

Resource: Familiarization, Internalization, Articulation (Fia)

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Familiarization, Internalization, Articulation (Fia)

NUM

Numbers 1:1-16

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 1:1-16 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 1:1-16 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 1:1-16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Moses continues his story of the Israelites' journey from Egypt to the land Yahweh promised them. Yahweh is the personal name for God and will be used throughout this passage. As you remember, Yahweh restored his covenant, or binding promise, with the Israelites after he rescued them from slavery in Egypt and agreed to go with them to the promised land, the land that Yahweh promised to give to Abraham and his descendants, the Israelites. Now, Yahweh gives Moses specific instructions for taking a census of all the men who are old enough to go to war from the different tribes of Israel.

As you know, Moses and the Israelites are still in the wilderness of Sinai near the bottom of Mount Sinai, the mountain where Yahweh gave Moses the 10 commandments, or laws for the Israelites to live by. The wilderness was an isolated area where there are few plants and where not many people settle.

Stop here and look as a group at a map of the Israelites' journey from Egypt that shows where Mount Sinai is. Pause this audio here.

Moses says Yahweh spoke to him in the tent of meeting. We hear the phrase "Yahweh spoke to Moses" often in Numbers. Moses uses this phrase to emphasize that all of the instructions that Moses gave the Israelites came directly from Yahweh. The tent of meeting was a tent where Yahweh's presence lived with his people. The people could move this tent from place to place as they moved. Yahweh met with Moses in this holy tent, also known as the tabernacle, where Yahweh told Moses his will for the people.

Stop here and look as a group at a picture of the assembled tabernacle. Pause this audio here.

Moses says Yahweh spoke to him on the first day of the second month in the second year after the Israelites left Egypt. This was 13 months after the Israelites left Egypt. The second month in that culture and language is the time of year that we call mid-April to mid-May. We know that the Israelites completed the tabernacle in the first month of the second year. This means Yahweh spoke to Moses in this passage one month after the Israelites completed the tabernacle.

Yahweh commands Moses and Moses's brother, Aaron, to count the total, or to take a census, of the Israelites, or the sons of Israel. Moses and Aaron will need to count the Israelites by clans and by families. A clan refers to a large group of relatives. The father's house was made up of families, or smaller groups of relatives. Moses and Aaron will need to count and list the names one by one of each male who is more than 20 years old. In the Israelite culture, once a male turned 20, he was old enough to take part in military activity. This means Moses and Aaron are counting the total number of Israelite men who are able to go to war.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How old should someone be in order to be involved in military activity in your culture? Pause this audio here.

Moses and Aaron will number, or enroll, these men by company. A company is a large military group with its own leader and banner. This type of census will prepare the Israelites as a well-organized army to go in and possess the land of Canaan, or the promised land.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Describe a time when leaders counted people in your community. How do you count the people in your community? Why would you count large groups of people in your community? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh also tells Moses to appoint 12 men, one from each tribe, to help Moses and Aaron with the work of counting. As you remember, Israel consisted of 12 tribes. Each one of the 12 men was the head of that man's father's house, or the family chief of the tribe. Yahweh says to Moses the name of each of the 12 men, one from each tribe, who will assist Moses and Aaron with the counting.

Yahweh names the tribes of Israel according to their mothers, not necessarily according to their birth order. You will remember that Jacob had sons from four mothers: from Leah, from Rachel, from Leah's servant, and from Rachel's servant. The tribes are listed as the sons of Leah first, the sons of Rachel, then the sons of the servants. Throughout Numbers the order of the list sometimes changes.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: When you list groups of people in your culture, how do you decide what order to list them in? Pause this audio here.

From the tribe of Reuben, Yahweh chooses Elizur the son of Shedeur. From the tribe of Simeon, Yahweh chooses Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai. From the tribe of Judah, Yahweh chooses Nahshon the son of Amminadab. From the tribe of Issachar, Yahweh chooses Nethanel the son of Zuar. From the tribe of Zebulun, Yahweh chooses Eliab the son of Helon. As you remember, Joseph, the son of Jacob, had two sons whose descendants became two tribes: Ephraim and Manasseh. From Ephraim, Yahweh chooses Elishama the son of Ammihud. From Manasseh, Yahweh chooses Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur. From the tribe of Benjamin, Yahweh chooses Abidan the son of Gideoni. From the tribe of Dan, Yahweh chooses Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai. From the tribe of Asher, Yahweh chooses Pagiel the son of Ochran. From the tribe of Gad, Yahweh chooses Eliasaph the son of Deuel. And from the tribe of Naphtali, Yahweh chooses Ahira the son of Enan. These are the 12 tribal leaders who will help count their tribes and eventually lead them when the Israelites march.

After Yahweh gives the 12 names, Moses then summarizes who the men were. Moses describes them as leaders of their ancestral tribes. This means they were chiefs, or distinguished and important leaders, who represented their whole tribe. "Heads of the clans of Israel" means that they were in charge of thousands of Israelites in their tribe. These thousands of men could become groups of soldiers in an army to help protect Israel.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 1:1-16 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 2 scenes.

In the first scene: One month after the Israelites finished building the tabernacle, Yahweh meets with Moses in the tabernacle, also known as the tent of meeting, in the wilderness of Sinai. Yahweh tells Moses how Moses and Aaron should count or list all the men who are old enough to go to war from the different tribes of Israel.

In the second scene: Moses chooses 12 men, one leader from each tribe, to help him and Aaron take the census.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- Israelites
- 12 leaders, one from each tribe

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

It is important to remember that in the book of Exodus, Yahweh restored his covenant with the Israelites and said he would personally go with them to the land of Canaan. Yahweh gave the Israelites specific instructions for how to build the tabernacle so that He could live with them. The Israelites built the tabernacle according to Yahweh's exact instructions.

The Israelites are still in the wilderness of Sinai, most likely near the base of Mount Sinai, where Moses received the 10 commandments.

Moses says he met with Yahweh in the tent of meeting, or the holy tent where the Israelites worshiped Yahweh. The tent of meeting refers to the tabernacle, or the house of Yahweh.

Moses met with Yahweh on the first day of the second month in the second year after the Israelites left Egypt. The word for month in Hebrew means "new moon." It refers to a lunar month which was around 29 days. So this means it was a month after the Israelites finished building the tabernacle.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture talk about time passing? What unit of measurement do people in your culture use for time? Pause this audio here.

Moses says Yahweh spoke to him in the tent of meeting, or the tabernacle. It is important to remember that only Moses could enter this holy tent to meet with Yahweh. He would then leave the tent and tell the Israelites what Yahweh said.

Yahweh tells Moses to count all of the Israelite males by clan and by father's house. It's important to remember that a clan is a larger group of relatives that is made up of smaller family groups, or smaller father's houses.

Moses and Aaron, Moses' brother, will not only count the Israelite males but also write down their names. You will remember that Aaron helped Moses lead the Israelites, and that Aaron was the high priest. They will only count the males who are 20 years old and older. It's important to remember that this was a way to enroll, or make them part of the Israelite army.

Moses and Aaron will count the men head by head. In other words, Moses and Aaron will count each male one by one to make sure they do not leave anyone out.

Yahweh tells Moses that one man from each tribe will help Moses count the Israelites. This means Moses will take 12 leaders to help Moses and Aaron. Each of these 12 tribal representatives must be the head of a family.

Yahweh then tells Moses the names of leaders from each tribe who will stand with Moses. These men will stand with Moses, meaning that they will help Moses and Aaron with the census.

Yahweh lists one man from each of Israel's 12 tribes: Reuben, Simeon, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Ephraim, Manasseh, Benjamin, Dan, Asher, Gad, and Naphtali. It is important to note that Moses does not mention the tribe of Levi. This is because Yahweh has a special purpose for the Levites. Instead, Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, are listed as official Israelite tribes. Yahweh lists the name of the tribe first, and then the man from that tribe who will help Moses.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you remember long lists of names in your culture? Discuss with your group creative ways to remember the names of the 12 leaders from each of the 12 tribes. Pause this audio here.

