16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Bezalel makes the table made of acacia wood 88 centimeters long, 45 centimeters wide, and 67 centimeters tall. He overlays it with pure gold and puts a border of pure gold around it. Bezalel puts a rim around the table about 10 centimeters wide, with a gold border on it.

In the second scene: Bezalel makes four gold rings for the table and fastens them to the table where the legs are. These rings are to hold the poles to carry the table. Bezalel makes the poles out of acacia wood and overlays them with gold.

In the third scene: Bezalel makes the special containers for the table—the dishes, bowls, and pitchers—out of pure gold. The Israelites will use these containers for their offerings to Yahweh.

The characters in this passage are:

- Bezalel
- Other workers

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It is important to notice that the original language does not mention Bezalel's name, but it's clear that he worked on the table, and some translations say his name. Bezalel builds the table using the special skills and knowledge that Yahweh gave him.

Because of how Moses words this passage, it is likely that other workers are completing the work with Bezalel according to Yahweh's instructions.

It is important to notice that Bezalel completes each step of the process in sequence instead of completing all the steps at the same time.

It is important to notice that most of this passage is exactly the same as the previous passage where Yahweh instructed Moses in the building of the table.

Stop here and discuss as a group. It may be helpful to relisten to your translation of Exodus 25:23–30. Be sure to listen for the specific words you used in that passage's translation to help you in this one. Pause this audio here.

Bezalel makes the table out of acacia wood according to the dimensions Yahweh gave to Moses. Bezalel covers the table with gold and shapes the gold around the edges. Bezalel then makes rings of gold and attaches them to the corners of the table next to the legs. The rings were next to the border to hold the poles the Israelites would use to carry the table.

Stop and discuss how builders make things out of gold and overlay things with metal as a group. Pay attention to the words you use as you describe these actions. Pause this audio here.

Bezalel makes poles to carry the table. Bezalel covers them with gold to go through the rings. Then Bezalel makes golden containers of pure gold for the table. Bezalel makes plates and dishes for the incense. Bezalel makes bowls and pitchers for liquid offerings. As you remember, the Israelites will use these plates and dishes for burning incense. They will use the pitchers and bowls to pour out different offerings from the Israelites to Yahweh.

Bezalel finishes constructing the table precisely according to Yahweh's specifications .

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 37:10–16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has one scene.

The characters in this passage are:

- Bezalel
- Other workers

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Act out Bezalel making the table out of acacia wood following the dimensions given by Yahweh. Bezalel covers the table with gold and shapes the gold around the edges.

Pause the drama.

Act out Bezalel making rings of gold and attaching them to the corners of the table next to the legs. The rings are next to the border to hold the poles used to carry the table.

Bezalel then makes poles to carry the table. Bezalel covers them with gold to go through the rings.

Once the table is complete, act out Bezalel making golden containers of pure gold for the table. Bezalel makes plates and dishes for the incense. Bezalel makes bowls and pitchers for liquid offerings.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 37:10-16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

If needed, it may be helpful to re-listen to your translation of Exodus 25:23-30. Be sure to listen for the specific words you used in that passage's translation to help you in this one.

Bezalel follows Yahweh's instructions and makes a table out of **acacia wood** for the tabernacle. Acacia wood is a strong wood that was found in the area of Mt. Sinai. This table was 2 **cubits** long by 1 cubit wide, by 1 and a half cubits tall. A cubit is about the length of a man's arm from his elbow to the tips of his fingers. This is approximately 45 centimeters long. Use the same descriptions for acacia wood and cubit you've used in previous passages. For more information on cubit refer to the Master Glossary.

Bezalel overlayed the table with **pure gold** and put a golden molding around it. Pure gold is a precious metal that is very valuable and has no other metal mixed with it. Then there is to be a rim around the table that is a handbreadth, or 10 centimeters, around the table also with a pure gold molding around it. Use the same words for pure gold, molding, and rim that you have used in previous passages.

Bezalel places four golden rings on the corners of the table where the legs are, but close to the rim. These will hold the poles to carry the table. The poles are also to be made out of acacia wood and overlaid with gold.

Finally, Bezalel makes all of the plates, dishes, bowls, and pitchers out of pure gold. The plates were very shallow dishes, and the dishes were deeper, more like cups. The people used the plates and dishes for incense. The bowls were smaller than the pitchers, but the people used both the bowls and pitchers to pour out the special drink offerings to Yahweh. The Israelites would give an **offering**, or a gift or sacrifice, to Yahweh to thank Him, to be purified, or to ask for forgiveness. Use the same word for offering that you have used in previous passages. For more information on offering, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and show a photo of the plates, dishes, bowls, and pitchers. Be sure to use the same words for these items that you used in previous passages.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 37:10–16

Audio Content

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Exodus 37:17–24

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 37:17–24 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 37:17–24 three times, in three different translations, if possible. Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.

4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 37:17–24 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Bezalel and the other Israelite craftsmen continue to follow Yahweh's specific instructions for how to build the tabernacle, or sanctuary. This was the place where the Israelites would worship Yahweh. The workers have already finished making the tabernacle, the ark, and the table. In this passage, Bezalel and the workers build another piece of furniture that the Israelites will keep in the tabernacle: the lampstand.

Stop here and look at the drawing of the lampstand together as a group. Pause this audio here.

Bezalel follows Yahweh's instructions and makes the lampstand by hammering pure gold. It is possible other workers helped Bezalel. He uses a single piece of gold to make the lampstand and its decorations. He hammers out the base and the shaft, or stem, of the lampstand. The base gives the lampstand stability on the floor of the tabernacle and the shaft or stem rises vertically from the base. Decorated branches resembling the branches of a tree came off the stem. With three branches heading off to one side and three to the other side, and including the main shaft or center stem, there were a total of seven different supports for oil lamps. In this way, the lampstand resembled a tree. Both the tree and fire, or light, often symbolized life in Israelite culture.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What symbols do people use in your culture to represent life? Pause this audio here.

Bezalel makes three cups on each branch. The cups supported the actual lamps that would hold the oil. The lamps were to sit cradled in each cup. Bezalel made the cups to resemble almond flowers, each one having a bud, or center, and the blossom or flower petals. In this way, the oil lamps would sit within a gold flower on a gold tree.

Stop here and look at a picture of almond flowers and buds together as a group. Pause this audio here.

Since each branch had three flower-shaped cups and the stem had four cups, there were a total of twenty-two places where the Israelites could place oil lamps. However, there were only seven specific places for oil lamps, with the other fifteen made to decorate the lampstand to look like a tree with many flowers. It is unclear if the decorative cups could actually hold oil lamps. Bezalel spaces the buds out on the stem so that they fit nicely at different heights from the branches, with one bud probably near or at the top of the stem, and the other three below the pairs of branches successively.

Just as Yahweh instructed, Bezalel makes the lampstand out of one piece of gold which seems impossible. However, it is possible that they made the pieces separately and then joined them together seamlessly afterwards. They probably joined together the pieces of the lampstand by heating and beating the gold together. This was the traditional means of shaping and joining metal at the time.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do workers where you live shape and form metal? Describe the process of metalworking in your culture. Pause this audio here.

Then Bezalel makes the seven oil lamps, or oil bowls, out of pure gold. The lamps had a pinched edge and a wick saturated in oil to cast the most light. These types of lamps burned coarse olive oil or fat and could stay alight for 2 to 4 hours. As you remember, Yahweh wanted the lamps placed on the lampstand in such a way that the lamps would light the area in front of them. This would help light the tabernacle for the benefit of the priests who ministered there. Finally, Bezalel makes the lamp snuffers and the tray that holds them out of gold. Eventually, the priests would use these snuffers to cut off the burned end of the wick. The snuffers mentioned here were probably more like a pair of tweezers or tongs. The trays would hold the snuffers as well as the burned parts of the wick.

Stop here and look at a picture of the oil lamps and snuffers together as a group. Pause this audio here.

Just as Yahweh instructed, Bezalel used a full talent of gold, which was 75 pounds, or about 35 kilograms, to build the lampstand and everything that went with it.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 37:17–24 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has two scenes.

In the first scene: Bezalel makes a lampstand with a base and a trunk, or stem. Bezalel makes all of the parts of the lampstand out of hammered gold just like Yahweh instructed. He makes the lampstand with three branches on each side of the trunk. Each branch and the trunk has golden cups in the shape of almond flowers. Bezalel makes each branch with three cups and makes the trunk with 4 cups, one on top and one underneath where the pair of branches meet on the trunk. Bezalel makes all of his work out of one piece of hammered gold.

In the second scene: Then Bezalel makes the seven oil lamps to sit in the cups on top of each branch and the trunk. Finally, he makes the snuffers and trays for the snuffers out of pure gold. At the end, the completed lampstand and all that went with it are made of 75 pounds of pure gold.

The characters in this passage are:

- Bezalel
- Other workers

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

It is important to notice that most of this passage is exactly the same as the previous passage where Yahweh instructed Moses in the building of the lampstand.

Stop here and discuss as a group: It may be helpful to relisten to your translation of Exodus 25:31–40. Be sure to listen for the specific words you used in that passage's translation to help you in this one. Pause this audio here.

It is important to notice that the only person mentioned in this passage is Bezalel, although it is likely other workers helped him make the lampstand. Bezalel builds the lampstand with the special skills and knowledge that Yahweh gave him.

Bezalel builds the lampstand and the decorations out of one piece of pure gold by hammering it.

It is important to notice that there is not a description of the order that Bezalel used to build the lampstand. Moses only mentions what Bezalel built and describes how Bezalel built it.

Bezalel builds the lampstand with three branches on each side coming out from the center stem.

Each branch has three lamp cups in the shape of almonds with buds and petals, but the center stem has four lamp cups in the shape of almonds with buds and petals. There was an almond bud under each pair of branches.

It is important to notice that the description of the lampstand stops here. Then Moses describes the next objects that Bezalel builds—the lamps, lamp snuffers, and trays.

Bezalel builds seven lamps, lamp snuffers, and trays. Bezalel used pure gold to build the whole of the lampstand and all the accessories. Bezalel used 75 pounds, or 35 kilograms, of pure gold.

It is important to note that mentioning the 35 kilograms at the end doesn't mean that Bezalel measured the weight of the items once he had finished making them. Bezalel most likely had a set amount of gold at the beginning of the project and kept a record of how much he used as he went.

Stop here and discuss with your group how you calculate or measure the material you will use for a project. Try to find something around 35 kilograms where you live and pick it up to have a better understanding of how much the lampstand weighed. Pause this audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 37:17–24 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has two scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Bezalel
- Other workers

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

It is possible to act this out using visual aids like a previous drawing, image, or a diagram of what the lampstand might look like. For the act of Bezalel building the lampstand, you could draw the lampstand according to the description while the actor repeats out loud the parts of the lampstand.

Act out Bezalel building the lampstand using pure gold. The base, the center stem, the lamp cups, and the petals were of one continuous piece.

Pause the drama.

Act out Bezalel building the seven lamps for the lampstand, lamp snuffers, and trays, all of pure gold.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 37:17–24 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Bezalel begins work on the **lampstand** and makes it with a base and a trunk or stem. He makes all of the parts of the lampstand out of pure hammered **gold**. A lampstand in this case is a base and trunk of a stand that will hold several lamps. Use the same word or phrase for lampstand that you used in previous passages.

Pure gold is a precious metal that is very valuable and has no other metal mixed with it. Use the same word you've used for pure gold in previous passages.

Bezalel makes the lampstand with 3 **branches** on each side of the trunk. Each branch and the trunk has golden **cups** in the shape of almond flowers. Each branch has three cups and the trunk has four cups, one on top and one underneath where the pair of branches meet on the trunk. The almond cups and branches are all one piece with the trunk and all made out of the same hammered gold. Branches are the long sticks that extend from the trunk. Cups are the small bowls that will hold the oil lamps.

Bezalel then makes the seven **oil lamps** to sit in the cups on each branch and the trunk. He makes the seven lamps sit in such a way that they light the area in front of the lampstand. Oil lamps are small bowls that people fill with olive oil, usually made of clay, with a lip on one side that a wick for lighting extends out of. However,

Bezalel makes these oil lamps out of gold. Use the same word or phrase for oil lamp that you have used in previous passages. For more information, look up oil lamp in the Master Glossary.

Finally, Bezalel makes the **snuffers** and trays out of pure gold. He uses 35 kilograms of gold to make the whole lampstand. Be sure to use the same word for snuffers that you used in previous passages.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 37:17–24

Audio Content

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Exodus 37:25–38:8

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 37:25–38:8 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 37:25–38:8 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 37:25–38:8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

God has given Moses instructions for how the Israelites should build a place of worship called the tabernacle and everything in it. God has given workers the skill to make the tabernacle and now they, led by a skilled worker named Bezalel, are making the tabernacle and all of its items. This section describes how they made the altar of incense, the special incense and anointing oil, the altar of burnt offerings, and the basin for washing.

Stop here and look at a picture of the tabernacle as a group. Pause this audio here.

Bezalel and the skilled workers made an altar for burning incense out of wood from the acacia tree. The priests will use this altar to burn incense and the fragrant smoke from the incense symbolized prayer in this time. The altar is a rectangle shape with a square base. The altar's base is a cubit, or 50 centimeters, square, and two cubits, or about one meter, tall. The workers carved horns, or points, out of the same piece of wood at the altar's top four corners.

Stop here and look at a picture of the acacia wood as a group. Pause this audio here.

Then Bezalel and the skilled workers covered the altar with a thin layer of pure gold. This would be the best gold without anything else in it. They also added a decorative gold border around the sides of the altar, close to the top. Next, they made two gold rings and attached them to opposite sides of the altar below the decorative border. This can possibly mean that there was one pair of rings—one ring for each side—or that there were two pairs of rings—two rings for each side. The workers also made poles out of acacia wood and covered them in gold. The priests would be able to slide the poles through the rings to carry the altar whenever the priests move the tabernacle.

Stop here and look at a picture of the altar of incense as a group. Pause this audio here.

Next, the workers prepared the holy anointing oil and fragrant, or good-smelling, incense. Anointing oil is a special mix of olive oil mixed with precious spices. When people pour some of this oil mixture on things or people, this shows that those things or people were now holy. Incense is a mix of natural materials like spices and gums that smells good when people burn it. Only the priests can use this special incense mix in the tabernacle. In the original language, it says that the oil and incense were the work of a perfumer. A perfumer is someone who prepared and blended good-smelling oils and incense. This means that Bezalel and the skilled workers carefully prepared the oil and incense like a skilled perfume maker would.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a time that someone made something very well or carefully, like a professional would. Listen for phrases that show that the person's work was the best. Pause this audio here.

The workers made the altar for burnt offerings out of acacia wood as well. The priests will burn the animal, food, and drink offerings on this altar to show that the people are dedicating these offerings to Yahweh. This altar's base is five cubits, or 2.3 meters, square, and it was three cubits, or 1.5 meters, tall. The workers carved horns, or points, out of the wood at the top four corners. They carved the horns out of the same piece of wood as the rest of the altar. Then the skilled workers covered the altar with bronze, a metal that is a mixture of copper and tin.

Stop here and look at a picture of the altar of burnt offerings as a group. Pause this audio here.

The workers also made the tools for this altar out of bronze. They made pots with wide openings at the top for removing the greasy ashes left by the animal sacrifices. They made shovels, or scrapers, for cleaning the altar, bowls for sprinkling liquids, forks with three long points for turning the meat on the altar, and firepans for carrying burning coals or hot ashes.

Stop here and look at an image of the altar's tools as a group. Discuss whether these are common tools in your culture. Pause this audio here.

Next, they made a bronze grating for the altar of burnt offerings. This was probably narrow strips of bronze laid across each other to create a net. They put the grating below the ledge of the altar, halfway up the altar. They also made a ring for each corner of the grating that would stick out of the sides of the altar. It does not say here what material the workers used to make the rings, but when God gave instructions to Moses about the altar, God said to make the rings out of bronze.