The end of the list of names most likely marks the end of Yahweh's direct speech to Moses, but it is unclear. After the end of the list of names, Moses tells us who these leaders were. It is important to remember that the 12 men are important leaders who will lead their tribes as they march.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 1:1-16 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
- Israelites
- 12 leaders chosen from each tribe

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 in the wilderness of Sinai. One month after the Israelites finish building the tabernacle, Moses enters the tent of meeting and meets with Yahweh.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel curious. I wonder what Yahweh will tell Moses this time," or, "I am in awe. It is amazing to see Yahweh using the tabernacle to meet with Moses. I am unworthy to even go near the house of Yahweh," or, "I am eager. I am ready to start traveling again toward the land Yahweh has promised us. I hope Yahweh tells Moses it is time to leave this wilderness."

Act out Yahweh telling Moses inside the tent of meeting how Moses and Aaron should count all of the Israelite men who are at least 20 years of age and therefore able to go to war.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel worried. There are thousands of people! How will Aaron and I be able to count them all accurately?" or, "I am thinking. This type of census means that Yahweh is organizing us as an army. Even now he is preparing us to enter the land of Canaan," or, "I am thankful to be in Yahweh's presence again and to know that he has a plan for our future."

Act out Yahweh telling Moses the names of 12 tribal representatives who will help Moses and Aaron take the census. Each man is already a leader of his father's group. Moses leaves the tent and chooses the 12 men, one leader from each tribe, to help him count the Israelites. The 12 men are important and respected leaders of their tribes.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 1:1-16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Yahweh speaks to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai. Yahweh is the personal name for God, and this name is used throughout this passage. It is the name God revealed to Moses at the burning bush, and could mean, "I am." God's people were careful with his name, Yahweh, because they considered it a holy, or special, name.

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.

The **wilderness** of Sinai refers to a lonely, isolated place without water. There are almost no trees or bushes growing in a wilderness or desert. The ground is dry and rocky, and there are wild animals roaming around. People do not live in the desert. This wilderness was located at the bottom of Mount Sinai.

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.

Yahweh speaks to Moses in the **tent of meeting**. This refers to a large tent, or temporary shelter, that the Israelites moved from place to place and where the presence of Yahweh lived. The Israelites worshiped God at this tent. It was also where Moses met with Yahweh to hear Yahweh's will for the people. The tent of meeting is another name for the **tabernacle**, or the House of God.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for the **tent of meeting**. Look up the 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. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh wants Moses to officially count, or take a census of, the sons of Israel, or the Israelites. The Israelites refer to all the descendants of Jacob, who was the grandson of Abraham. Jacob had 12 sons, and therefore the Israelites divided into 12 tribes: Reuben, Simeon, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Ephraim, Manasseh, Benjamin, Dan, Asher, Gad, and Naphtali. Eventually, the tribe of Joseph divided into two "half tribes": Ephraim and Manasseh.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for the **Israelites**. Look up the Israelites 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 count the Israelites by **clan** and by their **father's houses**. In Hebrew culture, a tribe was the largest family group; there were 12 tribes of Israel. A clan was the next largest group of relatives. Each clan was made up of smaller family groups that the Israelites called families or "father's houses." A clan is made up of several families, which includes three or four generations.

Stop here and discuss how you will translate **clan** and **father's house**, or "family." It may help to discuss your own families and how you would divide them based on clan and father's house. Make sure your translation is clear that the clan is a larger group than a father's house. Pause this audio here.

Moses and Aaron obey Yahweh and take 12 men, one from each tribe, to help them count the Israelite males who are 20 years old and older and able to go to war. They will organize the men by their **troops**, or groups of fighting men. The 12 men Yahweh lists are important leaders who will lead their tribes as they march. Because they have positions of such honor, Moses will mention their names again later in the book of Numbers. Translators will need to keep these names consistent throughout their translations.

Stop here and discuss how you will translate "groups of fighting men," or **troops**. Pause this audio here.

Moses says that Yahweh chose these 12 men from the **congregation** of Israel. Congregation means community and it refers to all of the Israelites.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 1:1-16

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Numbers 1:17–47

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 1:17–47 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 1:17–47 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 1:17–47 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

As you remember, Moses and the Israelites are in the wilderness of Sinai. In the previous passage, Yahweh met with Moses in the completed tabernacle, also known as the tent of meeting, and told Moses to take a census of all of the Israelite men who could go to war. Yahweh also chose 12 men, one leader from each tribe, to help Moses and Aaron count the Israelites. Now, Moses, Aaron, and the 12 leaders take a census of the 12 Israelite tribes.

Moses and Aaron call together the 12 leaders to help them count the Israelites. As you remember from the previous passage, this passage is happening on the first day of the second month in the second year since the Israelites left Egypt. With the help of the 12 men Yahweh chose, Moses and Aaron gather together the whole community of the Israelites. In the previous passage, Yahweh told Moses to count all the Israelite men who were 20 years old or older and therefore able to go to war. Yahweh told Moses to count the men by clan and by father's house. Clans refer to larger groups of relatives while fathers' houses or families refer to smaller groups of relatives. Yahweh told Moses to count the Israelites head by head, or one by one. Now Moses obeys Yahweh, and with the help of the leaders, he numbers, or enrolls, the Israelites exactly as Yahweh said in the wilderness of Sinai.

Moses now lists the census of the 12 tribes of the Israelites using the same phrases for each tribe. For each tribe, Moses explains that he listed by name each man who was 20 years old and older and physically able to go to war. The phrase "who were able to go to war" means their bodies were fit enough to go to war. Moses lists the number of males in each tribe, and then finally adds all of those numbers together into one total number of Israelite men who were able to go to war.

Stop here and discuss as a group: When you count people in your community, how do you organize them and who do you count? Why do you organize them in that way? What are the different ways you organize people in your community or area? Pause this audio here.

The first tribe Moses lists is Reuben. Reuben was Israel's firstborn. This means Reuben was the firstborn son of Jacob, whose name was also Israel. The number of men from the tribe of Reuben who were 20 years old and older, and were able to go to war, was 46,500.

The number of men from the tribe of Simeon who were 20 years old and older, and able to go to war, was 59,300.

Moses uses this same pattern to list the number of men for each tribe. The tribe of Gad had 45,650 men. The tribe of Judah had 74,600 men. The tribe of Issachar had 54,400. The tribe of Zebulun had 57,400 men. The tribe of Ephraim, the son of Joseph, had 40,500 men. The tribe of Manasseh had 32,200 men. The tribe of Benjamin had 35,400 men. The tribe of Dan had 62,700 men. The tribe of Asher had 41,500 men. The tribe of Naphtali had 53,400 men.

Moses says that the names he listed were all the names he numbered, or enrolled, with the help of the 12 tribal leaders. All the males Moses listed were 20 years old or older and were counted according to their families. The total number of Israelite men who were able to go to war was 603,550.

Moses notes that he did not count the Levites, or the descendants of Levi, as part of the census. We will find out why in the next passage.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 1:17–47 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 and Aaron gather the 12 tribal leaders. Together they take a census of the 12 Israelite tribes just as Yahweh said.

In the second scene: Moses writes down, or lists, the name of every Israelite male who is 20 years old or older and able to go to war. Moses lists them by tribe, clan, and father's house. Moses does not count the Levites. In total, there are 603,550 Israelite men who are able to go to war.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Aaron
- 12 tribal leaders
- Israelites
- Levites

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

Moses and the Israelites are in the wilderness of Sinai. A wilderness is a dry, desolate area that has almost no trees or bushes. This wilderness was located at the bottom of Mount Sinai.

It's important to remember that Yahweh met with Moses and commanded him to take a census of all the Israelite men who were able to go to war. Yahweh also gave Moses the names of 12 men, one from each tribe, who would help Moses and Aaron count the Israelites.

The first day of the second month is in the second year since Yahweh brought the Israelites out of Egypt.

Moses obeys Yahweh and calls together the 12 tribal leaders with his brother, Aaron. Together, they gather all the Israelites and take a census of the 12 tribes.

It's important to notice that the word "numbered" can be translated as "enrolled" which likely means that Moses was writing down the names of all the Israelite men. The 12 tribal leaders most likely helped Moses by organizing their tribes according to clan, father's house, and males who were 20 years old or older and able to go to war.