The workers also made carrying poles from acacia wood and covered the poles in a thin layer of bronze. Then they slid the poles through the rings so that the priests would also be able to carry this altar as well. The section clarifies that the workers made the altar hollow out of boards. This would make it lighter and thus easier for the priests to carry such a large altar.

The last item that the workers made in this section is the bronze basin and its stand. This is a large bowl or vessel that holds water which the priests will use for washing. They also made a stand to hold the basin. The workers used bronze from melted bronze mirrors. In this time, people polished bronze to make it reflective like a mirror. This would be the best quality bronze, as any flaws or impurities would distort the reflection.

Stop here and look at a picture of the bronze basin and its stand as a group. Pause this audio here.

Unlike for the other bronze items, the author of this section explains who gave the bronze that the workers used to make the basin. Perhaps the author included this information because it was from a different source than the other bronze. The women who served at the entrance to the tent of meeting gave their bronze mirrors to make items for the tabernacle. The Israelites would have understood who these women were, so there is no more explanation about them here. The tent of meeting is sometimes another name for the tabernacle. The original tent of meeting was a smaller tent where God would speak to Moses. Since this passage was likely written after the tabernacle was built, this probably means that these women served at the entrance to the tabernacle, not the original tent of meeting, but we are not sure. These women possibly volunteered to help take care of the tabernacle, doing tasks like cleaning utensils, gathering water, and helping other women worshipers.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell an old story about something that happened a long time ago or an old folk story. Listen for when the storyteller mentions a job, item, or idea that people don't use anymore. How do they explain it? How much information do they give? If the storyteller is telling the story to a foreigner, how much more information does he give about the subject?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 37:25–38:8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

In the first scene: Bezalel and the skilled workers make the altar of incense.

In the second scene: Bezalel and the skilled workers make the anointing oil and incense.

In the third scene: Bezalel and the skilled workers make the altar of burnt offerings.

In the fourth scene: Bezalel and the skilled workers make the bronze basin and its stand.

The characters in this passage are:

- Bezalel
- The skilled Israelite workers
- And the women who served at the entrance to the tent of meeting

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

The Israelites have been making the tabernacle and everything in it just how God said to. In the original language, it says that "he" made these items, while some translations say "they." In earlier sections, it clarifies that Bezalel led the skilled workers of Israel to make these items. God gave Bezalel special skill and teaching abilities to work on this project.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a brief story about a time when a group of people with a leader worked to build something, like a house. Listen for the way the storyteller shows the people all worked together on the project even though not everyone may have helped with every single task. Pause this audio here.

In the first scene, Bezalel and the workers carved the altar for burning incense out of acacia wood. The altar is a rectangle box with a base that is one cubit square. A cubit was a standard measurement of length that is about 50 centimeters. The altar is two cubits, or about one meter, tall. The workers carved horns on the four top corners out of the same piece of wood as the rest of the altar.

Stop here and look at a picture of the altar of incense again as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Next, the workers covered the top and all the sides of the altar with a thin layer of pure gold and added a decorative gold border close to the top of the altar, going around the sides. Then the workers added two gold rings, or circles, to opposite sides of the altar. This can possibly mean that there was one pair of rings—one ring for each side—or that there were two pairs of rings—two rings for each side. There were probably four rings total but the original language is unclear. These rings are large enough to put a pole through. The workers attached the rings to two opposite sides of the altar so that they can slide two poles horizontally through the rings on either side of the altar. The workers also made the poles from the wood of the acacia tree and covered the poles with gold. This altar will be inside the tabernacle tent.

In the second scene, Bezalel and the workers made the anointing oil and the special incense. For the oil, they mixed together a specific list of spices and olive oil, following the instructions that God gave them. They also followed God's instructions to make the special incense, mixing together natural materials like spices and gums. The workers measured and mixed these ingredients very carefully, like a professional perfume maker.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Discuss the process of how people in your culture make good-smelling things, such as perfume, candles, or incense. How hard is the process? What kind of good-smelling things are only for certain ceremonies or certain people? Pause this audio here.

In the third scene, Bezalel and the workers made the altar of burnt offerings. They also made this altar out of acacia wood, but this altar is larger than the altar of incense. This altar is a rectangular box with a base that is five cubits, or 2.3 meters, square. This altar is three cubits, or about 1.5 meters, tall. The workers carved horns on the four top corners out of the same piece of wood as the rest of the altar.

Stop here and look at a picture of the altar of burnt offerings as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Next, the workers covered this altar in a thin layer of bronze, a metal that is a mixture of copper and tin. They also made all the altar's equipment out of bronze. They made the pots, shovels, bowls, meat forks, and firepans. They also made a bronze grating for the altar, which was probably narrow strips of bronze laid across each other to create a net. This allowed fat from the burning animals to fall through and air to rise up from underneath so the fire would stay hot.

At the corners of the bronze grating, on two sides of the altar, the workers put bronze rings to hold the carrying poles. Then they made the poles out of acacia wood and covered them with a thin layer of bronze. They put the poles through the rings, so it would be ready for the priests to move it. This scene finishes with a reminder that the altar is hollow so it is easier to carry. This altar will be in the courtyard of the tabernacle.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Discuss different ways your culture uses to move heavy objects by hand, such as adding handles, straps, or carrying poles. Pause this audio here.

In the fourth scene, Bezalel and the workers made the bronze basin, which was probably round, and large enough to hold water for four or five priests to dip their hands into. They also made a bronze stand to put the basin on. This basin will be in the courtyard of the tabernacle, by the altar of burnt offering. To make the basin and the stand, the workers melted bronze mirrors. Women who would one day serve at the entrance to the tabernacle gave the bronze mirrors as materials for the tabernacle.

Stop here and look at a picture of the bronze basin and its stand as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 37:25–38:8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 4 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Bezalel
- The skilled Israelite workers
- The women who served at the entrance to the tent of meeting

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Bezalel and the skilled Israelite workers have been making the tabernacle and the items in it. They made the altar of incense out of wood from the acacia tree, carving horns at the top four corners. The altar's base was 50 centimeters square and it was one meter tall. They covered the top and the sides with a thin layer of gold and made a gold decorative border around the sides, close to the top. They attached gold rings on the two sides of the altar to hold the poles for carrying the altar. They made the carrying poles out of wood from the acacia tree and covered them with gold.

Next, they made the holy anointing oil and the pure, good-smelling incense, working just as carefully as a professional perfume maker.

Pause the drama.

Bezalel and the workers made the altar of burnt offerings out of acacia wood as well. This bigger altar's base was about 2.3 meters square and it was about 1.5 meters tall. They also carved horns at the corners of the altar out of the same wood, but they covered this altar with a thin layer of bronze. They also made the pots, shovels, bowls, meat forks, and firepans out of bronze. They added a bronze net on the altar and bronze rings on the four corners. Then they made carrying poles out of wood from the acacia tree and covered them with bronze. They put the poles through the rings on the side of the altar for carrying the altar. They made this altar hollow, out of wooden boards.

Pause the drama.

Then the workers made the big bronze bowl for washing and the stand it sat on. Women who served at the entrance to the tent of meeting gave bronze mirrors and the workers used this precious bronze to make the bowl and its stand.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 37:25–38:8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Bezalel and the skilled workers make two **altars** out of **acacia** wood. An altar is a place where people present gifts and burn them as an offering to God. The priests will burn incenses on the altar of incense and they will burn the burnt offerings on the altar of burnt offerings. For more information on altar, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for altar as you used in previous passages.

Stop here and look at the pictures of the altar of incense and the altar of burnt offerings again as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Acacia wood is wood from an acacia tree. This is a hard and durable wood.

Stop here and look at a picture of the acacia wood again as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Incense is a mix of natural materials like spices and gums that smells good when people burn it. The workers made a special mix of incense that will be for the altar of incense only. Use the same word or phrase for incense as you used in previous passages.

Burnt offerings were when people sacrificed animals to God by burning them completely on an altar. These offerings were for the forgiveness of sin in general. For more information on burnt offerings, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for burnt offering as you used in previous passages.

The altars' measurements are in **cubits**. A cubit is the length of the average forearm of an adult male. This is a common way to measure things and is used frequently in the Bible. The length of one cubit, or the length of the average forearm, is about 50 centimeters. For more information on cubit, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for cubit as you used in previous passages.

The workers also make the holy **anointing oil**. Anointing oil was a special blend of olive oil and precious and fragrant spices. People would pour or rub a little bit of this oil on someone's head to show that God was

appointing someone to a special place, service, or function in the purpose of God. For more information on anoint, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for anointing oil as you used in previous passages.

Holy means set apart. If an object is holy, it means that it is set apart for God's special purposes. An object that is holy can only be used for the worship of God, and cannot be used for ordinary work. For more information on holy, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for holy as you used in previous passages.

The workers cover the altar of burnt offerings in a thin layer of **bronze**. Bronze is a brownish mix of copper and tin. Use the same word or phrase for bronze as you used in previous passages.

The women who served at the entrance to the **tent of meeting** gave bronze mirrors. The tent of meeting is sometimes another name for the **tabernacle**. The original tent of meeting was a smaller tent where God would speak to Moses. The skilled workers are building a new tent where the Israelites will worship God. This will be the tabernacle, though some still called it the tent of meeting. For more information on the tabernacle, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for tabernacle, or tent of meeting, as you used in previous passages.

Stop here and look at a picture of the tabernacle as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 37:25–38:8

Audio Content

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Exodus 38:9–20

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 38:9–20 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 38:9–20 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 38:9–20 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Earlier in Exodus, God spoke to Moses on the mountain of Sinai. He gave Moses instructions for how to make the tabernacle and everything used for worship in and around the tabernacle. In this passage, Moses describes how the men made the courtyard. The description of the work is almost the same as the instructions God gave Moses, so it is clear that the men obeyed his commands as they made the courtyard. God set aside Bezalel and Oholiab and other skilled craftsmen to carry out the work of building the tabernacle and all the other items for worship. The Spirit of God gave them wisdom and skill to do the work.

God also commanded the Israelites to bring to Moses the materials needed for the items. Remember that the Israelites were slaves in Egypt, but God commanded them to ask their neighbors to give them items before God

rescued them. The Israelites provided all the precious fabrics and metals they needed for building the tabernacle, and some of the materials probably came from their Egyptian neighbors. They had so much, Moses had to stop them from bringing items because they brought more than they needed for the work. They had been carrying these items with them in the wilderness.

Some translations say "he made" or "they made" the courtyard. It was likely Bezalel and other skilled men who made the courtyard together. They made it with curtains of finely twined or twisted linen, just as God commanded Moses to do. The south side of the courtyard was 100 cubits, or 46 meters, long. It had twenty posts and twenty bronze bases with silver hooks and bands on the posts, just as God commanded. The north side was also 100 cubits, or 46 meters, long and had twenty posts and twenty bronze bases, with silver hooks and bands on the posts.

Stop here and look at a picture of finely twined linen as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of a bronze base as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of a silver hook and band on a post as a group. Pause this audio here.

They made the west end 50 cubits, or 23 meters, long out of curtains, with ten posts and ten bases, with silver hooks and bands on the posts, just as God commanded. They also made the east end, the side where the sun rises, 50 cubits, or 23 meters, long. They made curtains 15 cubits, or 6.9 meters, long on one side of the entrance, with three posts and three bases, and curtains 15 cubits, or 6.9 meters, long on the other side of the entrance, also with three posts and three bases.

They made all the curtains around the courtyard from finely twined or twisted linen. They made the bases for the posts out of bronze. They made the hooks and bands on the posts out of silver, and the tops, or capitals, of the posts were covered with silver, so all the posts of the courtyard had silver bands. It is not clear from this description whether only the top of the posts were covered in silver or whether the entire post was covered in silver, but it was probably only the tops of the posts that were covered in silver.

Stop here and look at a picture of the courtyard as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of the tops of the posts as a group. Pause this audio here.

A person who is skilled at embroidery made the curtain, or screen, for the entrance to the courtyard out of blue, purple, and scarlet yarn and finely twined linen. He made the curtain 9.2 meters long and 2.3 meters high, the same height as the courtyard curtains. For the entrance curtain they made four posts with silver hooks and bands and four bronze bases, and the tops were covered with silver. They made all the tent pegs of the tabernacle and the surrounding courtyard out of bronze. They used the tent pegs to secure the tabernacle to the ground.

Stop here and look at a picture of the entrance curtain as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and share a story about someone in your language group who is skilled at creating designs on cloth using threads of different colors. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Share a story of a time when you made a temporary shelter. What did you do to protect it from being destroyed by a strong wind?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 38:9–20 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 1 scene.

In the first scene: Moses describes the way the men carried out God's instructions for how to build the tabernacle courtyard just as he told Moses to do.

The characters in this passage are:

- Bezalel
- An unknown number of men appointed by Moses and skilled by the Spirit of God
- An embroiderer

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

The passage says, "then he made the courtyard." "He" probably refers to Bezalel who did some work himself and also oversaw other men as they worked. They made the south side of the courtyard of curtains 46 meters long. It was not one long curtain, 100 cubits, or 46 meters, in length. It was many smaller curtains hung between the posts. They made twenty posts and twenty bronze bases. In some translations it says that both the posts and the bases were made of bronze. If the posts were made of bronze, they were probably wooden posts covered in bronze.

They made silver hooks and silver bands for the posts, and from these hooks they hung the curtains. The north side of the courtyard was the same length as the south side. They also made it from curtains, the same length as those on the south side, and with twenty posts in twenty bronze bases, with silver hooks and bands on the posts for hanging the curtains.

They made the west side of the courtyard 50 cubits, or 23 meters, wide, so it was half the length of the south and north sides, with ten posts and ten bases, with silver hooks and bands on the posts and silver tops, or capitals. The east side, where the sun rises, was also 50 cubits, or 23 meters, wide, so the courtyard was a perfect rectangle.

The east side was a little different than the west side, though, because it had the entrance curtain. They made curtains 15 cubits, or 6.9 meters, long on one side of the entrance, with three posts and three bases, and curtains 15 cubits, or 6.9 meters, long on the other side of the entrance, also with three posts and three bases. These curtains were made of finely twisted linen like all the other courtyard curtains. They made bases for the posts from bronze, and they made hooks and bands for the posts out of silver, so they made silver bands for all the courtyard posts.

An embroiderer made the curtain for the entrance to the courtyard. He made it using blue and purple and scarlet yarn and finely twisted linen. He made it 20 cubits, or 9.2 meters, long. He made the entrance curtain the same height as the other courtyard curtains, 5 cubits, or 2.3 meters, high, and they made four posts and four bronze bases for the posts. They made silver hooks and silver bands for the four posts, and they covered the tops of the posts with silver. They made all the tent pegs of the tabernacle and the courtyard around it out of bronze.

Stop here and look at a picture of the courtyard as a group. Pause this audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 38:9–20 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 1 scene.

The characters in this passage are:

- Bezalel
- An unknown number of men appointed by Moses and skilled by the Spirit of God
- An embroiderer

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Bezalel and the men made the courtyard. They made the south side 46 meters long out of curtains made with finely twisted linen. They made twenty posts and twenty bronze bases. They made silver hooks and silver bands for the posts. They made the north side the same way they made the south side.

Pause the drama.

They made the west end of the courtyard 23 meters wide, with ten posts and ten bases, with silver hooks and silver bands on the posts. They also made the east end, where the sun rises, 23 meters wide. A skilled embroiderer made the entrance curtain out of blue and purple and scarlet yarn. They made it 9.2 meters long and 2.3 meters high, which was the same height as the other courtyard curtains. They made four posts and four bronze bases for the entrance curtain. They made silver hooks and bands, and they covered the tops of the four posts with silver. They made all the tent pegs for the tabernacle and the courtyard out of bronze.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 38:9–20 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The men made the **tabernacle courtyard** exactly the way God instructed Moses to make it. The word **tabernacle** sometimes refers to the tent where Yahweh lived among his people, the Israelites, before the temple was built. Tabernacle can also refer to the entire area of the tabernacle, including the courtyard and everything within it. For more information about the tabernacle, refer to the Master Glossary. A **courtyard** is an area that is open to the sky with a boundary all around it. Use the same word or phrase for courtyard as you used in previous passages.

The courtyard was 100 **cubits** long and 50 cubits wide. One cubit is about the length of the average adult man's forearm, or almost 50 centimeters long. One hundred cubits would be about 50 meters long. Use the same word or phrase for cubit, or the same unit of measurement, as you used in previous passages. For more information about a cubit, refer to the Master Glossary.

They made the curtains of the courtyard out of **finely twined linen**. Finely twined linen is fabric made by twisting thin linen threads together into thicker thread. Linen is made from a plant called flax. Use the same word or phrase for finely twined linen as you used in previous passages.

They made the **bases** for the posts out of **bronze**. The base for the posts was a piece of bronze metal with a place carved out of the center where the post could be placed so it would be stable. Bronze is a mixture of copper and tin. Use the same words or phrases for base and bronze as you used in previous passages.

The courtyard posts had **silver hooks** and **bands** on them for holding the curtains. **Silver** is a metal that is less valuable than gold but more valuable than bronze. The bands were strips of silver that went around the posts near the top, and the hooks were pieces of silver curved or bent at an angle. They also made the tops of the posts, or the capitals, of silver. Use the same words or phrases for silver and hooks and bands and tops, or capitals, as you used in previous passages.

If needed, stop here and look again at a picture of the silver hooks and bands and the silver tops, or capitals, of the posts as a group. Pause this audio here.

They made the curtain, or screen, for the entrance of the courtyard out of **blue and purple and scarlet yarn**. Yarn is a twisted thread made from the wool of sheep. Blue and purple and scarlet colors were symbols of royalty for the Israelites at this time. Use the same words for blue and purple and scarlet and yarn as you used in previous passages.

If needed, stop here and look again at a picture of blue and purple and scarlet yarn as a group. Pause this audio here.

An **embroiderer** made the curtain, or screen, for the entrance of the courtyard. An embroiderer is a person who is skilled at weaving designs into fabric using threads of different colors.

The **tent pegs** for the temple and the courtyard were made of bronze. Tent pegs were pointed pieces of metal, like large nails, used to secure the posts.

If needed, stop here and look again at a picture of a tent peg as a group. Pause this audio here.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 38:9-20

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Exodus 38:21–31

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 38:21–31 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 38:21–31 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 38:21–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, the Israelites constructed the tabernacle just as Yahweh had instructed Moses.

Moses received the instructions for the tabernacle when he was on the mountain meeting with Yahweh.

This passage is an inventory or summary of the materials that the Israelite craftsmen used in making the tabernacle, or tent of meeting, which is sometimes called the tabernacle of the covenant, or testimony. In this case the covenant, or testimony, refers to the stone tablets of the law, which the Israelites were to keep in the tabernacle. This inventory lists the total amount of metal the craftsmen used in making the tabernacle and the various furnishings.

Stop here and look again at a picture of the tabernacle. Pause the audio here.

Moses commanded the Levites to create the inventory. In a previous passage, the Levites were set apart for service to Yahweh. Yahweh chose Aaron and his sons to serve as priests. Ithamar was the 4th son of Aaron. Aaron was Moses' brother. Ithamar was the Levite who led the Levites in creating the inventory.

Bezalel and his assistant Oholiab made everything that Yahweh commanded Moses to make. You will remember from an earlier passage that Yahweh chose these men to lead the other craftsmen in completing this project. Yahweh had chosen them because they had the gifts, or skills, needed to build the tabernacle. Yahweh would also give them more skills that they would need. Moses told them how Yahweh had commanded them to build the tabernacle.

This passage reminds us that Bezalel was the son of a man named Uri and the grandson of a man named Hur. Bezalel was from the tribe of Judah, which was one of the twelve tribes of the Israelites. Oholiab was the son of a man named Ahisamak. Oholiab was from the tribe of Dan which was also one of the twelve tribes of the Israelites. In Hebrew culture, it was important to know which tribe they belonged to. By naming the father, grandfather, and tribe, Yahweh is calling a specific person since it is possible that other people might have the same name.

Stop and discuss as a group: In your culture, how do you describe who a person is when you introduce them? What information about their work or their family do you say? Pause the audio here.

Next, the inventory lists the metals the Israelites used to make items for the tabernacle, the courtyard, and the sanctuary and its furnishings. The metals listed were gold, silver, and bronze.

The gold and bronze came from the wave offering, sometimes called an elevation offering. Earlier in Exodus, Yahweh told Moses to ask the people for an offering towards the building of the tabernacle. Yahweh told them to give the offering as an act of worship, and also as a joyous expression. He asked them for specific things. All of the materials were luxury items—the finest quality metals, fabrics, yarns, and so on.

Stop the audio and discuss this question as a group: In your culture how do you give offerings to God? How do you feel when you give an offering? Pause this audio here.

The 3 metals listed were the most costly of the materials used in building the tabernacle and its furnishings.

The total amount of gold the Israelites gave was 29 talents and 730 shekels. This was the same as 991 kilograms.

The amount of silver was 100 talents and 1775 shekels, which was 3420 kilograms.

The total amount of bronze was 70 talents and 2400 shekels. This was the same as 2427 kilograms.

You will remember from earlier passages that a talent weighs 30 kilograms, a shekel 10 grams, and a beka is 5 grams. The Israelites exchanged these weights as currency.

The silver came from the census tax. Every man who was 20 years old or older who was numbered in the census. The population of men over 20 years old was 603,550. This is the first time we learn what the population was. Each person gave one beka. A beka is half a sanctuary shekel.

The passage tells us that they used the gold for all the work on the sanctuary. The passage tells us that some of the silver, 100 talents, was used for the 100 bases of the sanctuary and the rest of the silver was used to make the hooks for the posts, to overlay the tops of the pots, and to make the bands for the posts.

They used the bronze to make the bases for the entrance, the bronze altar, gratings, and all the utensils. They also used the bronze for the bases for the courtyard and the courtyard entrance, as well as for the tent pegs for the whole tabernacle.

Stop the audio to look again at the pictures of the things that were made of the metals talked about in this passage.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 38:21–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: Earlier, before the Israelites built the tabernacle, Ithamar followed Moses' command and recorded all the materials that the Israelites brought and used to build the tabernacle, particularly the metals.

In the second scene: We learn about the two men—Bezalel and Oholiab—who led the craftsmen in building the tabernacle. We learn about how the materials were provided.

In the third scene: We learn the exact amounts of gold, silver, and bronze that the people brought, and we learn how much of each the Israelites used in the different parts of the tabernacle.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Ithamar
- Bezalel
- Oholiab
- The Israelites

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

The Israelites have just built the tabernacle and all the things that go in it. Now this passage is a summary of the gold, silver, and bronze that the Israelite craftsmen used when they built the tabernacle. First we hear that before the Israelites built the tabernacle, Moses commanded Ithamar, the 4th son of Aaron, to lead the Levites in recording the amount of gold, silver, and bronze that the Israelites brought for the tabernacle. Then the storyline shifts to tell us about the two men, Bezalel and Oholiab, who led the craftsmen who built the tabernacle. Bezalel was the son of Uri who was the son of Hur from the tribe of Judah. Oholiab was the son of Ahisamak from the tribe of Dan. He was an engraver and a designer as well as an embroiderer in blue, purple, and scarlet yarn and fine linen.

Now the passage talks about the amounts of gold, silver, and bronze that the Israelites used when they built the tabernacle. The amount of gold was 29 talents and 730 shekels. This was the same as 991 kilograms.

The amount of silver was 100 talents and 1775 shekels. This was 3420 kilograms

The amount of bronze was 70 talents and 2400 shekels. This was 2427 kilograms.

Stop and discuss as a group what word you have previously chosen for talent and shekel and discuss how you will translate the meaning of beka, which is half a shekel. Use these conversions to help you:

- 1 talent weighs 30 kilograms
- 1 shekel 10 grams
- 1 beka is 5 grams

You may find it helpful to find items or pieces of metal that weigh about the amounts of a talent, a shekel, and a beka. Pause the audio here.

Pay attention to the different parts of the tabernacle and what each part is used for. Notice which metals are used for the different parts.

Stop and draw out the tabernacle using colours if possible to show where the 3 different metals were used. Pause the audio here.

Pay attention to where the different metals had come from. The gold and bronze were from the wave offering. Previously in Exodus Moses had asked the people to give an offering for the specific items that were needed for the tabernacle. You will remember that when the Israelites left Egypt, they asked for items from the Egyptians.

The silver had come from a census tax. Each male 20 years and older was counted in the census and they had to pay 1 beka, or half a shekel. There were 603,550 men.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualise the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 38:21–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Ithamar
- Bezalel
- Oholiab
- The Israelites

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Act out Moses giving the command to Ithamar to lead the Levites to make an inventory of all the materials they used to build the tabernacle.

Pause the drama.

Act out Bazelel and Oholiab making parts of the tabernacle.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "How did you feel when you saw Bezalel and Oholiab build the tabernacle?" The person might answer things like, "I was amazed and awed that Yahweh had sent just the right people with the right skills to help build the tabernacle." [!end] Continue the drama.

Act out Moses asking for the wave offering and the people bringing their offerings earlier in Exodus.

Pause the drama.

Act out Ithamar giving a list of the quantities used to Moses. He should tell Moses that the craftsmen used 991 kilograms of gold, 3420 kilograms of silver, and 2427 kilograms of bronze.

Pause the drama.

Also ask them, "What was the silver and bronze used for?" They might reply, "They were used for the other furnishings inside and outside of the tabernacle," or they might give the full detail: "Some of the silver was used for the 100 bases of the sanctuary and the rest was used to make the hooks for the posts, to overlay the tops of the pots, and to make the bands for the posts. The bronze was used to make the bases for the entrance, the bronze altar, gratings, and all the utensils. Also for the bases for the courtyard and the courtyard entrance, as well as for the tent pegs for the whole tabernacle."

Ask them, "Where did all that metal come from?" He might reply, "The Israelites gave this gold and bronze in the wave offering. The Israelites gave this silver during the census."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 38:21–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

This passage gives a list of the amount of materials the people used to build the tabernacle, or tent of meeting, which is sometimes called the tabernacle of the covenant, or testimony. In this case the covenant, or testimony, refers to the stone tablets of the law, which the Israelites were to keep in the ark of the covenant in the tabernacle.

Use the same word for **tabernacle** and **ark of the covenant** that you have previously used. Tabernacle and ark of the covenant are in the Master Glossary.

The Israelite craftsmen used gold, silver, and bronze in the construction of the sanctuary, or tabernacle. Use the same word for **sanctuary** as previously used. For more information on sanctuary refer to the Master Glossary.

Oholiab was an engraver and designer, and an embroiderer in blue, purple, and scarlet yarn.

An engraver was someone who cuts marks in hard objects to decorate the item. A designer is someone who plans how something will be made. An embroiderer is someone who decorates with needlework. Use the same words for embroiderer, designer, and engraver that you have used in previous passages. The colours the people used for the tabernacle furnishings were the richest, best colours available.

The passage describes the quantity of each type of metal using talents, shekels, and bekas.

A talent was a flat, round, gold or silver disk, or circular-shaped loaf that weighed about 30 kilograms.

One shekel, or a sanctuary shekel, weighed about 10 grams.

One beka was half a shekel, which is 5 grams.

Use the same words for talent and shekel that you have used in previous passages.

*Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **beka**. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.*

The passage says the gold and bronze came from the wave offering.

This type of offering was different to the other sacrificial offerings that would have been burnt on the altar. Moses had asked the people for an offering towards the building of the tabernacle. They were told to give the offering as an act of worship, and also as a joyous expression. Use the same word or phrase for wave offering as you used in previous passages. For more information on offering refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 38:21–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 38:21–31

Audio Content

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Exodus 39:1–7

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 39:1–7 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 39:1–7 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 39:1–7 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The previous passage names the craftsmen involved and the materials that they used in the making of the tabernacle.

The next three passages talk about how the craftsmen made the garments of the high priest. The first sentence of the passage is a general introduction to all three passages. The sentence says that "they" made beautiful priestly garments from blue, purple, and bright red threads, for ministering in the holy place. The word "they" refers to Bezalel, Oholiab, and other skilled craftsmen to whom Yahweh gave wisdom and skill by his Spirit. They were the same people who had constructed the tabernacle. These workers made clothes for priests for serving in the tabernacle. The workers made holy garments, or garments set apart, for Aaron's use when he serves Yahweh as the high priest. The craftsmen made them exactly as Yahweh commanded Moses. Yahweh decided what the clothes would look like, including the smallest details. He commanded Moses, and Moses made sure that the craftsmen made the clothes according to the instructions Yahweh commanded Moses to follow.

This passage focuses on one item of priestly clothing—the ephod. The ephod is a piece of clothing which was common at the time but could be very plain or highly decorative. You will remember that we don't exactly know what an ephod was like but we know that it covered the body from the shoulders down to the thigh. The skilled workers possibly made the ephod from two pieces of material on the front and two pieces on the back. Another possibility is that they made the ephod from two pieces of material, one on the front of the body and one on the back of the body.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of possible designs for a high priest's ephod. Pause this audio here.

The high priest's ephod is highly decorated and very impressive to look at. The passage says that "he," meaning Bezalel, most likely with his helpers, made the ephod of gold, blue, purple, and bright red yarns, and fine linen. The craftsmen wove the material for the ephod, or decorated it on the surface, with decorative gold thread and blue, purple, and bright red thread. The main material was fine linen.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of gold thread, of blue thread, of purple thread, and of bright red, or scarlet, thread. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of fine linen cloth. Pause this audio here.

This is the way that the craftsmen made the gold thread. Bezalel and other craftsmen took gold and hammered it into thin sheets. Then they cut these into strips, which became decorative threads, and wove them skilfully into the fine linen and also into the blue, purple, and red thread. This produced a patterned cloth that most likely sparkled brightly yet was entirely flexible and wearable.

Stop here and discuss as a group: What kind of festive clothes do skilled workers make in your culture? Pause this audio here.

The craftsmen made shoulder pieces, or shoulder straps, which joined the front of the ephod to the back of the ephod. They also made a cloth belt sometimes called a waistband, or sash, which held the ephod onto the body. The craftsmen made the belt to form one piece with the ephod, and they used the same thread and material as in the ephod. The craftsmen skillfully wove gold, blue, purple, and bright red yarns, and fine linen to make the ephod. The craftsmen made the cloth belt according to the instructions that Yahweh commanded Moses to follow.

The craftsmen prepared two stones, which were either multicoloured onyx or red carnelian. There are many colours of onyx including pale cream, white, brown, red, and black. We don't know the colour of the stone they used for the ephod. The craftsmen carved the valuable stones into shapes and put around them fine gold wire, which they shaped and wove into a pattern. People called this technique gold filigree work. The craftsmen engraved the names of the "sons of Israel" on the stones like engravings on a seal. The "sons of Israel" are the twelve sons of Jacob who entered Egypt. These sons became the ancestors of the twelve tribes of Israel. The skilled workers carved six of the names on one stone and six of the names on the other. They engraved the names in the order that the sons were born.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of onyx stone in various colours. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and as a group look at gold wire filigree work around a precious stone. Pause this audio here.