It's important to notice that Moses uses the same phrases to list the census by tribe, clan, and father's house. Every time Moses lists the 12 tribes of the Israelites in the census, he uses the same phrases for each tribe. First, Moses uses the phrase "from the descendants of..." to show the name of the tribe that the counted people belonged to. For each tribe, Moses explains that he listed by name each man who was 20 years old and older and physically able to go to war. The phrase "who were able to go to war" means their bodies were fit enough to go to war. Moses counts the men according to their clan and father's house. Finally, Moses lists the number of males in each tribe starting with the phrase "the numbers of the tribe of..." or "those numbered of the tribe of..." However you translate these phrases, be sure to use the same phrases and put them in the same order for each tribe Moses listed.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What phrases do people use where you live when they officially count people? Pause this audio here.

It is important to notice that Moses does not count the tribe of Levi. Instead, Joseph's tribe splits into two tribes: Ephraim and Manasseh. This is because Yahweh has a special purpose for the Levites.

One way to show this is by splitting actors or objects into 13 groups. Moses can count 12 of the groups but he does not count the last group. The actors for the 12 tribal leaders can help organize their tribes as Moses counts them.

After Moses has counted each of the 12 tribes, he says the total number of Israelite men able to go to war is 603,550.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you list big numbers like this in your language? What kinds of patterns do you use when you need to remember large lists of names? What names would you list first and why? How do you say large numbers in your language? 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

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 1:17–47 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
- 12 tribal leaders
- Israelites
- Levites

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 and Aaron gathering the 12 tribal leaders. Together, Moses, Aaron, and the 12 tribal leaders gather all the Israelites and take a census of the 12 tribes just as Yahweh said.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing a tribal leader, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I am honored to help Moses count my tribe," or, "Yahweh is wise to give Moses help since we have so many people," or, "I feel nervous. I do not like the thought of going to war, but I trust Yahweh is on our side."

Act out Moses writing down the name of every Israelite man who is 20 years old or older and able to go to war. Moses lists them by tribe, clan, and father's house. Moses does not count the Levites.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Levites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel curious. I wonder what Yahweh's purpose is for us," or, "Yahweh is preparing us to go to war. We must be getting close to the land of Canaan," or, "I feel in awe. Yahweh is so organized."

In total, Moses counts 603,550 Israelite men who are able to go to war.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 1:17–47 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Moses obeys Yahweh and gathers all of the Israelites. Moses, Aaron, and the 12 leaders count the Israelites by clan and by father's house. A clan is a large group of relatives. Each clan was made up of smaller family groups that the Israelites called families, or father's houses. A clan is made up of several families, which includes three or four generations. Be sure to use the same words for clan and father's house that you used in the previous passage.

Moses counts the Israelites just as **Yahweh** commanded. Yahweh is the personal name for God, and it is used throughout this passage. Be sure to use the same word or phrase for Yahweh that you used in the previous passage. More information about the name Yahweh is in the Master Glossary.

Moses counts the Israelites in the desert, or **wilderness**, of Sinai. Use the same term for wilderness that you used in the previous passage, and remember that wilderness is in the Master Glossary.

Moses says Reuben was the firstborn son of Israel. As you remember, Abraham was the first ancestor of the Israelites, but it was Abraham's grandson, Jacob, who Yahweh later gave the name Israel. Since that time, Abraham's descendants are called Israelites. Here, Israel refers to the Israelites' ancestor Jacob. Later, when Moses says the 12 leaders of Israel, Israel refers to the descendants of Jacob as a people or nation. Be sure that your audience understands the difference in the two ways to use the word Israel.

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

Moses lists the descendants of each son of Israel. A person's descendants are his children, grandchildren, and all future generations from the same family line. The Israelites are descendants of Abraham, and each tribe is made up of the sons of Israel, or Jacob, Abraham's grandson.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **descendants**. Look up descendants 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 notes that he did not count the Levites, or the descendants of Levi, as part of the census. The Levites were one of the 12 tribes of Israel. They were the descendants of Jacob's son, Levi. Moses and Aaron were the descendants of Levi. Yahweh specially chooses the Levites to serve him in the tabernacle, or tent of meeting, and to care for it.

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

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 1:17–47

Audio Content

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Numbers 1:48–54

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 1:48–54 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 1:48–54 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 1:48–54 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Moses has just taken a census of all the men able to go to war from the different tribes of Israel. Moses followed Yahweh's instructions and he did not count the tribe of Levi, or the Levites. Instead, in this passage Yahweh specially chooses the Levites to care for and protect the tabernacle, or the house of Yahweh. Yahweh is the personal name for God and will be used throughout this passage.

The Israelites, or the sons of Israel, are still in the wilderness of Sinai, and they have recently completed building the tabernacle. Yahweh most likely gave Moses instructions for the Levites as part of Yahweh's instructions for the census. But Moses treats Yahweh's role for the Levites as something distinct or set apart. The Levites were the descendants of Levi, who was one of the 12 sons of Jacob. Yahweh was about to do something special and important through the Levites.

Yahweh tells Moses to appoint, or choose, the Levites to be in charge of the tabernacle of the testimony and all of its furnishings. As you remember, the tabernacle is a large moveable tent where Yahweh lived and where the Israelites worshiped him. Moses uses the phrase "the tabernacle of the testimony" because the tent was where Moses kept the ark of the covenant which held the stone tablets, or the 10 commandments. These tablets were a testimony or guarantee of the covenant, or binding promise, that Yahweh made with his chosen people, the Israelites. You can find more information about the ark of the covenant in the Master Glossary.

Stop here and look at a diagram of the assembled tabernacle as a group. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh emphasizes that only the Levites can carry the tabernacle and all that belongs to it. Only the Levites will carry the tent, care for it, and camp around it. This means the Levites will set up their tents in a circle around the tabernacle.

Stop here and look as a group at an illustration of a tent used by the Israelites. Pause this audio here.

When Yahweh wants the tabernacle to move, only the Levites will take the tabernacle down, pack it, and set the tabernacle back up once the Israelites arrive at their next campsite. Yahweh strongly warns Moses that if any Israelite who is not a Levite comes close to the tabernacle, then the Levite guards will execute that person, or put that person to death.

The rest of the Israelites will set up their tents according to their tribes and troops, or groups of fighting men. This means Moses had organized the Israelites into a large army. The Israelites would use standards, or banners, to separate or distinguish the different tribes. This was some type of visual sign or marker, most likely a flag of some sort, that helped divide the Israelite camp into different sections.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Describe groups of people in your culture who travel often. How do they organize or set up where they stay each night? How do people in villages organize where they live? What kind of responsibilities do smaller groups have within the large group? Pause this audio here.

In contrast, the Levites will camp around the tabernacle. Yahweh does this so that the other Israelites will not get close to the tabernacle. If other Israelites come close to the tabernacle, this will cause Yahweh's wrath, or anger, to come to the community because the other Israelites are not set apart especially for service to Yahweh like the Levites are. The Levites will not only care for the tabernacle, but their protective circle around the tabernacle will also guard it. The Levites will both guard the tabernacle from other people approaching and protect the people from Yahweh's anger.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people protect or guard sacred places in your culture? What happens if someone tries to approach without permission? Pause this audio here.

So the Israelites obeyed all of Yahweh's commandments after hearing them from Moses.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 1:48–54 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: Moses takes a census of the Israelites, but he does not count the Levites because Yahweh told Moses to not include them with the rest of the Israelites.

In the second scene: Yahweh tells Moses to put the Levites in charge of taking care of the tabernacle and all of the objects that belong with it. The Levites have to carry all the parts of the tabernacle when the Israelites travel, and then the Levites have to camp around the tabernacle once the Levites have set the tabernacle up.

In the third scene: Yahweh tells Moses that the Levites are responsible for taking down the tabernacle, carrying the tabernacle, and rebuilding the tabernacle when the Israelites reach their next destination. Yahweh says that if anyone who is not a Levite comes close to the tabernacle, then the Levite guards must kill that person.

In the fourth scene: Yahweh tells Moses that each tribe has a special place for their family groups. Yahweh instructs the Levites to camp around the tabernacle to protect the Israelites from Yahweh's anger. Yahweh says that the Levites should stand guard around the tabernacle.

In the fifth scene: The Israelites did everything as Yahweh told them to do.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Levites
- The rest of the Israelites

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

It is important to remember that Yahweh has told Moses to count the number of Israelite men from each tribe who are able to go to war. As you remember, the Israelites are the descendants of Jacob. Since Jacob had 12 sons, there are 12 tribes of Israel. Moses counted 11 of the tribes, but he did not count the Levites, or the descendants of Levi.

It is important to notice that the order of events when Yahweh tells Moses not to count the Levites is not very clear. It is possible that Yahweh told Moses not to count the Levites before Moses started the census. In which case, Moses introduces the commandment of Yahweh as an explanation of why Moses didn't count the Levites as a part of the original census.

Yahweh tells Moses not to include the Levites in the census or the counting of the Israelites. Moses uses this statement as a way to introduce a new section. In this section, Moses talks about the Levites' special role as guardians or protectors of the tabernacle.

It is important to notice that Yahweh is giving special importance to the role of the Levites by using two different but similar expressions. Both phrases, "only the tribe of Levi you will not number," and, "you will not take their census," show the same idea.

Yahweh told Moses to put the Levites in charge of taking care of the tabernacle and all of the objects that belonged with it.

It is important to remember that the tabernacle and the objects were the sacred or holy objects built by the Israelites under the instructions of Yahweh and the approval of Moses.

The Levites have to carry all the parts of the tabernacle when the Israelites travel, and then the Levites have to camp around the tabernacle once the Levites set it up.

Yahweh tells Moses that the Levites are responsible for taking down the tabernacle, carrying the tabernacle, and rebuilding the tabernacle when the Israelites reach their next destination. Yahweh says if anyone comes close to the tabernacle who is not a Levite, then the Levite guards must kill that person.

It is important to notice that Yahweh appoints the Levites as guards of the tabernacle. Later, we will find out that they were the ones responsible for executing any person who came too close to the tabernacle.

Yahweh tells Moses that each tribe has a designated place for their tribe and family that they will mark by a standard, or banner.

Stop here and discuss as a group: What kinds of markers do people use to show who lives where, or to show certain areas in your community? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh said that the Levites should camp around the tabernacle to protect the other Israelites from Yahweh's anger. This was because the other Israelites were not set apart for special service to Yahweh like the Levites were. The other Israelites could not be in the presence of Yahweh—they were not ritually clean and not set apart in the same way as the Levites. Because of this, Yahweh says that the Levites will stand guard around the tabernacle.

So the Israelites do everything as Yahweh told them to do. Once again, Moses repeats that the Israelites did everything Yahweh said in order to show the cycle of how the Israelites obeyed and then disobeyed Yahweh. This is an important cycle that will show up many times in the book of Numbers.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 1:48–54 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:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Levites
- 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.

Act out Moses taking a census of the Israelites. He does not count the Levites because Yahweh told him to not include them with the rest of the Israelites.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the other Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "What about the Levites? Are they not going to fight alongside us?," or, "I feel curious. What is Yahweh's purpose for the Levites?" or, "I feel jealous. What makes the Levites so special?"

Act out Yahweh speaking with Moses about the Levites. You may want to act out each part of Yahweh's instructions in the background as Yahweh speaks to Moses. You can do this as a way of representing that the Israelites obeyed all of Yahweh's commands.

Yahweh tells Moses to put the Levites in charge of taking care of the tabernacle and all of the objects that belong with it. Yahweh instructs the Levites to carry all the parts of the tabernacle and then camp around it once they have set it up.

Yahweh tells Moses that the Levites are responsible for disassembling the tabernacle, carrying the tabernacle, and rebuilding the tabernacle when the Israelites reach their next destination. Yahweh says if anyone comes close to the tabernacle who is not a Levite, then the Levite guards must kill that person.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel worried. The people have to understand how important the tabernacle is to Yahweh and what will happen if people get too close," or, "I am honored Yahweh chose my tribe to care for his special house," or, "This is an important responsibility. The Levites must guard Yahweh's house well."

Ask the person playing an Israelite when they hear Yahweh's instructions, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel fearful. I do not want to get too close to the tabernacle and risk Yahweh's anger," or, "I'm not jealous anymore. This sounds like a serious responsibility for the Levites with serious consequences for disobedience," or, "I feel in awe. Yahweh provides order and solutions for even the smallest details of our journey."

Act out Yahweh telling Moses that each tribe has a designated place for their family. Yahweh says that the Levites will camp around the tabernacle to protect the Israelites from Yahweh's anger. Yahweh says that the Levites will stand guard around the tabernacle.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing a Levite when they hear Yahweh's instructions, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel nervous. This is a serious responsibility. I really hope no one tempts Yahweh's anger," or, "I'm honored to serve and protect the house of Yahweh!" or, "I feel in awe. What will it be like getting to stay next to the presence of Yahweh as we travel?"

The Israelites obey all of Yahweh's commands for the Levites.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 1:48–54 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Yahweh told Moses to take a **census**, or count all the Israelite tribes, except for the Levites. 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. Census refers to an official counting of people. Be sure to use the same word for census that you used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

The **Levites** were one of the 12 tribes of Israel. They were the descendants of Jacob's son, Levi. Moses and Aaron were the descendants of Levi. Yahweh specially chooses the Levites to serve him in the tabernacle and to care for it. The Levites were a warlike people who guarded the tabernacle from any sinful person getting too close. Use the same word or phrase for Levites that you have used in previous passages. For more information on the Levites, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Levites are not part of the census of the **Israelites**, or the sons of Israel. The Israelites refer to all of the descendants of Jacob. Jacob had 12 sons, and therefore the Israelites were divided into 12 tribes. God made a covenant, or special agreement, with the Israelites. The agreement was that the Israelites would obey all God's commandments, and that God would bless the Israelites and make the Israelites a blessing for all the people on

the earth. Use the same word or phrase for Israelites that you have used in previous passages. For more information on the Israelites, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh appoints the Levites to serve in and care for the **tabernacle** of the testimony. The tabernacle refers to the large tent moved from place to place by the Israelites and to the dwelling place of Yahweh. It is where the Israelites will worship Yahweh. This was the place where priests made sacrifices on behalf of the people before David's son built the temple.

Stop here and look at a diagram of the assembled tabernacle. 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. Pause this audio here.

Moses uses the phrase "the tabernacle of the **testimony** or **covenant** law" because the tabernacle was where the Israelites kept the ark of the covenant where Moses placed the stone tablets, or the 10 commandments. These tablets were a testimony of the covenant, or binding promise, that Yahweh made with his chosen people to bless them if they obeyed his commandments. Testimony is when a person or object testifies, or bears witness, to declare the truth about something from that person or object's own experience. The stone tablets inside the tabernacle show that Yahweh's binding promise to his people is true and valid. Your group can choose which translation to use: the tabernacle of the testimony or the tabernacle of the covenant law.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **testimony** or **covenant** law depending on your translation. Look up testimony or 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.

The rest of the Israelites will set up their tents according to their tribes and **troops**, or groups of fighting men. This means Moses had organized the Israelites into a large army. Use the same word for troops, or groups of fighting men, that you have used in previous passages.

The Israelites would use **standards**, or **banners**, to separate or distinguish the different tribes. This was some type of visual sign or marker, most likely a flag of some sort, that helped divide the Israelite camp into different sections.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **standards** or **banners**. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there.

The Levites would camp around the tabernacle of the testimony so they could protect the Israelites from the **wrath** of Yahweh. Wrath is the attitude that Yahweh has when he sees sin and evil. Yahweh punishes people when they do evil, although Yahweh is also always merciful. That is why the Levites camp around the tabernacle to protect the Israelites from entering the tabernacle when they are not pure.

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

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 1:48–54

Audio Content

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Numbers 2:1–17

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 2:1–17 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 2:1–17 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 2:1–17 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Moses and the Israelites are in the wilderness of Sinai. As you remember, the wilderness was an isolated area where there are few plants and where not many people settle. Moses has just taken a census of every Israelite tribe except for the Levites, because the Levites will be the caretakers and guards of the tabernacle, or the house of Yahweh. Yahweh is the personal name of God and is used throughout this passage. Now, Yahweh instructs Moses on how the Israelites are to set up camp each time they travel.

Yahweh speaks to Moses and Moses' brother Aaron. As you remember, Jacob, who Yahweh named Israel, had 12 sons, so the Israelites had 12 tribes of Jacob's descendants. Yahweh says the Israelites should camp by tribe and that each tribe will have a specific place to camp. Each tribe should mark their camp with a standard, or banner. This was some kind of visual marker that set each tribe apart in the camp.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, how do families, teams, or clans show pride in their group? How can you tell one group apart from another? What marks them as being different? Pause this audio here.