Then Bezalel attached each stone with the gold wire to the shoulder strap of the ephod. This was so that when Aaron was wearing the ephod in the tabernacle, the stones would remind Yahweh of the people of Israel or

they would remind Aaron of the people of Israel. The craftsmen made the stones for the shoulder pieces according to the instructions that Yahweh commanded Moses to follow.

Stop here and as a group look at an illustration of the shoulder pieces with the engraved onyx stones. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss as a group why it was important for the craftsmen to follow exactly the instructions that Yahweh gave to Moses for making the ephod.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 39:1-7 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has two scenes.

In the first scene: Bezalel and most likely his helpers, the craftsmen, make the ephod.

In the second scene: The craftsmen make the additional parts of the ephod:

- the shoulder pieces, or shoulder straps
- the cloth belt
- and the stones for the shoulder pieces

The characters in this passage are:

- "They," which stands for Bezalel, Oholiab, and other skilled workers
- And "He," which stands for Bezalel

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

This is the first of three passages, which talks about the skilled workers making the high priestly garments, according to the instructions Yahweh commanded Moses to follow.

This passage focuses on the ephod. Much of the wording of this passage is similar to the wording of the instructions that Yahweh gave Moses earlier on the mountain. The difference is that before, Yahweh was giving the instructions and here the craftsmen are carrying out the instructions. First, the workers made the ephod of gold, blue, purple, and bright red yarns, and fine linen. The craftsmen wove the material for the ephod, or decorated it on the surface, with decorative gold thread and blue, purple, and bright red thread. The main material was fine linen.

Bezalel and other craftsmen took gold and hammered it into thin sheets. Remember that although the passage says that one person did this work, it is most likely that Bezalel and other craftsmen worked together. Because of that, some translations say that several people worked together on the ephod. Then they cut these into strips, which became decorative threads, and wove them skilfully into the fine linen and also into the blue, purple, and red thread.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of gold thread, of blue thread, of purple thread, and of bright red, or scarlet, thread, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and as a group look at fine linen cloth. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and gather different coloured threads and pieces of fabric. Act out the making of the ephod. Pause this audio here.

The craftsmen made shoulder pieces, or shoulder straps, which joined the front of the ephod to the back of the ephod. They also made a cloth belt sometimes called a waistband, or sash, which held the ephod onto the body. The craftsmen made the belt to form one piece with the ephod, and they used the same thread and material as

in the ephod. The craftsmen wove it skilfully of gold, blue, purple, and bright red yarns, and fine linen like they wove the ephod. The craftsmen followed the exact instructions that Yahweh gave to Moses.

The craftsmen prepared two stones, which were either multicoloured onyx or red carnelian. The craftsmen carved the valuable stones into shapes and put around them fine gold wire, which they shaped and wove into a pattern. People called this technique gold filigree work. The craftsmen engraved the names of the twelve sons of Israel on the stones like engravings on a seal. The skilled workers carved six of the names on one stone and six of the names on the other. They engraved the names in the order that the sons were born.

Then Bezalel attached each stone with the gold wire to the shoulder strap of the ephod. This was so that when Aaron was wearing the ephod in the tabernacle, the stones would remind Yahweh of the people of Israel or they would remind Aaron of the people of Israel. The craftsmen made the stones for the shoulder pieces according to the instructions that Yahweh commanded Moses to follow.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of onyx stone in various colours. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and as a group look at gold wire filigree work around a precious stone. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and as a group look at an illustration of the shoulder pieces with the engraved onyx stones. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and gather stones and some wire. Act out the making of the shoulder pieces, the cloth belt and the stones for the shoulder pieces. Pause this audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 39:1–7 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has two scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- "They," which stands for Bezalel, Oholiab, and other skilled workers
- And "He," which stands for Bezalel

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Bezalel and his helpers made woven priestly garments for ministering in the tabernacle. They made the garments from the blue, purple, and bright red threads. They also made sacred garments for Aaron, the high priest, according to the instructions Yahweh commanded Moses to follow.

Pause the drama.

Bezalel and his helpers made the ephod of gold, and of blue, purple, and bright red thread, and of fine linen. They took gold and hammered it into thin sheets. Then they cut these into strips, which became decorative threads, and wove them skilfully into the fine linen and also into the blue, purple, and red thread.

The craftsmen made shoulder pieces for the ephod and attached them to the ephod's two edges. They also made a cloth belt, which held the ephod onto the body. The craftsmen made the belt to form one piece with the ephod, and they used the same thread and material as in the ephod. The craftsmen wove it skilfully like the ephod using gold, blue, purple, and bright red yarns, and fine linen. The craftsmen made the cloth belt according to the instructions that Yahweh commanded Moses to follow.

Pause the drama.

The craftsmen mounted the onyx stones in gold filigree settings and engraved them like a seal with the names of the sons of Israel. Then they fastened them on the shoulder pieces of the ephod as memorial stones for the sons of Israel, as Yahweh commanded Moses.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 39:1-7 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Much of the wording of this passage is similar to the wording of the instructions that Yahweh gave Moses earlier on the mountain. The difference is that before, Yahweh was giving the instructions and here the craftsmen are carrying out the instructions. Remember the words you used in the previous passage and use them here. You may find it helpful to listen to your translation of the previous passage about the ephod before translating this passage.

Bezalel and his helpers made finely woven garments from the blue, purple, and bright red threads for the priests serving in the **Holy Place**. The Holy Place was an area in the tabernacle containing the table of the Bread of the Presence, lampstand, and incense altar. Only the priests and the high priest could enter the Holy Place.

They made the **holy**, or sacred, garments for Aaron, as **Yahweh** had commanded Moses. Holy garments are special clothes used only by the high priest. The craftsmen make the clothes to consecrate, or set apart and make holy, Aaron and his sons. Use the same word or phrase for holy as you used in previous passages. Yahweh is the personal name for God. In this passage, God is called Yahweh. Be sure to translate Yahweh in the same way as you have in previous passages. For more information on holy and Yahweh refer to the Master Glossary.

Bezalel made the **ephod** of gold, blue, purple, and bright red **yarns** and fine **linen**. Ephod is an item of clothing which covers the body from shoulder to thigh. Yarn is finely twisted thread used to weave linen cloth or embroider on top of cloth. The coloured yarn was probably used to weave the cloth and the gold yarn was probably used to embroider the cloth. People made linen cloth from fine thread made from the flax or hemp plant. The threads are woven into linen cloth which is soft and high quality. Use the same word or phrase for **fine twined or twisted linen** as you used in previous passages.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of possible designs for a high priest's ephod, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Use the same word or phrase for **ephod** and **yarn** as you used in previous passages. For more information on an ephod, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of gold thread, of blue thread, of purple thread, and of bright red, or scarlet thread, if needed.

Stop here and look at a picture of fine linen fabric as a group. Pause this audio here.

The craftsmen made **shoulder pieces**, or shoulder straps, which joined the front of the ephod to the back of the ephod. Use the same word or phrase for shoulder pieces as you used in previous passages.

The skilled workers made the skilfully woven **waistband**, or **cloth belt**, from the same material as the ephod. The high priest used the waistband to hold the ephod and other clothing into the body at the waist. Use the same word or phrase for waistband as you used in previous passages.

Each shoulder strap has a precious stone set onto it. The stone is probably **onyx**, but could be a different stone. Use the same word or phrase for onyx as you used in previous passages.

Stop here and look at a picture of onyx stones in varying colours as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

The craftsmen **engraved** the onyx stones with the names of the sons of Israel. Engraving is the process of cutting into a stone or other hard substance with a sharp tool to make a picture, pattern, or word. Use the same word or phrase for engraved as you used in previous passages.

The onyx stones were held onto the shoulder straps with fine gold wire settings called **gold filigree**. Use the same word or phrase for gold filigree as you used in previous passages.

Stop here and look at a picture of gold wire filigree work around a precious stone, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 39:1-7

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Exodus 39:8-21

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 39:8–21 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 39:8–21 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 39:8–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The previous passage tells us how the skilled craftsmen made the ephod, which was part of the high priest's garments that Aaron, Moses' older brother, would wear.

This passage describes how the craftsmen made the breastpiece, another element of the high priest's garments, which Aaron would wear. The breastpiece was a ceremonial piece of clothing that covered the front upper body of a person.

Bezalel and the other skilled workers made the breastpiece out of cloth to be similar to the ephod. The craftsmen used gold, blue, purple, and bright red yarns, and fine linen cloth. They used the same thread and the cloth for making the high priest's breastpiece, the high priest's ephod, and the inner curtains of the tabernacle.

The breastpiece was a square-shaped pocket. The skilled workers probably folded a single piece of cloth in half to make a pocket, or pouch. The high priest used the pocket to hold special objects. The measurements for the breastpiece were one span in length and one span in width. The Israelites used spans as one way to measure length. A span is the distance between the tip of the thumb and the tip of the small finger when the fingers are stretched wide. A span is approximately 9 inches, or 22 centimetres, in modern units.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your community measure the length of cloth? Pause this audio here.

Much of the wording of this passage is similar to the wording of the instructions on how to make the breastpiece that Yahweh gave Moses earlier on the mountain. The difference is that before, Yahweh was giving the

instructions and here the skilled craftsmen are carrying out the instructions. You may find it helpful to listen to your translation of the previous passage about the ephod before translating this passage.

If you choose to listen to the previous passage, pause this audio here.

The craftsmen arranged four rows of precious stones onto the front of the material of the breastpiece. We don't exactly know which stones the craftsmen used on the breastpiece. People translated the names of the stones in the original language in a variety of ways in different Bible translations.

On the first row, the first stone was possibly a carnelian or a sardius. Some translations call it a ruby, but people cannot engrave a ruby. This stone is bright red in colour and possibly transparent. The second stone was possibly a chrysolite or a topaz. This stone was probably yellow/green and possibly translucent. The third stone was a stone that sparkled or reflected the light well. This stone is often given the name emerald but was probably a stone more easy for people to engrave, possibly a beryl. This stone was possibly green or red.

Stop here and look at a picture of a red carnelian, a sardius, and a ruby as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of yellow/green chrysolite and a yellow topaz as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of an emerald and a green beryl as a group. Pause this audio here.

On the second row, the first stone was possibly a turquoise or a garnet, but some translations call it a sapphire or an emerald. Sapphires and emeralds are too hard for people to engrave. This stone was possibly red, blue, or green. The second stone was probably a lapis lazuli, but some translations call it a sapphire. However, it was unlikely to be a sapphire, as sapphires are too hard for people to engrave. This stone was blue. The third stone was a precious stone. Translations give the stone different names including diamond, moonstone, and emerald. It was probably white. It was unlikely to be a diamond or an emerald as these stones are too hard for people to engrave.

Stop here and look at a picture of a turquoise, a garnet, a sapphire, and an emerald as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of a lapis lazuli and a sapphire as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of a diamond, a moonstone, and an emerald as a group. Pause this audio here.

On the third row, the first stone was a gemstone. It was possibly an orange jacinth or a blue turquoise. The second stone is probably an agate-a striped stone. The third stone was probably an amethyst-a clear purple stone.

Stop here and look at a picture of an orange jacinth and a blue turquoise as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of a striped agate as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of a purple amethyst as a group. Pause this audio here.

On the fourth row, the first stone was bright and shining. This stone is probably an aquamarine with a clear blue/green colour, but might be a beryl. The second stone was the same stone used on the shoulder straps of the high priest's ephod. This stone is probably an onyx, which is often a mixture of colours. This stone could also be a red carnelian. The third stone was probably a jasper. This stone was probably green or red.

Stop here and look at a picture of blue/green aquamarine and a beryl as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of onyx in varying colours and a red carnelian as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of a green jasper and a red jasper as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here. We have asked you before to discuss the following questions as a group, but you may find it helpful to talk about these things again. If so, discuss as a group: What semi-precious stones do your leaders have in their ceremonial clothing? What meaning, if any, do these stones have? If you don't use stones for decorations, what other objects are used to decorate ceremonial clothing? Pause this audio here.

The craftsmen attached the stones to the breastpiece using gold, which they made into fine wire and shaped or wove into a pattern. People called this technique gold filigree work, and the craftsmen also used it to attach the two precious stones onto the shoulder straps of the ephod.

Stop here and look at a picture of gold filigree surrounding a precious stone. Pause this audio here.

There were twelve stones with a name of a son of Israel, or Jacob, engraved on each stone on the breastpiece. Each stone was like a seal, because the craftsmen engraved the names on the stones like on a seal. Each name represented a different tribe of the twelve tribes of Israel. To engrave means to cut into a surface with something sharp to make a pattern, picture, or words. The craftsmen engraved the stones on the breastpiece in the same way as the stones on the shoulder straps of the ephod. This time, the craftsmen engraved only one name on each stone. The craftsmen engraved six names on each stone on the shoulder straps of the ephod. The high priest carried the name of each son of Israel to Yahweh when he was serving in the tabernacle. This was a reminder to Yahweh of his people descended from Israel and a reminder to the high priest of the people he represented before Yahweh.

Stop here and look at an illustration of the high priest wearing a breastpiece, showing several different possible examples of the breastpiece. Pause this audio here.

The skilled workers made gold wire twisted around each other to make gold cords like rope. They made the gold cords the same way as the cords on the shoulder straps of the ephod. They would use the wires to attach the breastpiece to the ephod.

Then the craftsmen made other items out of gold to attach the breastpiece to the ephod. They made two settings of gold filigree and two gold rings. They attached the two gold rings to the breastpiece with one on each side, probably at the top edge of the breastpiece. Then the craftsmen attached the two ends of the gold cords to the rings at the top of the breastpiece to hold the top of the breastpiece to the ephod. We don't know how the workers attached the cords to the rings. We don't know if they slipped the cords through the rings or tied them in some way. Then the craftsmen attached the two other ends of the cords on the front of the ephod to the two filigree settings on the shoulder pieces.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of gold wire twisted together into a cord. Pause the audio here.

Then the craftsmen made two more gold rings. They attached the gold rings to the two ends of the breastpiece, on its inside edge next to the ephod. The rings helped to hold the breastpiece to the ephod. The workers made two more gold rings. They attached the gold rings on the front of the ephod at the lower part of the shoulder straps, possibly where the straps met the material of the ephod above the skilfully woven cloth belt that goes around the ephod. The craftsmen attached the gold rings of the breastpiece to the gold rings of the ephod with a blue/purple thread twisted together to make a fine cord. The breastpiece lay on the skilfully woven cloth belt of the ephod so that it did not swing out from the body of the high priest. The craftsmen made the breastpiece according to the instructions Yahweh commanded Moses to follow.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 39:8-21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has two scenes.

In the first scene: The skilled workers are making the breastpiece for the high priest.

In the second scene: The skilled workers are attaching the breastpiece to the high priest's ephod using gold cord and rings.

The characters in this passage are:

- "He" which stands for Bezalel
- And "they" which stands for Bezalel, Oholiab, and other skilled workers

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

This passage is almost the same as the previous passage where Yahweh gives Moses instructions on Mount Sinai for making the breastpiece. In this passage, Moses tells us that the skilled workers really did make the

breastpiece in the way that Yahweh instructed them. However, in this passage Moses does not explain the purpose of the breastpiece again.

You may want to listen to the way you translated the previous passage before listening to this script. If you choose to do that, pause this audio here.

If needed, listen to the rest of this script to remember how the skilled workers made the breastpiece.

The skilled workers made the breastpiece using the same fabric and thread as the ephod. The breastpiece was a pocket, square in shape and made to contain items. It was completely visible and sat on top of the rest of the clothing of the high priest.

Stop here and do this activity as a group: Get a rectangle of material which is two times longer than the width. Ask a volunteer to fold the fabric over to make the material into a square shape while describing what they are doing. Pay attention to the words used to describe the changes to the shape in the material. Pause this audio here.