All the Israelite tribes will camp around the tabernacle, or the tent of meeting. The tabernacle refers to the moveable tent where the presence of Yahweh lived.

Stop here and look at a picture of the assembled tabernacle as a group. Pause this audio here.

The Israelites are to camp at a distance from the tabernacle. We learned in the previous passage that this was to prevent ritually unclean Israelites from getting too close to the tabernacle and risking Yahweh's anger. Any person who was not a Levite who got too close to the tabernacle would die.

Yahweh then instructs Moses on how the Israelite tribes will camp around the tabernacle. The way Yahweh organizes the Israelites is similar to how a person would organize an army, protecting the tabernacle in the center as they marched from place to place. Yahweh says that the tribes of Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun will camp on the east side of the tabernacle, or the side where the sun rises, where the entrance of the tabernacle was located. Though there are three tribes, Yahweh calls this section of the Israelites the camp of Judah. The chief of Judah was Nahshon, the son of a man named Amminadab. The tribe of Judah numbered 74,600. The chief of Issachar was Nethanel, the son of a man named Zuar. The tribe of Issachar numbered 54,400. The chief of Zebulun was Eliab, the son of a man named Helon. The tribe of Zebulun numbered 57,400. Together the three tribes numbered 186,400. Yahweh says the camp of Judah will be the first camp to start marching whenever the Israelites set out to travel.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people express or represent large numbers in your culture? Think of an object that each person has more than one of. How would you represent the number of these objects that your household or family has? How would you represent the number of these objects that your community has? How would you represent the number of these objects that your people group may have? Pause this audio here.

On the south side of the tabernacle will be the camp of Reuben consisting of the tribes of Reuben, Simeon, and Gad. Just like the camp on the east, the three tribes will camp next to each other and at a distance from the tabernacle. The chief of Reuben was Elizur, the son of a man named Shedeur. The tribe of Reuben numbered 46,500. The chief of Simeon was Shelumiel, the son of a man named Zurishaddai. The tribe of Simeon numbered 59,300. The chief of Gad was Eliasaph, the son of a man named Deuel. The tribe of Gad numbered 45,650.

Together the three tribes numbered 151,450. The camp of Reuben will be the second camp to begin marching when the Israelites move from place to place.

Stop here and look as a group at a diagram of the four camps set up around the tabernacle. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh interrupts his instructions about the four camps, one on each side of the tabernacle, to focus on the central place of the tabernacle. The Levites, who camp around the tabernacle and are responsible for carrying it, will march with the tabernacle in the center of the four camps of Israel. In this way, the Israelites are protecting the tabernacle on all sides. Yahweh says all the Israelite tribes are to travel in the same order as they camp, each in position under the appropriate standard, or banner. This means the four Israelite camps will march with the tabernacle in between the tribes in order to keep it safe.

In the next passage, Yahweh continues his instructions about the arrangement of the tribes around the tabernacle.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 2:1-17 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 4 scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh speaks to Moses and Aaron about where the tribes should camp in relation to the tabernacle, and how they should march.

In the second scene: The tribes of Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun camp on the east side of the tabernacle, where the entrance is. Each tribe has their own banner. They are camped some distance away from the tabernacle. They know they will march first.

In the third scene: The tribes of Reuben, Simeon, and Gad camp on the south side of the tabernacle some distance away. Each tribe has their own banner. They know they will march second.

In the fourth scene: The Levites camp around the tabernacle. They are ready to carry the tabernacle in the middle of the other tribes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- Levites
- Other Israelites

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

It is important to remember that Aaron, who is the brother of Moses, is the leader, or high priest, over the rest of the Levites. Both Moses and Aaron are descended from Levi.

Yahweh introduces the idea that each tribe will have a special place to camp around the tabernacle. They will need to camp under their standard, or banner.

Yahweh tells the tribes to use standards, or banners. These visual markers help the Israelites tell each tribe or family apart in the four different sections of the camp.

As you remember, Yahweh told the Levites to camp around the tabernacle to protect it. Yahweh now tells the other tribes to camp facing the tabernacle. This makes the tabernacle, or the house of Yahweh, the central part of the Israelite camp.

It is important to remember that the entrance to the tabernacle is on the east, or the side where the sun rises. This means the tribe of Judah plays an important role in protecting the entrance into the presence of Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, how do people describe directions based on the sun? How would you give directions to the nearest town? Pause this audio here.

All the numbers Moses reports for the tribes are consistent with the census he took earlier. The Israelite troops consisted of men who were 20 years old or older who could go to war.

It is important to remember that the Israelites are still traveling often as they make their way toward the land Yahweh has promised them. Yahweh provides structure and order for how the tribes should march as they travel and how they should camp when they rest.

It is important to notice that Moses interrupts his instructions about where the tribes will camp. Yahweh gives importance to where the Levites will be and the central positioning of the tabernacle. The Levites will carry the tabernacle in the middle of all the tribes.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Map out or build a model of how people in your culture structure their villages or cities. Where do important people live? Where do people build the most important or special buildings in a village or city? Pause this audio here.

The tribes will march under their banners in the same positions that they camp. We will receive more details about the marching order later in the book of Numbers.

In total, there will be four sections of camp, one on each of the four sides of the tabernacle, consisting of three tribes each.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 2:1-17 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
- Aaron
- Levites
- Other 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 speaking to Moses and Aaron about where the tribes should camp in relation to the tabernacle and how they should march.

You may want to act out or visualize the 12 tribes obeying Yahweh's commands in the background. You can do this by using different colored rocks or by drawing in the dirt the positions of the tribes.

Act out or show how the tribes of Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun camp on the east side of the tabernacle, where the entrance is. Each tribe has their own banner. They camp some distance away from the tabernacle. They know they will march first.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the tribe of Judah, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "We feel important. Yahweh chose us to guard the front of the tent and to lead our brothers," or, "I feel honored. I am proud to carry our banner in front of the tabernacle," or, "I can see why Yahweh wants us to go first since we have the most troops."

Act out or show how the tribes of Reuben, Simeon, and Gad camp on the south side of the tabernacle some distance away. Each tribe has their own banner. They know they will march second.

Act out or show how the Levites camp around the tabernacle. They are ready to carry the tabernacle in the middle of the other tribes.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Levites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel relief. I'm glad Yahweh has provided protection for us since we will be carrying all the pieces of the tabernacle," or, "I feel in awe. Even the pattern and order for how we camp and march show that Yahweh should be the center of our lives," or, "I feel honored. I will protect the tabernacle with my life."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 2:1-17 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Yahweh instructs Moses and Aaron on how the Israelites should set up camp and march. 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.

The **Israelites** refer to all of the descendants of Jacob, whose name was also Israel. Jacob had 12 sons, therefore the Israelites were divided into 12 tribes. Yahweh made a covenant, or special agreement, with the Israelites. The agreement was that the Israelites would obey all Yahweh's commandments, and Yahweh would bless the Israelites and make the Israelites a blessing for all the people on the earth. Use the same word or phrase for Israelites that you have used in previous passages. For more information on the Israelites, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh instructs the tribes to camp in **troops**, or groups of fighting men, under their **standard**, or banner. Be sure to use the same words or phrases for troops and for standard that you used in previous passages.

All of the tribes will camp on all four sides of the **tabernacle**, or the **tent of meeting**. The tabernacle, or the House of God, refers to a large tent that the Israelites moved from place to place. It was where the presence of Yahweh lived and where the Israelites worshiped Yahweh. This was a place where priests made sacrifices on

behalf of the people before David's son built the temple. Use the same word or phrase for tabernacle that you used in previous passages. For more information on tabernacle, refer to the Master Glossary.

After explaining where the tribes will camp in relation to the tabernacle, Yahweh talks about the camp of the **Levites**. The Levites were one of the 12 tribes of Israel. They were the descendants of Jacob's son, Levi. Moses and Aaron were the descendants of Levi. Yahweh specially chooses the Levites to serve him in the tabernacle and to care for it. The Levites were responsible for taking down, packing, and reassembling the tabernacle when the Israelites moved from place to place. The Levites were a warlike people who guarded the tabernacle from any sinful person getting too close. Use the same word or phrase for Levites that you have used in previous passages. For more information on the Levites, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 2:1-17

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (10890917 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Numbers 2:18–34

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 2:18–34 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 2:18–34 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 2:18–34 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Moses and the Israelites are in the wilderness of Sinai. Yahweh has just instructed Moses and Aaron on how the Israelites are to set up camp.