Skilled workers decorated the breastpiece with beautiful stones engraved with the names of the sons of Israel. They engraved each stone with a single name and attached them to the breastpiece using fine gold wire. The skilled workers arranged the stones in four rows with three stones in each row. The stones were all different from each other and all different colours. We don't know exactly which stones the skilled workers used on the breastpiece. If you don't have names for the stones you can simply call them by their colour or another description. There are 12 beautiful stones. In the first row, there was a bright red stone, a yellow stone, and a sparkling green or red stone. In the second row, there is a red, blue, or green stone, a blue stone and a precious stone, which was possibly white. In the third row, there was an orange or blue gemstone, a striped stone, and a purple stone. In the fourth row, there is a bright stone, which was probably blue/green, a stone of many colours, and a possibly green or red stone.

Stop here and look at an illustration of the high priest wearing a breastpiece, showing several different possible examples of the breastpiece. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at an illustration of the high priest wearing his special clothing. Pause this audio here.

The breastpiece is a separate piece of clothing to the ephod. The skilled workers attached the breastpiece closely to the ephod by gold cord and gold rings at the top, and gold rings and blue/purple twisted thread at the bottom. The cords and rings hold the breastpiece close to the body. The position of the gold rings holds the breastpiece above the cloth belt, which the high priest wears over the ephod. The skilled workers made the breastpiece according to the instructions Yahweh commanded Moses to follow.

Stop here and do this activity as a group: Make the breastpiece and attachments for the ephod using materials you have available to you. If possible, ask a volunteer to wear it. Notice where it sits on the body of the volunteer. Alternatively, draw a square shape on the ground and arrange 12 stones in the square in the same pattern as the craftsmen did. Pause this audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 39:8-21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has two scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- "He" which stands for Bezalel
- And "they" which stands for Bezalel, Oholiab, and other skilled workers

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

The skilled workers made the breastpiece out of the same material and thread as the high priest's ephod and the inner curtains of the tabernacle. They made it into a square pocket to cover Aaron's chest. It was on top of the high priest's clothing. The skilled workers decorated the front of the breastpiece with semi-precious stones. The skilled workers engraved each stone with a name of a son of Israel.

Pause the drama.

The skilled workers attached the breastpiece to the high priest's ephod. The breastpiece sat close to the ephod and rested on the body above the cloth belt. The skilled workers used gold and high quality coloured thread to attach the breastpiece to the ephod. They made the breastpiece according to the instructions Yahweh commanded Moses to follow.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 39:8–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Much of the wording of this passage is similar to the wording of the instructions that Yahweh gave Moses earlier on the mountain. The difference is that before, Yahweh was giving the instructions and here the craftsmen are carrying out the instructions. Remember the words you used in the previous passage and use them here. You may find it helpful to listen to your translation of the previous passage about the breastpiece before translating this passage.

The skilled workers made a **breastpiece**. This is an item of clothing that covers the front upper body of a person. Use the same word or phrase for breastpiece as you used in previous passages.

The skilled workers made the breastpiece like the **ephod**. Use the same word or phrase for ephod as you used in previous passages. Look up ephod in the Master Glossary for more information.

They made the breastpiece from **gold**, **blue**, **purple**, and **bright red yarn** and **fine twisted linen**. Use the same words or phrases for gold, blue, purple, and bright red yarn and fine twisted linen as you used in previous passages.

The breastpiece is a **span** in length and a span in width. The Israelites used spans as one way to measure length. A span is the distance between the tip of the thumb and the tip of the small finger when the fingers are stretched wide. A span is approximately 9 inches, or 22 centimetres, in modern units. Use the same word or phrase for span as you used in previous passages.

The skilled workers decorated the breastpiece with twelve semi-precious stones. The stones are all different. We don't know exactly which stones the skilled workers used on the breastpiece. If you don't have names for the stones you can simply call them by their colour or another description. On the first row, the first stone is possibly a **carnelian** or a sardius and is probably red. Some translations call it a ruby, but people cannot engrave a ruby. Use the same name of the stone that you decided to use in the passage where Yahweh gave instructions to Moses on how to make the breastpiece.

Stop here and look at a picture of a red carnelian and a sardius and a ruby as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

On the first row, the second stone is possibly a **chrysolite** and is probably yellow/green. It may also be a topaz. Use the same name of the stone that you decided to use in the passage where Yahweh gave instructions to Moses on how to make the breastpiece.

Stop here and look at a picture of yellow/green chrysolite and a yellow topaz as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

On the first row, the third stone sparkles or reflects the light well. Some translations call the stone an **emerald** but it was probably a stone more easy for people to engrave, possibly a beryl. It might be green or red. Use the same name of the stone that you decided to use in the passage where Yahweh gave instructions to Moses on how to make the breastpiece.

Stop here and look at a picture of an emerald and a green beryl as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

On the second row, the first stone is possibly a **turquoise** or a garnet, but some translations also call it a sapphire and an emerald. Sapphires and emeralds are too hard for people to engrave. This stone is possibly red, blue, or green. Use the same name of the stone that you decided to use in the passage where Yahweh gave instructions to Moses on how to make the breastpiece.

Stop here and look at a picture of a turquoise, a garnet, a sapphire, and an emerald as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

On the second row, the second stone is probably a **lapis lazuli** and is probably blue. Some translations call it a sapphire, but people cannot engrave a sapphire. Use the same name of the stone that you decided to use in the passage where Yahweh gave instructions to Moses on how to make the breastpiece.

Stop here and look at a picture of a lapis lazuli and a sapphire as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

On the second row, the third stone is a precious stone often called a **diamond** and is probably white. Some translations call it a moonstone or an emerald. It is unlikely to be a diamond or an emerald as people cannot engrave diamonds or emeralds. Use the same name of the stone that you decided to use in the passage where Yahweh gave instructions to Moses on how to make the breastpiece.

Stop here and look at a picture of a diamond, a moonstone, and an emerald as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

On the third row, the first stone is a gemstone and is probably an orange **jacinth** or a blue turquoise. Use the same name of the stone that you decided to use in the passage where Yahweh gave instructions to Moses on how to make the breastpiece.

Stop here and look at a picture of orange jacinth or blue turquoise as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

On the third row, the second stone is probably an **agate**-a striped stone. Use the same name of the stone that you decided to use in the passage where Yahweh gave instructions to Moses on how to make the breastpiece.

Stop and look at a picture of agate as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

On the third row, the third stone is probably a purple **amethyst**. Use the same name of the stone that you decided to use in the passage where Yahweh gave instructions to Moses on how to make the breastpiece.

Stop here and look at a picture of an amethyst as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

On the fourth row, the first stone is bright and sparkles. It might be an **aquamarine** or a beryl. Use the same name of the stone that you decided to use in the passage where Yahweh gave instructions to Moses on how to make the breastpiece.

Stop here and look at a picture of an aquamarine and a beryl as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

On the fourth row, the second stone is probably an **onyx**. This stone could also be a red carnelian. Use the same word or phrase for onyx as you used in previous passages. Use the same name of the stone that you decided to use in the passage where Yahweh gave instructions to Moses on how to make the breastpiece.

Stop here and look at a picture of onyx in various colours and a red carnelian as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

On the fourth row, the third stone is probably a **jasper** and might be green or red. Use the same name of the stone that you decided to use in the passage where Yahweh gave instructions to Moses on how to make the breastpiece.

Stop here and look at a picture of a green jasper and a red jasper as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

The skilled workers **engraved** the stones with the names of the sons of Israel and attached them onto the breastpiece with settings made from **gold filigree**. Use the same word or phrase for engraved and gold filigree that you decided to use in the passage where Yahweh gave instructions to Moses on how to make the breastpiece.

The skilled workers attached the breastpiece to the shoulder straps of the ephod with **gold chains twisted like cords**. Use the same word or phrase for gold chains twisted like cords as you used in previous passages.

Stop here and look at a picture of gold wire twisted together into a cord, if needed. Pause this audio here.

People attached the bottom part of the breastpiece to the ephod using gold rings and blue **cord**. The cord is thin, often used for clothing, and can be tied. Craftsmen make fine cord from animal hair or plant fibres, which they weave and spin together.

Use the same word or phrase for cord as you used in previous passages.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 39:8-21

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (5633490 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Exodus 39:22–31

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 39:22–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The previous passage described how the skilled workers made the breastpiece, which was part of the high priest's garments that Aaron, Moses' older brother, would wear. This passage talks about how the skilled workers completed making the remaining items of the high priest's garments: the robe, the tunic, and the turban. The passage also describes the making of the clothing for Aaron's sons, the priests.

This passage is very similar to the previous passage where Yahweh gives Moses instructions on Mount Sinai for making the remainder of Aaron's priestly garments and priestly garments for his sons. In this passage, Moses tells us that the skilled workers really did make the garments in the way that Yahweh instructed them. However, in this passage Moses does not explain the purpose of the garments again.

You may want to listen to the way you translated Exodus 28:31–43 before listening to this script. If you choose to do that, pause this audio here.

Then Bezalel and the skilled workers made a robe for the high priest to wear under the ephod. They wove the robe entirely of a blue thread. The blue was a blue/purple colour. The workers made the thread for the cloth from goat hair and dyed it blue/purple.

Stop here and look at a picture of a robe as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of blue/purple wool cloth, if needed. Pause this audio here.

The skilled workers made the robe from one piece of cloth with a hole in the middle for the head. The workers strengthened the edge of the opening for the head with special sewing or a binding so that the cloth would not tear. The workers strengthened the edge of the robe in the same way that they strengthen the edge of another item of clothing. We don't know what this other item of clothing was like, but some versions mention a coat of mail which soldiers wore as protection. There were no sleeves on the robe. We don't know if the makers sewed the sides together or if they left them open.

The skilled workers made special decorations for the bottom edge, or the lower hem, of the robe. The skilled workers made decorative representations of a pomegranate fruit out of blue, purple and bright red yarn and twisted linen. We don't know if the workers used all three colours for one decoration or if the workers used

one colour in turn for each pomegranate decoration. Pomegranates are a common fruit in the region. Yahweh and other people in the Bible use pomegranates to represent Yahweh's generous providing for his people.

Stop here and look at a picture of a pomegranate fruit as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

The skilled workers also made bells of pure gold and they attached the bells between the pomegranates along the hem of the robe. They alternated a bell and a pomegranate all around on the hem of the robe. Aaron would wear the robe to minister to Yahweh in the tabernacle. We don't know if the pomegranate decorations hung down from the hem between the bells or if the workers sewed them onto the hem. The skilled workers made the robe according to the instructions that Yahweh commanded Moses to follow.

The skilled workers also made tunics of fine woven linen for Aaron and his sons, the priests. There is a description of the tunic in the previous passage where Yahweh was giving the instructions to Moses on how to make the priestly garments. The tunics had long sleeves, but we do not know if the tunics were white, or if the weaving included threads of the other colours. Aaron as the high priest most likely wore the tunic underneath the blue robe. His sons who were priests wore it as their outer garment. We don't know if Aaron's tunic was the same as his sons' tunics.

Stop here and look at a picture of a tunic as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of cloth woven from different colours as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

The skilled workers made a turban of fine linen which was the high priest's head covering. They also made decorated caps of fine linen, which Aaron's sons, the priests, wore as their head covering. The caps were different from Aaron's turban, because the original language uses a different word for each. There is no description of the caps, or headdresses, in the Bible, but the original language for "caps" suggests that they may have been high and cone shaped. They were probably smaller and less elaborate than Aaron's turban.

The skilled workers made clothing or undergarments to cover the priests' and high priest's private parts. The workers made the undergarments from fine twisted linen cloth. The Hebrew word used here to mean "fine linen" is different from the word used in the previous passage about this clothing. The Hebrew word there means more ordinary linen cloth. But since the passage here says "fine linen" it is very likely that the material used for the undergarments was fine linen. The undergarments covered the priests' bodies from their hips to their thighs and passed underneath the body between the legs. They were probably like modern day shorts.

Stop here and look at a picture of the undergarments. Pause this audio here.

The skilled workers made a sash, or cloth belt. Since the text talks about just one sash we presume that it is probably the sash for the high priest, which held the robe onto his body. The craftsmen made the sash from fine twisted linen and they embroidered or sewed on top of the cloth belt with blue, purple, and bright red yarns. The skilled workers made the tunics, the turban, the caps, the undergarments, and the sash according to the instructions that Yahweh commanded Moses to follow.

Stop here and look at a picture of cloth embroidered with different colours as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

The skilled workers made a band of pure gold, which had a special medallion or flat, possibly flower-shaped gold decoration as part of it. The craftsmen probably made the medallion in a flat shape similar to a flower so that they could engrave it. The skilled workers engraved the medallion with words meaning holy or set apart for Yahweh, like engravings of a seal. Engrave means to cut into a surface with something sharp to make a pattern, picture or words. The skilled workers fastened fine blue cord to the gold band with the gold medallion. Moses would attach the band with the medallion to the front of Aaron's turban when Aaron becomes high priest. This was probably the same blue cord that the workers attached the breastpiece to the ephod with. The skilled workers made the band and the medallion of pure gold according to the instructions that Yahweh commanded Moses to follow.

Stop here and look at a picture of the high priest's turban with the gold band and medallion attached to it. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of the high priest and a priest wearing their garments for serving in the tabernacle. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Yahweh designed the high priest's and priests' clothes and it was important that the skilled workers made them exactly how Yahweh instructed Moses. In your culture what are the special ceremonial clothes that important people wear? Who and when wears those clothes? Are there special rules for who can make the clothes and how these people should make them?

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 39:22–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has six scenes.

In the first scene: The skilled workers made a robe for Aaron the high priest to wear under the ephod.

In the second scene: The skilled workers made tunics for Aaron the high priest and his sons, the priests.

In the third scene: The skilled workers made a turban for Aaron the high priest and caps for his sons, the priests.

In the fourth scene: The skilled workers made the undergarments for the priests and the high priest.

In the fifth scene: The skilled workers made a sash, or a cloth belt for the high priest.

In the sixth scene: The skilled workers made a band of pure gold, which had a special medallion as part of it. The skilled workers attached the band and the medallion to Aaron's turban.

The characters in this passage are:

- "He" which stands for Bezalel
- And "They" which stands for Bezalel, Oholiab, and other skilled workers

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

This passage is very similar to the previous passage where Yahweh gives Moses instructions on Mount Sinai for making the remainder of Aaron's priestly garments and priestly garments for his sons. In this passage, Moses tells us that the skilled workers really did make the garments in the way that Yahweh instructed them. However, in this passage Moses does not explain the purpose of the garments again.

You may want to listen to the way you translated Exodus 28:31–43 before listening to this script. If you choose to do that, pause this audio here.

If needed, listen to the rest of this script to remember how the skilled workers made the remaining garments.

The skilled workers made the high priest's robe. We know that Bezalel and Oholiab were leading the skilled workers in their work, although this passage does not mention them by name. The robe they made is part of the high priest's clothing and he wears it under the ephod. However, the workers only used purple blue cloth made from animal hair to make the robe. This is different from the ephod and breastpiece, which the skilled workers made from fine linen cloth. The skilled workers made a hole in the middle of the cloth for the head to pass through.

Stop here. We have asked you before to do this activity as a group, but you may find it helpful to do it again. If so, stop here and do this activity as a group: Get a rectangle of paper and fold it in half with the short length making the centrefold. Tear a small semi-circle in the centre of the fold to make a round hole in the paper. Imagine a finger or stick is a person and place the rectangle over the finger or a wooden stick, passing the finger or stick up through the hole in the paper. Pause this audio here.

The workers strengthened the edge of the neck hole of the robe so the robe would not tear with use. We don't know how the workers strengthened the neck hole or opening. The workers might have used extra sewing or added a special strong piece of fabric around the edge. The original language compares this strong neck hole to the neck hole in some sort of heavy garment like body armour or a coat of mail that a soldier might wear. Some translations of the Bible leave out the comparison to the heavy garment, and just say that it is a strong neck hole, so that it is not confusing. You might like to do the same, particularly if the item of clothing is not present

in your culture. The high priest's robe was a long piece of clothing and covered the high priest from neck and shoulder down to below the knees. He wore it to minister to Yahweh in the tabernacle.