Stop here and look at a picture of the assembled tabernacle as a group. Pause this audio here.

As we know, the tribes of Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun will camp on the east side of the tabernacle, or the house of Yahweh. The tabernacle was a portable tent where the presence of Yahweh lived. This section on the east side of the tabernacle will be called the camp of Judah and their numbers total 186,400.

On the south side of the tabernacle will be the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Simeon. This section on the south side will be called the camp of Reuben and their numbers total 151,450. Yahweh also said the Levites will camp around the tabernacle in the center of the tribes and that the section or camp of Judah will march first and the camp of Reuben will march second when the Israelites move from place to place.

Now Yahweh continues to give those instructions to the rest of the tribes of Israel. On the west side of the tabernacle will be the camp of Ephraim. The camp of Ephraim consists of three tribes: Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin. Each tribe will camp beneath their family standard, or banner. Ephraim's chief was Elishama, who was the son of a man named Ammihud. The tribe of Ephraim numbered 40,500. Manasseh's chief was Gamaliel,

who was the son of Pedahzur. The tribe of Manasseh numbered 32,200. Benjamin's chief was Abidan, the son of Gideoni. The tribe of Benjamin numbered 35,400. The total number of the three tribes was 108,100 troops. All the troops on the west side will march third when the Israelites travel.

On the north side of the tabernacle will be the camp of Dan. The camp of Dan consists of three tribes: Dan, Asher, and Naphtali. Each tribe will camp beneath their family standard, or banner. The chief of Dan was Ahiezer, who was the son of a man named Ammishaddai. The tribe of Dan had 62,700 troops. The chief of Asher was Pagiel, who was the son of a man named Ocran. The tribe of Asher had 41,500 troops. The chief of Naphtali was Ahira, who was the son of a man named Enan. The tribe of Naphtali had 53,400 troops. In total, the three tribes on the north side of the tabernacle had 157,600 troops. These troops will be the fourth and last to begin marching when the Israelites travel.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Discuss what it is like in your culture when large groups of people march together, especially in battle. Who goes first and last? Why? Pause this audio here.

In summary, there are four Israelite camps, and each camp is made up of three tribes each. They will set up camp in a rectangular formation with the tabernacle in the middle.

Stop here and look at a diagram of how the Israelites set up the four camps around the tabernacle as a group. Pause this audio here.

In total, the Israelites had 603,550 troops. As you remember, these were men 20 years old or older who could go to war. All the troop numbers are the same numbers that Moses earlier recorded in the census. The census did not include the Levites because Yahweh specially chose them to be caretakers and guards of the tabernacle. Moses says again that the Israelite tribes did exactly as Yahweh commanded. Every tribe and family obeyed and set up the camp and marched in the order Yahweh told them to.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 2:18–34 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 4 scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh continues telling Moses and Aaron how the Israelites will camp and march.

In the second scene: The tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin camp on the west side of the tabernacle. Each tribe has their own banner. They camp some distance away from the tabernacle. They know they will be the third ones to march.

In the third scene: The tribes of Dan, Asher, and Naphtali camp on the north side of the tabernacle. Each tribe has their own banner. They camp some distance away from the tabernacle. They know they will march last.

In the fourth scene: Moses gives a summary of all the families. Just as Yahweh commanded, Moses does not include the Levites in this registration. The Israelites march and camp under their own banners. The Israelites do exactly as Yahweh told them to do.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- Levites
- Other Israelites

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

It is important to remember that this passage is a continuation of the instructions Yahweh gave to Moses and Aaron. Yahweh has already grouped the first six tribes; there are three tribes on Judah's side, the east side of the tabernacle, and three tribes on Reuben's side, the south side of the tabernacle.

Yahweh tells the tribes to use standards, or banners. These visual markers help the Israelites tell each tribe or family apart in the four different sections of the camp.

As you remember, Yahweh told the Levites to camp around the tabernacle to protect it. Yahweh tells the other tribes to camp facing the tabernacle. This makes the tabernacle, or the house of Yahweh, the central part of the Israelite camp.

Yahweh continues to describe who will camp on the next side of the tabernacle. After the south side, the next side is the west side, towards the setting sun. The three tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin will camp on the west side of the tabernacle. Yahweh tells Moses that the side of Ephraim will be the third ones marching when the Israelites travel.

The three tribes of Dan, Naphtali, and Asher will be on the north side of the tabernacle. Yahweh tells Moses that the side of Dan will be the last ones marching when the Israelites travel.

Moses summarizes the registration or enrollment of the troops of Israel. Just as Yahweh commanded, Moses does not count the Levites as part of the registration.

Moses says again that the Israelites did everything as Yahweh commanded. The Israelites camped and marched under their own banners. Moses repeats that the Israelites obeyed in order to show how important the Israelites' obedience to Yahweh is.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 2:18–34 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
- Levites
- Other 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 continuing to speak to Moses and Aaron about where the other six tribes should camp in relation to the tabernacle and how they should march.

You may want to act out or visualize the 12 tribes obeying Yahweh's commands in the background as you did in the previous passage. You can do this by using the same visualization tools that you used before. For example, using colored rocks or by drawing in the dirt the positions of the tribes around the tabernacle.

Act out or show the tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin camping on the west side of the tabernacle. Each tribe has their own banner. They are camping some distance away from the tabernacle. They know they will march third in line.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel relief. I do not have to organize the troops. Yahweh has organized the people for me," or, "I feel encouraged that my people are not complaining about what position they are in when marching," or, "I feel excited. We are getting ready to march towards the promise of Yahweh."

Act out or show the tribes of Dan, Asher, and Naphtali camping on the north side of the tabernacle. Each tribe has their own banner. They are camping some distance away from the tabernacle. They know they will march last.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing someone from the tribe of Simeon, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel confident in Yahweh. Yahweh has organized us in a way that ensures we can protect the tabernacle and each other," or, "I am curious. Is there any reason why Yahweh has set us up in such a specific way?" or, "I am happy to see that Yahweh has positioned us all around the tabernacle."

Act out Moses giving a summary of all the families. Just as Yahweh commanded, Moses does not include the Levites in this registration. The Israelites march and camp under their own banners. The Israelites do exactly as Yahweh told them to do.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Levites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel confident Yahweh is with us," or, "I feel responsible. We are in charge of protecting our own people from the anger of Yahweh," or, "Yahweh is powerful but still uses us and gives us an important role as warriors surrounding the tabernacle."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 2:18–34 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Yahweh continues giving Moses and Aaron instructions for where the Israelites will camp and march in relation to the tabernacle. Use the same name for Yahweh that you have used in previous passages.

Yahweh says each tribe will camp under their **standard**. Remember, this was a banner or visual marker that distinguished one tribe from another. Use the same word you used in previous passages.

Moses then gives a summary and says the total number of troops for the **Israelites** was 603,550. The Israelites refer to all of the descendants of Jacob. Jacob had 12 sons, therefore the Israelites were divided into 12 tribes. Yahweh made a covenant, or special agreement, with the Israelites. The agreement was that the Israelites would obey all Yahweh's commandments, and Yahweh would bless the Israelites and make the Israelites a blessing for all the people on the earth. Use the same word or phrase for Israelites and troops, or groups of fighting men, that you have used in previous passages. For more information on the Israelites, refer to the Master Glossary.

Just as Yahweh commanded, Moses did not count the **Levites** as part of the census. Use the same word or phrase for Levites that you have used in previous passages. For more information on the Levites, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses that the Israelites should march with their **clans** and **families**. Use the same words for clans and family groups that you have used in previous passages.

Moses emphasizes that the Israelites completed all of Yahweh's commands for camping and marching just as Yahweh instructed.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 2:18-34

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (9725593 KB)

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Numbers 3:1-13

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 3:1-13 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 3:1-13 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 3:1-13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Moses and the Israelites are in the wilderness of Sinai. Yahweh has just instructed Moses and Aaron on how the Israelite tribes will camp and march. Yahweh also told Moses not to count the Levites as part of the census of the Israelite troops. Now, Moses lists Aaron's descendants and describes the very special role of the Levites.