Stop here. We have asked you before to discuss the following questions as a group, but you may find it helpful to talk about these things again. If so, discuss as a group: How do people who make clothing in your community stop edges of clothing from tearing? If possible, look at a piece of clothing and discuss the type of work the makers used on the neck hole to stop it from tearing. Pause this audio here.

The skilled workers made decorative pomegranates of blue, purple, and bright red yarns. The pomegranates either hung from the hem of the robe or the workers sewed them onto the hem. Then the skilled workers made bells of pure gold and attached them to the bottom of the robe between the pomegranates. The gold bells hung from the robe but did not reach the floor. The passage now states that the skilled workers made the robe according to the instructions that Yahweh commanded Moses to follow.

The skilled workers, or craftsmen, also made tunics of fine woven linen for Aaron and his sons, the priests. There is a description of the tunic in the previous passage where Yahweh was giving the instructions to Moses on how to make the priestly garments. The tunics had long sleeves, but we do not know if the tunics were white with a chequered pattern on it, or if the weaving included threads of the other colours. Aaron as the high priest most likely wore the tunic underneath the blue robe. His sons who were priests wore it as their outer garment. We don't know if Aaron's tunic was the same as his sons' tunics.

The workers made a turban from the same linen cloth as the tunic. We don't know if the workers made the turban cloth with a pattern in the same way as the tunic.

They also made decorated caps of fine linen, which Aaron's sons, the priests, wore as their head covering. The caps were different from Aaron's turban, because the original Hebrew text uses a different word for each. There is no description of the caps, or headdresses in the Bible, but the Hebrew word translated "caps" suggests that they may have been high and cone shaped. They were probably smaller and less elaborate than Aaron's turban.

Stop here and discuss as a group, what different words are there in your language to describe head coverings? Do the words in themselves describe the shape, the fabric or the different purposes of those head coverings? Pause this audio here.

The skilled workers made clothing or undergarments to cover the priests' and high priest's private parts. The workers made the undergarments from fine twisted linen cloth. The Hebrew word used here to mean "fine linen" is different from the word used in the previous passage about this clothing. The Hebrew word there means more ordinary linen cloth. But since the passage here says "fine linen" it is very likely that the material used for the undergarments was fine linen. The undergarments covered the priests' bodies from their hips to their thighs and passed underneath the body between the legs.

The skilled workers made a sash or cloth belt. Since the text talks about just one sash we think that it is probably the sash for the high priest, which held the robe onto his body. The craftsmen made the sash from fine twisted linen and they embroidered or sewed on top of the cloth belt with blue, purple and bright red yarns. The passage emphasises again that the skilled workers made the garments according to the instructions that Yahweh commanded Moses to follow.

Stop here. We have asked you before to do this activity as a group, but you may find it helpful to do it again. If so, stop here and find some clothes or cloth with various patterns. Talk about the designs and techniques the makers used to make these clothes or cloth. Pause this audio here.

The skilled workers made a band of pure gold, which had a special medallion or flat, possibly flower-shaped gold decoration as part of it. The craftsmen probably made the medallion in a flat shape similar to a flower so that they could engrave it. The skilled workers engraved the medallion with words meaning holy or set apart for Yahweh, like engravings of a seal. Engrave means to cut into a surface with something sharp to make a pattern, picture, or words. The skilled workers used fine blue cord to attach the band to the medallion. Later, when Aaron was made High Priest, the band was attached to the front of Aaron's turban. This was probably the same blue cord that the workers attached the breastpiece to the ephod with. The passage tells us that the skilled workers made the band and the medallion of pure gold according to the instructions that Yahweh commanded Moses to follow. In the three passages which talk about how the skilled workers actually made the clothes, the text repeats seven times that they followed Yahweh's instructions.

Stop here. We have asked you before to do this activity as a group, but you may find it helpful to do it again. If so, stop here and as a group draw an outline of the high priest's turban on the ground. Draw the band with the medallion onto the outline of the turban and make marks to show where the skilled workers engrave the words. Draw the cords, which attach the medallion to the turban. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss as a group: the text in the last three passages, which talk about the making of the high priest's and priests' clothes, repeats seven times the statement that the skilled workers followed Yahweh's instructions for making the garments. When you tell stories in your people group, how do you make important parts of the story stand out?

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 39:22–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has six scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- "He" which stands for Bezalel
- And "They" which stands for Bezalel, Oholiab, and other skilled workers

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

Bezalel made the robe that Aaron wore under the ephod from a single piece of blue woven cloth, with an opening for Aaron's head in the middle of it. The skilled workers reinforced the opening with a woven collar so it would not tear. They made pomegranates of blue, purple, and bright red yarn, and attached them to the hem of the robe. They also made bells of pure gold and placed them between the pomegranates along the hem of the robe, with bells and pomegranates alternating all around the hem. The high priest was to wear this robe whenever he ministered before the Lord, just as the Lord had commanded Moses.

Pause the drama.

The skilled workers made tunics for Aaron and his sons from fine linen cloth. They made the turban and the special head coverings of fine linen. They also made the undergarments of finely woven linen. The skilled workers made the sash of finely woven linen and embroidered it with blue, purple, and scarlet thread, just as the Lord had commanded Moses.

Pause the drama.

Finally, they made the band of pure gold with a medallion of pure gold. They engraved it like a seal with these words: "Holy to the Lord." They attached a blue cord to the gold band and the medallion. Later when Aaron becomes high priest, Moses will attach it to Aaron's turban, just as the Lord had commanded him.

Pause the drama.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 39:22–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Much of the wording of this passage is similar to the wording of the instructions that Yahweh gave Moses earlier on the mountain. The difference is that before, Yahweh was giving the instructions and here the craftsmen are carrying out the instructions. Remember the words you used in the previous passage and use them here. You may find it helpful to listen to your translation of the previous passage about the last group of high priestly and priestly garments before translating this passage.

The skilled workers made a **robe** for the high priest to wear under the **ephod**. Use the same word or phrase for a robe as you used in previous passages. Use the same word or phrase for ephod as you used in previous passages. For more information on an ephod, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and look at a picture of a robe and ephod as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

The skilled workers made the robe out of **blue** cloth. The blue colour is a blue purple. Use the same word or phrase for blue as you used in previous passages.

The woven binding around the opening is like the neck opening in a heavy battle garment that soldiers might wear for protection. It is sometimes referred to as a **coat of mail**. Use the same word or phrase for coat of mail as you used in previous passages.

The skilled workers decorated the lower edge or **hem of the robe**. Use the same word or phrase for a "hem of the robe" as you used in previous passages.

The workers decorated the lower edge of the robe with **pomegranates**, which they made from coloured yarn. Use the same word or phrase for pomegranates as you used in previous passages.

Stop here and look at a picture of pomegranate fruit, if needed. Pause this audio here.

The skilled workers made **tunics** for Aaron and his sons. Use the same word or phrase for tunic as you used in previous passages. For more information on a tunic refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and look at a picture of a tunic as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

The high priest Aaron will wear a **turban**. Aaron's sons will wear **caps**. Use the same words or phrases for turban and caps as you used in previous passages.

The skilled workers made **undergarments** for the high priest and priests using fine twisted linen. Use the same word or phrase for undergarments as you used in previous passages.

Stop here and look at a picture of the undergarments, if needed. Pause this audio here.

The skilled workers made a **sash** or **cloth belt**. Use the same words or phrases for sash or cloth belt as you used in previous passages.

The skilled workers **embroidered** the cloth belt. Use the same word or phrase for embroider as you used in previous passages.

Stop here and look at a picture of cloth embroidered with different colours as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

The skilled workers made a band of pure gold, which had a special **medallion** or flat, possibly flower-shaped gold decoration as part of it. Use the same word or phrase for medallion as you used in previous passages.

The skilled workers **engraved** the medallion with words meaning holy or set apart for Yahweh, like engravings of a seal. Use the same word or phrase for engraved as you used in previous passages.

Stop here and look at a picture of the high priest's turban with the gold band and medallion attached to it, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 39:22–31

Audio Content

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Exodus 39:32–43

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 39:32–43 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 39:32–43 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.

4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 39:32–43 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Bezalel and the other Israelite craftsmen have been following Yahweh's specific instructions for how to build the tabernacle. This is the place where Yahweh would live among his people. It will allow the Israelites to continue to have a relationship with Yahweh as they travel to the land he promised them. In this passage, Moses inspects all the completed work of the Israelites and finds that everything meets Yahweh's standards.

As you remember, Yahweh gave a long list of instructions to Moses on Mount Sinai for how to make the tabernacle and all of the items that would go in it. The tabernacle was also called the Tent of Meeting. Although Moses has been using a temporary Tent of Meeting to meet with Yahweh while the Israelites finished the tabernacle, Moses uses both of these terms here to describe the completed tabernacle. The tabernacle is both sacred, or set apart, for Yahweh to dwell in, and will be the place where the Israelites meet with and worship Yahweh.

When the Israelites completed their work on the tabernacle, they brought all their completed work to Moses. Here, the tabernacle refers to all the separate parts of the tabernacle. Note the Israelites have not assembled all the various parts yet. This demonstrates that the Israelites could easily take apart the different parts of the tabernacle and move them from place to place.

Stop here and look at all of the photos you have that relate to the tabernacle in turn as a group. As Moses lists each item, you can point to the corresponding picture for your team to see. Try to re-describe the items from memory and describe their function. These pictures should include:

- the tent with all its furnishings, clasps, frames, crossbars, posts, and bases
- the tent coverings of tanned ram skins and fine leather
- the inner curtain to shield the Most Holy Place where the ark was
- the ark of the covenant and its carrying poles
- the ark's cover—the atonement cover or mercy seat
- the table and all its utensils
- the Bread of the Presence
- the pure gold lampstand with its places to place the lamps, all its accessories, and the olive oil for lighting
- the gold altar, or altar of incense
- the anointing oil and fragrant incense
- the curtain for the entrance of the tent
- the bronze altar
- the bronze grating and its carrying poles and utensils
- the washbasin with its stand
- the curtains for the walls of the courtyard
- the posts and their bases
- the curtain for the entrance to the courtyard
- the ropes and tent pegs
- all the furnishings the Israelites will use to worship at the tabernacle
- the holy garments for the priests to wear while ministering in the tabernacle, including the garments for Aaron and his sons

Pause this audio here.

Moses inspects their work to ensure that all of the details are exactly how Yahweh asked for them to be, since Moses was the person who originally received all the instructions. Even though Yahweh chose Bezalel and Oholiab and gave them skills to build the tabernacle and teach other craftsmen their skills, Moses says that all the Israelites did the work just as Yahweh commanded. Moses uses repetition to emphasize that it was all of the Israelites who completed the tabernacle. In summary, Moses portrays the Israelites working together and obeying Yahweh through their offerings and shared efforts.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, when a group of people finish a work or project, who do people say is responsible for, or who gets the credit for, completing the work? Pause this audio here.

Then Moses blessed the people. This probably means that Moses prayed the people would experience Yahweh's favor. This shows the Israelites had succeeded in their efforts and as a result they had the favor of Yahweh. Now that the Israelites have completed the tabernacle, the Israelites can continue to be in relationship with Yahweh as his chosen people.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 39:32–43 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has two scenes.

In the first scene: The Israelites have been working on all the parts of the tabernacle. When they have finished everything, Bezalel, Ohaliab, and the rest of the Israelites bring the different parts of the completed tabernacle to Moses for him to inspect.

In the second scene: Moses checks each part of the tabernacle to ensure that it is exactly how Yahweh wants it to be. When he's finished, Moses confirms that everything is how Yahweh commanded it to be. Moses blesses the people by praying over them.

The characters in this passage are:

- Israelite craftsmen including Bezalel and Ohaliab
- The Sons of Israel
- Moses

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

The Israelite craftsmen have been eagerly working on the different parts of the tabernacle according to Yahweh's specific instructions. They are excited to have a restored relationship with Yahweh as his chosen people since the tabernacle will be the place where Yahweh lives among them.

It is important to note that the passage mentions that the Israelites had done everything Yahweh commanded. Moses attributes the work not just to Bezalel, Ohaliab, and the other craftsmen, but instead presents it as a completed work of the Sons of Israel, or of the whole Israelite community.

The Israelites brought the tent, or tabernacle, with all of its furnishings. This included the special clothing for the priests.

Stop here and discuss with your group how best to talk about the materials for the tabernacle. It may be easier to group them according to their purpose such as tent structure, furnishings for the inside of the tent, and priestly garments. Or it may work better to order the items based on how they would set up the tabernacle once they unpacked it. Look at the different items again as a group and try to tell this part of the passage, listing every item. Pause this audio here.

Remember that the Israelites needed to carry some of these items using wooden poles such as the ark and the table. By bringing all the pieces to Moses, the Israelites experience for the first time what it will be like to move the tabernacle from place to place.

Remember that the special garments are for Aaron and his sons who will serve as priests in the tabernacle. Yahweh specially chose them to make sacrifices on behalf of the people and to teach the people how to worship Yahweh.

Moses uses repetition to emphasize that Israel as a whole had completely obeyed Yahweh's commandments for building the tabernacle even down to the smallest detail.

Moses examines, or inspects, the work of the Israelites. He does this because Yahweh directly gave the instructions for building the tabernacle to Moses on Mount Sinai. Moses inspects every item and confirms that every item is exactly how Yahweh wants it to be.

Moses blesses the Israelites, or prays over the Israelites, and asks Yahweh to show his favor on them.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 39:32–43 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has two scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Israelite craftsmen including Bezalel and Oholiab
- The Sons of Israel
- Moses

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Act out the Israelites working on all the parts of the tabernacle. When they finish everything, Bezalel, Oholiab, and the rest of the Israelites bring the different parts of the completed tabernacle to Moses to inspect.

Pause the drama.

Act out Moses checking each part of the tabernacle to be sure it is exactly how Yahweh wants it to be.

Pause the drama.

When he's finished, Moses finds that everything is how Yahweh commanded it to be. Moses then blesses the people by praying over them.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Determined. I must seek Yahweh often to know his plans for us," or "Relieved. I'm happy the people can now see with their own eyes that Yahweh is truly with us," or "I hope the people will remember all that Yahweh has done for us. I hope they will remember this eagerness they have to serve and obey Him."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 39:32–43 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

For this passage, use the same words for each item that you have used in previous passages.

The Israelites complete their work on the **tabernacle, the Tent of Meeting**. The tabernacle is the sacred tent set apart as the dwelling place of Yahweh and where Yahweh's people worshiped Him. The Israelites transported the tabernacle from place to place. Although the Israelites have finished their work, the tabernacle is not put together yet. Use the same word for tabernacle that you have used in previous passages. For more information on tabernacle refer to the Master Glossary.

The Israelites bring the tent coverings of tanned skins, the inner curtain, and the **ark of the covenant**. This refers to the wooden box covered in pure gold that Yahweh asked Moses to make. It will hold the tablets given to Moses with the Law on them, a pot of manna, and Aaron's rod. The Israelites believed that Yahweh dwelled in the space directly above the ark, so it came to symbolize God's presence. Use the same word or phrase for the ark of the covenant as you used in previous passages. For more information on the ark of the covenant, refer to the Master Glossary.

They also bring the **atonement** cover for the ark, or the mercy seat. The Israelites called it the atonement cover because it refers to the concept of atonement, or reconciliation. This is the process of people overcoming hostility and distance and becoming true friends and allies. Some translations call it the mercy seat. The atonement cover represented the fact that Yahweh, the only true God, had in His eternal kindness and love arranged for the Israelites to enjoy reconciliation with Him. The Israelites were not strangers or enemies to Yahweh; they were Yahweh's chosen people. Use the same word or phrase for atonement cover that you used in previous passages. For more information on atonement, refer to the Master Glossary.