Moses begins to describe the descendants of his brother, Aaron, and himself by using the phrase "these are the names, or generations, of." This was a normal way to list a person's genealogy, or summarize their list of descendants. But here, Moses only lists two generations of their family. As you know, both Moses and Aaron belonged to the tribe of Levi, or the Levites. As was common in that culture, Moses lists Aaron's name first since Aaron was the older brother.

Moses gives the list of descendants as they were when Yahweh spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai. Mount Sinai is the mountain where Yahweh came down to speak to Moses during the Israelites' escape from Egypt. Though Yahweh spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai two different times, Moses is most likely referring to the second time after the Israelites made the golden calf. When the Israelites made the golden calf, the Levites showed their devotion to Yahweh by joining Moses and clearing the Israelite camp of people who were not on Yahweh's side.

Moses then names Aaron's four sons: Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. Once again, Moses lists Nadab first because he was the oldest son, or firstborn. Moses says Yahweh anointed Aaron and Aaron's sons as priests. Yahweh anoints someone when Yahweh gives that person a special task and has another person pour oil over that person's head. The oil represents Yahweh's Spirit. Yahweh anointed Aaron and his descendants as priests. This means he ordained, or gave them authority, to stand in between Yahweh and the people. Priests offered sacrifices on behalf of the people and served in the tabernacle to make it possible for people to have a good relationship with Yahweh.

Now Moses recalls a story that contrasts with the special purpose of the Levites. Aaron's two sons, Nadab and Abihu, died earlier in the wilderness of Sinai when they did not ceremonially burn incense in the way Yahweh commanded them to do. Unholy fire refers to the fact that the burnt incense they offered was unauthorized or forbidden. As you remember, fire from Yahweh's presence consumed or killed Nadab and Abihu. Because the brothers died before having children, they did not have any descendants. So Aaron's remaining two sons, Eleazar and Ithamar, served as priests with their father Aaron in charge.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, how do people react when a religious or spiritual leader dies unexpectedly while serving? What are some of the explanations people give for their death? Who would people choose to continue the leader's work? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses to gather all the Levites and to present the Levites before Aaron. Yahweh wants all the Levites to help Aaron with this work as Aaron's assistants in the tabernacle, or the house of Yahweh. The Levites must complete tasks on behalf of Aaron and the Israelites. This includes guarding the tabernacle, or tent of meeting, to prevent unholy people from getting too close. Yahweh says the Levites will be responsible for all the furnishings, or sacred objects, that belong to the tabernacle. The Levites' service at the tabernacle will be for the benefit of all the Israelites.

Moses emphasizes that Yahweh specially chose the Levites out of all the Israelites to help Aaron and Aaron's sons serve at the tabernacle. Although all the Levites will help guard and care for the tabernacle, only Aaron and Aaron's sons will serve as priests. Yahweh warns that if anyone other than Aaron and Aaron's descendants tries to do these priestly duties, that person will die.

Now Yahweh wants Moses to listen carefully to what he is about to say. Yahweh says that he is choosing the Levites to replace, or take the place of, all the firstborn sons of the Israelites. As you remember, all the firstborn sons of the Israelites belonged to Yahweh. The Israelites could only redeem, or buy back, their firstborn sons by offering a lamb to Yahweh in place of a son. Yahweh reminds the people of what he did in Egypt when he used the last plague to kill all of the firstborn sons in Egypt. Since that day, Yahweh consecrated, or set apart, the firstborn sons and animals as his own. But now, Yahweh says he will take the Levites as his own instead of the firstborn sons. Yahweh says the Levites belong to him because he is Yahweh.

Stop and discuss this question as a group: Discuss ways people in your culture can make exchanges or substitutes when a person needs to pay back a debt. How does someone feel when their substitute is accepted by the lender? Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 3:1-13 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 three scenes.

In the first scene: Moses speaks about Aaron's four sons: Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. Moses remembers how Nadab and Abihu died when they burned incense that Yahweh did not permit. They were consumed by fire from Yahweh's presence. Now, only Eleazar and Ithamar remain to help Aaron as priests.

In the second scene: Yahweh tells Moses to call all the Levites to the tabernacle to serve Aaron and his sons as their assistants. Yahweh says he has chosen the Levites out of all the Israelites to care for and guard the tabernacle and its furnishings. Yahweh says that only Aaron and his sons will serve as priests and that any person who tries to get too close to the tabernacle will die.

In the third scene: Yahweh tells Moses that the Levites will replace all of the firstborn sons of Israel that belong to Yahweh. Yahweh reminds Moses of when Yahweh killed the firstborns of the Egyptians. Since that time, Yahweh says all firstborn sons and animals of the Israelites belong to Yahweh. But now, the Levites will belong to Yahweh instead because he is Yahweh.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- Nadab
- Abihu
- Eleazar
- Ithamar
- The rest of the Levites
- The other Israelites

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

In this passage, Moses gives an account of the descendants of Aaron and Moses. It is important to remember that this passage only mentions the children of Aaron because Aaron was the oldest son.

It is important to remember that Moses is summarizing the instructions Yahweh gave Moses on Mount Sinai and in the wilderness of Sinai.

Previously, when Moses was on Mount Sinai, Yahweh spoke to Moses. At the moment of recording the names of Aaron's descendants, Aaron had four sons. But while the Israelites were in the wilderness of Sinai, Nadab and Abihu died. Nadab, who was the oldest son, and Abihu burnt incense before Yahweh in a way that Yahweh did not allow or permit. Because they offered unauthorized fire, Yahweh consumed both sons with fire from Yahweh's presence. Neither Nadab nor Abihu had sons, so they did not leave behind any descendants. This left Aaron's other two sons, Eleazar and Ithamar, to serve as priests under Aaron.

Now Yahweh tells Moses to call the Levites to Aaron. It's important to remember that Aaron was the high priest, so he was most likely at the tabernacle.

Yahweh says the Levites will be the assistants of the priests. The job of the Levites will be to serve around the tabernacle and to guard it. Yahweh also assigns the Levites the task of taking care of the furnishings, or sacred objects, inside the tabernacle.

The Levites will serve in the tabernacle on behalf of all the Israelites. Yahweh assigned the Levites to assist Aaron and his sons. It's important to note that while Yahweh assigns the Levites to guard and serve at the tabernacle, Yahweh only chooses Aaron and Aaron's sons to serve as priests.

Yahweh says that anyone who does not have authority, or anyone who is not a Levite, will die if they get too close to the tabernacle.

Moses uses repetition to emphasize and to show that it is important that Yahweh specially chose the Levites out of all the Israelites to help Aaron and Aaron's sons serve at the tabernacle.

Then Yahweh talks again with Moses. Yahweh tells Moses to pay close attention to the words that Yahweh is about to say. Yahweh explains to Moses that all the firstborn sons in Israel belong to Yahweh. Yahweh says that these firstborn sons opened the wombs of their mothers. When a child opens the womb of his mother, he is the child who comes first, or is the firstborn. This is the way that Yahweh talks about the oldest child.

Stop here and discuss the following question as a group: How do you talk about your oldest children in your culture? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh chose the Levites to replace the firstborn sons of Israel. This means all the Levites belong to Yahweh instead of the firstborn sons of the Israelites.

It is important to remember that Yahweh killed every firstborn in Egypt. But the Israelites followed the instructions Yahweh gave to Moses. Each Israelite family killed a lamb instead. Then each Israelite family put the blood of that lamb on the door frame of their house so that Yahweh would spare their firstborn son.

Yahweh reminds Moses of what happened in Egypt when Yahweh killed all the firstborn sons of the Egyptians. Instead of killing the Israelite firstborn sons and animals, Yahweh set them apart for himself. This means the firstborn sons of Israel belonged to Yahweh.

Yahweh finishes by saying that all the firstborn sons are his because he is Yahweh. This means that the Levites are now Yahweh's since they will replace the firstborn sons of Israel. So instead of the firstborn sons belonging to Yahweh, the Levites will act as substitutes who take the place of each firstborn son.