They bring all the furnishings for the tabernacle including their accessories, including the table, lampstand, and both the bronze and gold **altars**. An altar is a place where people kill and burn animals as an offering to God, or a place where people burn incense. Use the same word or phrase for altar that you used in previous passages. For more information on altar, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Israelites bring all the items for the outside, or exterior, of the tabernacle. They also bring the holy priestly garments. A **priest** is someone who offers sacrifices to Yahweh on behalf of the people. The priests will take care of the tabernacle and teach the Israelites to properly worship Yahweh. Yahweh chose Aaron and his sons to serve as priests in the tabernacle. The priests will wear these sacred, or **holy**, garments when they serve Yahweh. These garments are sacred because they are set apart especially for service to Yahweh. Use the same words for priest and for sacred, or holy, as you have in previous passages, and look up priest and holy in the Master Glossary for more information.

When Moses inspects all the Israelites' work on the tabernacle, he finds they have completed the work just as Yahweh commanded. Moses then **blesses** the people. Bless means that Moses prayed over the Israelites and asked Yahweh to show his favor on them. Use the same word or phrase for bless that you used in previous passages. For more information on bless, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 39:32-43

Audio Content

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Exodus 40:16–33

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 40:16–33 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 40:16–33 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 40:16–33 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Yahweh gave Moses instructions on the Mountain of Sinai for how the Israelites needed to build the tabernacle. The Israelites followed Yahweh's instructions and completed making all of the parts required for the tabernacle. Yahweh told Moses they should set up the tabernacle on the first day of the first month of the year, and Yahweh also gave Moses final instructions for setting up the tabernacle and how to anoint everything in the tabernacle with oil. Now, it is finally time to set up the tabernacle. Moses and the people do exactly what Yahweh commanded them to do. This passage is a summary of how they set up each part of the tabernacle.

The passage is a part of the most important part of the entire book of Exodus because Moses is finally assembling all of the parts of the tabernacle. Finally, the people will finish building Yahweh's special dwelling

place and Yahweh will be living amongst his people! The passage begins with a summary statement that shows how Moses obeyed Yahweh and did exactly what Yahweh commanded him. There are seven sections that tell how Moses and the people set up each part of the tabernacle.

Even though it says Moses put all of the parts of the tabernacle together, Moses did not build the tabernacle on his own. Moses was the supervisor for the Israelites who built each part of the tabernacle, and we know from a previous passage that Moses inspected the parts of the tabernacle, and he saw they made it all according to the instructions Yahweh gave Moses on the Mountain of Sinai. When the people traveled they moved the tabernacle with them. When they stopped in the new place, they needed to set up the tabernacle again. They needed to be able to move the tabernacle quickly and efficiently. When the Israelites moved to a new place, it is likely that different groups of people worked on assembling the different parts of the tabernacle at the same time. At each step of the building, Moses reminds us that he took Yahweh's instructions very seriously, and that he completed them exactly as Yahweh instructed. Moses is showing Yahweh's people the importance of following his instructions.

The people and Moses set up the tabernacle on the first day of the first month, in the second year after the Israelites left Egypt. This means it was one year since the Israelites left Egypt. Remember Yahweh told them to wait until this specific day to set up the tabernacle. Tabernacle means dwelling place or house. This special tent with its items inside and outside is a place where Yahweh will live with his people. Remember Yahweh designed the tabernacle to be movable so the Israelites can easily take it down and put it back up again as they travel. This is probably similar to other tents people used during Moses' time.

Stop here and look at a photo of the tabernacle as a group. Pause this audio here.

It is likely that all of the parts of the tabernacle were ready before this important day, and they waited until the first day of the year to set up the tabernacle for the first time as Yahweh instructed them. Yahweh wanted the people to set up the tabernacle for the first time on the first day of the year because it represented a way of celebrating the new year. Yahweh wanted the people to link the new year with worship of Yahweh. The start of the year during Moses' time was in March or April. This celebration was to show the importance of the tabernacle and how it represented Yahweh coming to live with his people. This was a very important day for the Israelite people.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Discuss important days or celebrations in your culture. How does your community celebrate? Why do you choose the specific days you celebrate? Pause this audio here.

The next section of the passage is about how Moses and the people set up the bases, frames, bars, posts, and covering of the tabernacle. This is the first part of setting up the tabernacle. Yahweh already told Moses in detail how to build these parts of the tabernacle, including the size of each part and the number of each part. Now, all of these parts are ready. The people put the silver bases on the ground, and then they put the acacia wood frames into the silver bases. They attached the bars and posts, which hold the framework of the tabernacle together. Then they spread the tent covering over the tabernacle, which had four layers of curtains. Yahweh gave Moses specific instructions about how to make each layer of the tent covering. This section ends with the same phrase, "as Yahweh commanded Moses," to show that Moses followed Yahweh's instructions for assembling each of these parts of the tabernacle.

Stop here and look at images of the bases, frames, bars, posts, and the four layers of the tent coverings as a group. Pause this audio here.

In the next section, Moses and the people put the testimony, or tablets of the covenant law, in the ark. The "testimony" is the stone tablets which have the ten words, or commandments, from Yahweh. These ten words are the covenant Yahweh made with his people. Remember that Yahweh gave exact instructions for how to build the ark, the poles on the ark, and the atonement cover; and Moses and the people made it all exactly as Yahweh commanded them. They made the ark and the ark's poles from acacia wood and overlaid them with gold. They put the atonement lid on the ark, which was made from pure gold. Remember this atonement cover is where Yahweh said he would meet with Moses. Moses and the people put the ark in the inner room of the tabernacle called the Most Holy Place, and they hung the protecting curtain to shield the ark from the Holy Place in the tabernacle. This section also ends with the phrase, "as Yahweh commanded Moses." This shows again that Moses and the people made the ark exactly as Yahweh told them to make it, and that Moses did all of these things exactly as Yahweh told him to do them.

Stop here and look at images of the ark, the atonement cover, and the protecting curtain as a group. Pause this audio here.

Next, Moses and the people put three pieces of furniture in the outer room of the tabernacle called the Holy Place. The tabernacle was also called the tent of meeting in the original language. First, Moses and the people put the table on the north side of the tabernacle in the Holy Place, outside of the curtain that covers the Most Holy Place. We know from previous passages that there were also specific plates, dishes, bowls, and pitchers on the table, but these are not mentioned in this passage. They put the bread on the table, which likely symbolized the twelve tribes of Israel, and more importantly, God's constant provision for the Israelites. Again, this section ends with the same phrase, "as Yahweh commanded Moses," to show that Moses followed Yahweh's instructions for placing the table and arranging the bread on it.

Stop here and look at an image of the table with the bread as a group. Pause this audio here.

The second piece of furniture Moses and the people put in the Holy Place of the tabernacle is the lampstand. They placed the lampstand and the seven oil lamps from gold exactly as Yahweh told them to place them. They put the lampstand across from the table on the south side of the tabernacle, and they put the seven oil lamps in cups on the lampstand. There were specific trays, snuffers, and decorations for the lamps and lampstand. This section also ends with the phrase, "as Yahweh commanded Moses," to show Moses followed Yahweh's instructions for placing the lamps and lampstand in the correct places.

Stop here and look at images of the lampstand and oil lamps as a group. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the last piece of furniture in the Holy Place is the altar of incense. Moses and the people made the altar out of acacia wood and overlaid it with gold. They put it in the Holy Place in front of the curtain to the Most Holy Place. Moses burned fragrant incense on the gold altar, just as Yahweh commanded Moses. The incense represents the prayers of the Israelites going up to Yahweh. Remember this is the first time that anyone burned incense on the altar. In the future, Aaron and the priests will burn the incense continually on this altar, but Moses burns the incense the first time because Moses is acting as Yahweh's priest before Aaron and his sons are officially appointed as priests. This section ends with the phrase, "as Yahweh commanded Moses," to show Moses followed Yahweh's instructions for placing the gold altar of incense and burning incense on it.

Stop here and look at an image of the altar of incense as a group. Pause this audio here.

In the next section, Moses and the people put the curtain at the entrance to the tabernacle. This curtain separates the Holy Place from the outside. Then they put the altar for burnt offerings in front of the tabernacle. They probably placed all the pots, pans, forks, shovels, and other equipment made out of bronze on the altar at this time, even though these items are not included in this passage. On this special day, Moses offers the first burnt offering and grain offering on the altar. Remember the people would bring animal sacrifices to offer to Yahweh on this altar. The priest killed the animal and cooked the sacrifice on the altar as a substitute for the people's sins. They also offered the grain offering on this altar. Again, the section ends with the phrase, "just as Yahweh commanded Moses," to show Moses did exactly what Yahweh told him to do for placing the curtain and burning the offering on the altar of the burnt offering.

Stop here and look at images of the curtain at the entrance of the tabernacle and the altar for the burnt offering as a group. Pause this audio here.

Finally, Moses and the people put the basin for washing between the tabernacle and the altar. The basin held water for washing. In the future, Moses, Aaron, and Aaron's sons washed their hands and feet in the water in the bronze basin each time they entered the tabernacle and each time they came to the altar of the burnt offering. They placed the basin and its stand exactly as Yahweh commanded Moses, and this section also ends with the phrase, "just as Yahweh commanded Moses," to show they did it exactly as Yahweh commanded him.

Stop here and look at images of the basin for washing as a group. Pause this audio here.

The last part of the tabernacle Moses set up was the courtyard around the tabernacle and the altar. The courtyard was the open space around the tabernacle and the altar. Curtains surrounded the courtyard, and the curtains were held up by bronze bases and posts. Moses put together the courtyard exactly as Yahweh commanded him, and then Moses set up the curtain at the gate of the courtyard. The passage ends by saying

that Moses finished the work, meaning that Moses and all the people finished the work of setting up the tabernacle.

Stop here and look at images of the courtyard and the curtain at the gate of the courtyard as a group.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 40:16–33 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 6 scenes.

In the first scene: This is a summary statement of how Moses and the people set up the tabernacle, and when they set up the tabernacle.

In the second scene: Moses and the people set up the bases, frames, bars, posts, and covering of the tabernacle just as Yahweh commanded Moses.

In the third scene: Moses and the people set up the ark and the testimony in the ark in the Most Holy Place of the tabernacle just as Yahweh commanded Moses.

In the fourth scene: Moses and the people set up three pieces of furniture in the Holy Place of the tabernacle just as Yahweh commanded Moses.

In the fifth scene: Moses and the people set up the curtain, the altar of burnt offerings, and the basin for washing outside the tabernacle just as Yahweh commanded Moses.

In the sixth scene: Moses and the people set up the outer courtyard around the tabernacle and the curtain at the gate of the tabernacle just as Yahweh commanded Moses.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Yahweh
- The Israelites
- Aaron
- And Aaron's sons

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In this passage, remember that Yahweh told Moses instructions about how to build each part of the tabernacle. Yahweh gave specific requirements for the materials used for each part of the tabernacle, and how to build them. Remember that this passage, along with the following passage, together make the most important part of the entire book of Exodus. Moses heard the instructions from Yahweh on the Mountain of Sinai, and then the people followed the instructions to build the tabernacle. Now, the day is finally here to assemble all of the parts of the tabernacle for the first time.

Stop here and look at an image of the tabernacle as a group again, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Also, remember that this is not necessarily the same order that the Israelites set up the tabernacle every time—other times it is likely that groups of people work on different parts of the tabernacle at the same time. In this passage, it seems that Moses and the people set up the tent itself, and then started in the innermost part of the tent and worked outwards.

In the first scene, remember that "Moses did everything just as Yahweh commanded him" is the theme of the entire passage. Some translations include this summary statement with the previous passage, but most people think it belongs with this current passage. Remember that not all of the details for each part of the tabernacle

are repeated here—the most important part of this passage is to see that Moses and the people did everything exactly as Yahweh commanded them.

The statement "as Yahweh commanded him" is repeated seven times in this passage after Moses and the people put together each of the seven parts of the tabernacle. This is an important phrase because it shows that Moses followed Yahweh's instructions for building each and every part of the tabernacle.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a time you or someone you know put something together or gave instructions that had many steps. How do you tell the story? Do you repeat certain phrases as you tell the steps of the instructions? Pause this audio here.

Remember also that this passage takes place on the first day of the first month of the second year after the Israelites left Egypt. Remember that different parts of the tabernacle were probably ready before this day, and they waited until this special first day of the new year to assemble the tabernacle for the first time.

In the second scene, remember that Moses and the people set up the bases, frames, bars, posts, and covering of the tabernacle. Remember that all of the details about how they did this are not included here, but the scene does end with the reminder that Moses did everything "as Yahweh commanded Moses."

Stop here and look at images of the bases, frames, bars, and posts again as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

In the third scene, remember this is about what Moses put inside the Most Holy Place of the tabernacle. Moses made the ark exactly as Yahweh commanded them and put the testimony in the ark and put the poles on the ark. He put the atonement cover on top of the ark. Remember how the people set up the tabernacle. First, they put the silver bases on the ground, and then they put the acacia wood frames into the silver bases. They attached the bars and posts, which hold the framework of the tabernacle together. Then they spread the tent covering over the tabernacle, which had four layers of curtains. Remember Moses and the people also hung the protective curtain to separate the Most Holy Place from the rest of the tabernacle. It is important to remember this scene also ends with the same phrase, "as Yahweh commanded Moses," to emphasize that Moses followed all of Yahweh's instructions.

Stop here and look at images of the ark, the atonement cover, and the protecting curtain again as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

In the fourth scene, remember that Moses and the people made all three pieces of furniture that Yahweh instructed them to put in the Holy Place of the tabernacle. The three pieces of furniture are the table with the bread on it, the lamps and lampstand, and the altar for incense. Remember Moses and the people placed, or set up, all of these things "as Yahweh commanded Moses." This same phrase appears in this scene three times. After Moses puts each one of the pieces of furniture in the Holy Place of the tabernacle, it says Moses did this "as Yahweh commanded Moses." North and south are used to show which side of the room to put each piece of furniture on. Moses and the people put the table with the bread on the north side. They put the lampstand on the south side, which means it was on the opposite side of the room from the table with the bread on it.

Stop here and look at images of the table with the bread, the lampstand and oil lamps, and the altar of incense again as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

In the fifth scene, Moses and the people set up the parts of the tabernacle that are in the courtyard. Remember this includes the curtain at the entrance to the tabernacle, the altar for burnt offerings in front of the tabernacle, and the basin for washing. Remember the bronze basin for washing is for Moses, Aaron, and Aaron's sons to wash their hands and feet in before they serve in Yahweh's tabernacle or at the altar of burnt offerings. Remember that the phrase, "as Yahweh commanded Moses," is repeated again after Moses sets up the curtain and the altar for burnt offerings, and also after he sets up the basin for washing. Remember this is the seventh and final time this phrase, "as Yahweh commanded Moses," is repeated in this passage.

Stop here and look at images of the curtain at the entrance of the tabernacle, the altar for the burnt offering, and the basin for washing again as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

In the sixth scene, remember that Moses and the people set up the final parts of the tabernacle. Remember the last part they set up is the courtyard and the curtain at the gate of the courtyard. Also, remember that this is not necessarily the same order that the Israelites set up the tabernacle every time—other times it is likely that

groups of people work on different parts of the tabernacle at the same time. Remember also that even though it says Moses finished the work, other people definitely helped Moses do the work of setting up the tabernacle.

Stop here and look at images of the courtyard and the curtain at the gate of the courtyard again as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Also, stop here and look at a diagram of where everything is in the tabernacle and courtyard as a group. Pause this audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it. Try to build a model of the tabernacle and its courtyard, and try to remember where you should put each object in the tabernacle.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 40:16–33 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 6 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Yahweh
- The Israelites
- Aaron
- And Aaron's sons

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Moses and the people set up the tabernacle for the first time. Moses does it all exactly as Yahweh commanded him. They set it up on the first day of the first month of the second year.

Pause the drama.

Moses sets up the bases, frames, bars, and posts of the tabernacle. Moses also puts the covering over the tabernacle. Moses does all of this as Yahweh commanded Moses.

Pause the drama.

Moses puts the testimony in the ark, attaches the ark's poles, and puts the atonement cover on the top of the ark. Moses puts the ark in the Most Holy Place of the tabernacle and hangs the protecting curtain to shield the ark. Moses does all of this just as Yahweh commands Moses to do it.

Pause the drama.

Moses sets up the Holy Place of the tabernacle. Moses puts the table there outside of the Most Holy Place, and he puts the bread on the table. Moses also puts the lampstand and lamps across from the table. Moses puts the altar of incense in front of the curtain to the Most Holy Place, and Moses burns the incense for the first time. Moses does all of this just as Yahweh commands Moses to do it.

Pause the drama.

Moses puts the curtain at the entrance to the tabernacle. Moses also sets up the bronze altar for burnt offerings and Moses offers a burnt offering and a grain offering on the altar for the first time. Moses also sets up the bronze basin for washing. In the future, Moses, Aaron, and Aaron's sons all wash their hands and feet in the bronze basin every time they go into the tabernacle or approach the altar of the burnt offering.

Pause the drama.

Moses put the courtyard around the tabernacle and the altar. Moses put the curtain at the gate of the courtyard. Moses finished all the work of setting up the tabernacle.

Pause the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 40:16–33 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

Moses set up the **tabernacle** exactly as Yahweh commanded Moses to do it. The tabernacle is the special tent that Yahweh told Moses to make. Yahweh will live in this tabernacle with his people. Translate tabernacle the same as you have in previous passages. For more information on tabernacle, see the Master Glossary.

Moses and the people set up the tabernacle on the first day of the first month of the second year after leaving Egypt. All of the parts of the tabernacle were ready for this important day when Moses assembled all of the parts. Yahweh told them to set up the tabernacle on this specific day. Translate this description of this specific day in the same way you translated it in the previous passage.

Moses set up the bases, frames, bars, posts, and tent covering of the tabernacle. Use the same words for each of these things that you used in previous passages.

Stop here and look at images of the bases, frames, bars, posts, and the four layers of the tent coverings again as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Moses put the testimony, or the tablets of the covenant law with the ten words from Yahweh, in the **ark of the covenant**. It is sometimes called the ark of the testimony. The ark was covered inside and outside with gold. The Israelites believed that Yahweh literally inhabited the space directly above the ark. Translate ark of the covenant the same as you have in previous passages. For more information on ark of the covenant, see the Master Glossary.

Moses attached the poles to the ark and put the **atonement** cover on top of the ark. Atonement means covering over, or reconciling, sin. In the original language, the word for the top of the ark means to cover over sins, and also a literal cover of the ark. Other translations translate this as "mercy seat." Translate atonement cover, or mercy seat, the same as you have in previous passages. For more information about atonement, see the Master Glossary.

Moses also hung the protecting curtain to shield the ark in the Most Holy Place from the Holy Place in the tabernacle. Moses did all of this just as Yahweh commanded Moses.

Stop here and look at images of the ark, the atonement cover, and the protecting curtain again as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Moses placed the table with the bread on it on the north side of the Holy Place. Translate table in the same way you have in previous passages.

Stop here and look at an image of the table again as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Moses made the lampstand and the seven **lamps** out of gold, exactly as Yahweh commanded Moses to make them. Moses put them on the south side of the tabernacle. Translate **lamps** and lampstand the same as you have in previous passages. For more information on oil lamps, see the Master Glossary. Moses made the lamps and lampstand exactly "as Yahweh commanded Moses."

Stop here and look at images of the lampstand and oil lamps again as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Moses put the incense **altar** in front of the curtain into the Most Holy Place. Moses lit the incense himself for the first time. Translate altar the same as you have in previous passages. For more information on altar, see the Master Glossary. Moses did this just as Yahweh commanded Moses.

Stop here and look at an image of the altar of incense again as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Moses put a curtain at the entrance to the tabernacle. Moses placed the altar for burnt offerings outside of the tabernacle. Moses offered the first burnt offering and grain offering on the altar as Yahweh instructed Moses to do. Translate altar for burnt offerings, burnt offering, and grain offering the same as you have in previous passages. For more information on altar, burnt offering, and grain offering, see the Master Glossary. Moses did this just as Yahweh commanded Moses.

Stop here and look at images of the curtain at the entrance of the tabernacle and the altar for the burnt offering again as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Moses put the basin for washing between the tabernacle and the altar. Translate basin the same as you have in previous passages. Moses did this all just as Yahweh commanded Moses.

Stop here and look at an image of the basin for washing again as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Moses set up the courtyard around the altar and the tabernacle. Moses put a curtain at the entrance, or gate, to the courtyard. Moses finished the work of setting up the tabernacle.

Stop here and look at images of the courtyard and the curtain at the gate of the courtyard again as a group, if needed.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 40:16–33

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (5525723 KB)

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Exodus 40:34–38

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Exodus 40:34–38 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 40:34–38 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 40:34–38 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Yahweh gave Moses instructions on the Mountain of Sinai of how the Israelites needed to build the tabernacle. Moses and the Israelites followed Yahweh's instructions and completed all of the parts of the tabernacle exactly how Yahweh commanded them to make the tabernacle. In the previous passage, Moses and the people set up

every part of the tabernacle exactly as Yahweh commanded them to do it. Now that the tabernacle is ready, Yahweh comes to dwell, or live, in the tabernacle. This passage describes the cloud and glory of Yahweh coming to live in the tabernacle that Moses and the people built for Yahweh.

This passage continues the most important part of the book of Exodus. Moses and the people finished building and setting up all of the parts of the tabernacle. Now, the tabernacle is ready for Yahweh to live in it. The Israelites have seen the cloud that symbolizes Yahweh's presence before. Now that cloud comes to cover the tabernacle. The Israelites saw the cloud when it guided them in the wilderness. The Israelites also saw the cloud on top of the Mountain of Sinai while Yahweh spoke with Moses. The cloud was also at the entrance of the tent of meeting where Moses went to meet Yahweh outside of the camp. Every time the Israelites saw the cloud, they saw a symbol of Yahweh and Yahweh's glory, or majesty and power.

The cloud was also a way for the Israelites to see that Yahweh went to live in his new house, his tabernacle. In previous passages, Yahweh promised he would come and live with his people. Yahweh lives in heaven, but also in the tabernacle among his people. This passage shows that Yahweh kept his promise to come and live with his people. Yahweh approved of the house that Moses and the people built for him, and Yahweh showed his approval by coming to live in the house.

In the first part of this passage, there are two different words used for the house of Yahweh-tent of meeting and tabernacle. Both words refer to the same tabernacle that Moses and the people built for Yahweh, exactly as Yahweh instructed them to build it. Both words have been found throughout the book of Exodus. In this passage, the two different words are each used two times in the original language. Both meanings are important for this new house of Yahweh. It is significant that both words are used together in this passage because this shows the house is both a tabernacle, or a place for Yahweh to dwell, or live, and also a tent of meeting, or a place for Yahweh to meet with his people.

Stop here and look at an image of the tabernacle again as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

The cloud is mentioned two times in this part of this passage. The first time "cloud" is used, it says the cloud covered the tabernacle, meaning the cloud hid the tabernacle from view. Moses and the people were in a hot desert, and a cloud provided shade and showed Yahweh's kindness during the warm weather.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a time a cloud provided shade for you. Pause this audio here.

The second time "cloud" is used, it says the cloud settled on the tabernacle. The word for "settled" is from the same word in the original language for "tabernacle," and it can mean settling down temporarily or living somewhere more permanently.

The passage says the glory of Yahweh fills the tabernacle. The glory of Yahweh means the power and majesty of Yahweh, or Yahweh's brilliant presence. It probably means there was a bright light inside the tabernacle. "The glory of Yahweh filled the tabernacle" is repeated a second time to emphasize the importance of Yahweh's brilliant presence coming to fill the tabernacle.

Moses cannot enter the tabernacle now, even though Moses was allowed to see Yahweh's glory, or brilliant presence, on the top of the Mountain of Sinai and in the tent of meeting outside of the camp. When Yahweh's glory fills the tabernacle, this shows that now the tabernacle belongs only to Yahweh. Moses was in charge of building and setting up the tabernacle, and now that all of the preparation is complete, the true owner of the tabernacle is coming to live in his house. It is true that later Moses and Aaron can enter the tabernacle, but Moses and Aaron can only enter the tabernacle when Yahweh's glory is not filling the inside of the tabernacle.

The next section tells about the journeys of the Israelites, and when they would stay in their camp or move to another place. Normally, the cloud is hovering above the tabernacle, which means the Israelites should stay in one place and not move. If the cloud lifts up from the tabernacle, then the people know they must leave the place where they are camped and move to another place. Yahweh is the one who lifts the cloud from the tabernacle, leaves the cloud over the tabernacle, or moves the cloud to another place. In the original language, the word for "journey" means "pulling up stakes," or packing up the tents and stakes that hold down the tents at their corners. When the Israelites followed the cloud to another place, they needed to pack up all of their tents and possessions, as well as everything inside and outside of the tabernacle of Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a time you or someone you know went on a journey. What did you do to prepare for your journey? How did you know it was the right time to leave for your journey? Pause this audio here.

The last part of this passage gives more information about what the cloud looked like during the day and at night. During the day, the cloud of Yahweh is always over the tabernacle. At night, there was a fire inside of the cloud so that all of the house, or family, of Israel in the camp could see the cloud in the dark. Both the tabernacle and the cloud are symbols of Yahweh living with his people. The cloud reminds the Israelites that Yahweh is always with them in the center of their camp, even at night when it is dark. Everywhere the Israelites traveled, Yahweh's presence was with them.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What are ways that your community feels close to God? Are there certain symbols or practices that help people remember God is with them?

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 40:34–38 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

In the first scene: The cloud covers the tabernacle, and Yahweh's glory fills the tabernacle.

In the second scene: When the cloud moves, the Israelites follow the cloud.

In the third scene: The cloud is over the tabernacle during the day, and a fire is in the cloud at night.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- And the Israelites

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

In this passage, remember Moses and the Israelites followed all of Yahweh's instructions for how to build the tabernacle for Yahweh. They set up the tabernacle on the first day of the first month in the second year, after the people came out of Egypt. Now, this passage tells what happens next after the tabernacle is set up. This passage is a continuation of the climax of the entire book of Exodus because now Moses and the people finished setting up the tabernacle, and Yahweh comes to live in the tabernacle.

In the first scene, remember that the cloud coming down over the tabernacle and the glory of Yahweh filling the tabernacle both show that Yahweh approves of the tabernacle that Moses and the people built for him. Remember that the cloud is a symbol of Yahweh's presence, and that this is not the first time the Israelites saw a cloud like this. The Israelites know this cloud represents Yahweh living with them. Remember also that there are two different words used in the original language for the house of Yahweh. Remember that a tabernacle is a place for Yahweh to dwell, or live, and a tent of meeting is a place for Yahweh to meet with his people. Remember both words-tabernacle and tent of meeting-refer to the same house for Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What words will you use for tabernacle and tent of meeting? How can you show both meanings in your translation? Pause this audio here.

Remember also that cloud and glory are both repeated twice in this scene. The phrase, "the glory of Yahweh filled the tabernacle," is repeated twice, which shows how important it is that Yahweh's brilliant presence filled the tabernacle.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you emphasize something important in your language? Do you repeat the same phrase more than one time, or do you do something else? How can you translate this phrase to show how important it is that the glory of Yahweh filled the tabernacle? Pause this audio here.

It is important to remember that the second part of the first scene says Moses cannot enter the tabernacle now that the glory of Yahweh is filling the tabernacle. Remember Moses has seen Yahweh's glory before, but now Yahweh is living in his house, the tabernacle. No one else can enter the tabernacle while the glory of Yahweh is filling the tabernacle. When the glory of Yahweh is not filling the tabernacle, it is possible for Moses and Aaron to enter the tabernacle, but that happens later.

In the second scene, remember that the Israelites stay in one place while the cloud stays over the tabernacle. Remember the tabernacle is in the middle of the camp of all of the Israelites, and the cloud over the tabernacle is a symbol of Yahweh living in the middle of the camp with the people.

Remember that if the cloud lifts from the tabernacle, the people must prepare to journey to another place. Remember this means packing up everything, including everything inside and outside of the tabernacle, to move to another place. Remember that Yahweh is the one who lifts the cloud from the tabernacle, and Yahweh is also the one who moves the cloud to another place. Remember that the Israelites followed a similar cloud in the wilderness.

In the third scene, remember that there is more description of the cloud. During the day, the cloud of Yahweh is over the tabernacle. At night, there is a fire in the cloud. Remember that fire in the cloud meant that all of the Israelites could see the cloud, even at night. Remember that the cloud is a reminder that Yahweh is living with his people.

Remember that all of the house, or family, of Israel could see the cloud during the day and at night. Remember that the Israelites always saw the cloud during all of their journeys.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 40:34–38 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 3 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- And the Israelites

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama.

Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses:

Moses and the people finished setting up the tabernacle exactly as Yahweh commanded them to do it. A cloud covers the tabernacle, and the glory of Yahweh fills the tabernacle.

Pause the drama.

Moses cannot go inside the tabernacle because the glory of Yahweh fills the tabernacle.

Pause the drama.

Also, ask the people playing the Israelites, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The people might answer things like, "Surprised that Moses cannot go inside the tabernacle now," or "In awe of the glory of Yahweh," or "Wondering when Moses will be able to go inside the tabernacle again." [!end] Continue the drama.

The Israelites prepared to move to another place anytime the cloud moved from over the tabernacle. If the cloud remained over the tabernacle, the Israelites stayed in the same place and did not move.

Pause the drama.

During the day, the cloud stayed over the tabernacle. At night, there was a fire burning in the cloud. All of the Israelites could see the cloud during the day and at night. Everywhere the Israelites traveled, the cloud of Yahweh was with them.

*Pause the drama.**Filling the Gaps*

Listen to an audio version of Exodus 40:34–38 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The cloud covers the tabernacle of Yahweh. The cloud hides the tabernacle from view, and it also comes to settle on the tabernacle. It is the same cloud the Israelites saw in the wilderness when a pillar of cloud guided the Israelites. The cloud is a symbol of Yahweh's presence. Translate cloud the same as you have in previous passages.

The cloud covers the **tabernacle**, which is the special tent that Yahweh tells Moses to make. Yahweh comes to live in this tabernacle as He promised He would, to live among his people. The tabernacle is also called the "tent of meeting" or the "house of God." Translate tabernacle the same as you have in previous passages. For more information on tabernacle, see the Master Glossary.

The glory of **Yahweh** fills the tabernacle. **Glory** in this passage means the brilliant presence of Yahweh. Yahweh is the personal name of God. Translate glory and Yahweh the same as you have in previous passages. For more information on glory and Yahweh, see the Master Glossary.

Moses could not enter the tabernacle while Yahweh's glory filled the tabernacle.

The cloud of Yahweh was over the tabernacle during the day. At night, there was a fire in the cloud. All of the house of Israel, or family of Israel, could see the cloud during the day and the fire in the cloud at night during all of their journeys. The tabernacle was in the center of the camp, in view of all of the Israelites in the camp. Translate house of Israel the same as you have in previous passages. For more information on house of Israel, see the word household in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Exodus 40:34-38

Audio Content

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