Yahweh reminds the Israelites who Yahweh is by repeating his name: I am Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Moses repeats information often to show that something in the story is important. Practice telling an important historical story from your culture. Pay attention to how you emphasize information or main points to show that something is important. Do you repeat the points? Do you change the tone of your voice? Do you slow down when you speak? 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

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 3:1–13 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
- Eleazar
- Ithamar
- The rest of the Levites
- The other 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 speaking about Aaron's four sons: Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. You can have the actor point to each of Aaron's sons in the background. Moses remembers how Nadab and Abihu died when they burned incense that Yahweh did not permit. They were consumed by fire from Yahweh's presence. Now, only Eleazar and Ithamar remain to help Aaron as priests.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Eleazar, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel scared. I remember what happened to my brothers. I know I must follow Yahweh's commands very carefully or I may die," or, "I feel determined. I don't want to disappoint Yahweh or my father. The Israelites are counting on us," or, "I am honored to help my people have a good relationship with Yahweh."

Act out Yahweh telling Moses to call all the Levites to the tabernacle to serve Aaron and Aaron's sons as their assistants.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Aaron, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I am grateful Yahweh is providing more people to help us with all the responsibilities of the tabernacle," or, "Being high priest is a big responsibility. I want to do my best to bring honor to Yahweh," or, "I am honored Yahweh specially chose our family to serve him."

Ask the person playing the Levites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I am honored that Yahweh chose us to help the priests," or, "This is a big job! I am overwhelmed!"

Act out Yahweh saying he has chosen the Levites out of all the Israelites to care for and guard the tabernacle and its furnishings. Yahweh says that only Aaron and Aaron's sons will serve as priests and that any person who tries to get too close to the tabernacle will die.

Act out Yahweh telling Moses that the Levites will replace all the firstborn sons of Israel who belong to Yahweh.

One way to represent this is to have the actors for the firstborns standing by Yahweh. All of the actors playing Levites can come to stand by Yahweh instead of the firstborns, and the firstborns can go back to stand with the other Israelites.

Act out Yahweh reminding Moses of when he killed the firstborns of the Egyptians. Since that time, Yahweh says all firstborn sons and animals of the Israelites belong to him. But now, the Levites will belong to Yahweh instead, because he is Yahweh.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "Yahweh always provides. We are so thankful he is providing the Levites in place of the firstborn sons," or, "The Israelites will be happy to hear that Yahweh provided a way for them to keep their firstborn sons through the Levites," or, "I want the people to remember what Yahweh has done for us and how he freed us from Egypt."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 3:1-13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Moses talks about Aaron's descendants, or **generations**, from the time that **Yahweh** appeared 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.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **generations**. Look up 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.

Aaron had four sons and Yahweh **anointed** them to be priests. Yahweh anoints someone when he gives them a special task and has another person pour oil over that person's head. The oil represents Yahweh's Spirit.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **anoint**. Look up 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.

Yahweh specially chose Aaron and Aaron's sons to be **priests** for the Israelites. A priest served in the tabernacle to help the Israelites worship Yahweh. Priests were responsible for offering sacrifices to Yahweh on behalf of the people. Aaron was the first high priest of the Israelites, and Aaron's sons were the first priests. Although all of the Levites, the tribe of Levi, helped at the tabernacle, Yahweh only chose the sons of Aaron to be priests.

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.

Aaron's two oldest sons died in the desert, or **wilderness**, of Sinai. Use the same word for wilderness that you have used in previous passages, and remember that wilderness is in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh says he wholly gives, or specially chooses, the **Levites** out of all the Israelites, or sons of Israel. The Levites were one of the 12 tribes of Israel. They were the descendants of Jacob's son, Levi. Moses and Aaron were the descendants of Levi. Yahweh specially chooses the Levites to serve Yahweh in the tabernacle and to care for it. The Levites did this work for the entire congregation, or community, of Israel. Use the same words or phrases for Levites and congregation that you have used in previous passages. For more information on the Levites, refer to the Master Glossary.

The **Israelites**, or sons of Israel, refer to all of the descendants of Abraham. Use the same word or phrase for Israelites as you have used in previous passages. For more information on the Israelites, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh says the Levites will serve under Aaron at the **tabernacle**, or the **tent of meeting**. The tabernacle, or the House of God, refers to a large tent that the Israelites moved from place to place. Use the same word or phrase for tabernacle, or tent of meeting, that you used in previous passages. For more information on tabernacle, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses that the Levites will replace all of the Israelite firstborn sons that belong to Yahweh. This means Yahweh **consecrates** the Levites for Yahweh's own. Consecrate means to set apart or dedicate someone as holy and belonging to God.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **consecrate**. Look up consecrate 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

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.

Numbers 3:1-13

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Numbers 3:14–20

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 3:14–20 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 3:14–20 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 3:14–20 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Moses and the Israelites are in the wilderness of Sinai. Yahweh has just revealed Yahweh's special purpose for the Levites. The Levites will both guard and serve at the tabernacle, or the house of Yahweh. They will also now belong to Yahweh, taking the place of all of the firstborn sons of Israel. Now, Yahweh commands Moses to take a census of, or officially count, the Levites.

As you remember, the Levites are the descendants of Levi, one of the 12 sons of Jacob. Yahweh specially chose the Levites to help Aaron and Aaron's sons serve at the tabernacle. Some of the duties of the Levites included guarding the tabernacle, caring for the sacred objects used inside the tabernacle, and carrying the tabernacle from place to place. Yahweh said that the Levites belong to Yahweh.

In this passage, Yahweh tells Moses to number, or count, all the Levite men who are one month of age or older. Later, Moses will take another census of the Levites. The later census counts the men who are able to immediately help carry and care for the tabernacle and the items in it. This census counts all males one month of age and older, because these are the Levites who will all one day have a part in helping guard the tabernacle.

Yahweh tells Moses that Moses needs to list the Levites by clan and by families. The clans were made up of families, or smaller groups of relatives. Moses obeys Yahweh's command and counts the Levites according to the word of Yahweh, or exactly as Yahweh said.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people refer to large groups of relatives where you live? Describe a family group in your culture. What makes a group of people a family in your culture? Pause this audio here.

Levi had three sons whom he named Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. Gershon's clans included Libni and Shimei. Kohath had four clans: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. And Merari had two clans: Mahli and Mushi. In total, the Levites consisted of eight clans that Moses listed according to Levi's sons' names—Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

In the next passage, Moses will give the numbers of each Levite clan and explain how Yahweh wants them to guard the tabernacle.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 3:14–20 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 two scenes.

In the first scene: Moses and the Israelites are in the wilderness of Sinai. As you remember, the wilderness was an isolated area where there are few plants and where not many people settle. Yahweh commands Moses to count the Levites according to their clans and father's houses. It is important to remember that a clan refers to a larger group of relatives and is composed of several houses or families. Moses obeys and counts the Levites just as Yahweh said.

In the second scene: Levi's three sons—Gershon, Kohath, and Merari—stand with their families divided by clans behind them.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Levites
- Gershon
- Kohath
- Merari

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

It is important to remember that Moses is summarizing the instructions Yahweh gave Moses in the wilderness of Sinai.

In this passage, Moses officially counts the Levites, or the descendants of Levi. It's important to remember that both Moses and Aaron are Levites.

Moses counts all of the Levite males who are one month old or older by clan and by their father's house. It is important to remember that a clan refers to a larger group of relatives and is composed of several houses or families.

Moses repeats the fact that "Moses counted them" to show how important Yahweh's role for the Levites is and to show that the Levites' census is different from the more general census of the rest of the Israelites. Moses is showing that Moses is obeying Yahweh's instructions because those instructions are important.

Moses then lists the three sons of Levi: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. He also lists the clans of each son. One way you can show the census visually is by using rocks, sticks, shells, or other small objects. You can group them by the same kind, color, or size to represent the different clans behind each son of Levi.

In total, Moses counted the eight Levite clans, which consisted of families.

The phrase "these are the clans..." is the summary of the census.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 3:14–20 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
- Levites
- Gershon
- Kohath
- Merari

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 talking to Yahweh in the wilderness of Sinai. Yahweh commands Moses to count the Levites according to their clans and father's houses. Moses obeys and counts the Levites just as Yahweh said.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel curious. I wonder why Yahweh wants me to count the Levites according to their house and clan," or, "I will do exactly as Yahweh commanded. I know he has good reasons for the order in which he asks things to be done," or, "I am proud that Yahweh is honoring my tribe by asking us to care for his special house."

Act out Levi's three sons, Gershon, Kohath, and Merari, standing with their families divided by clans behind them.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Gershon, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel content. I am glad Yahweh is counting the Levites too so that our descendants will have a record of our people," or, "I feel curious. I wonder what Yahweh's purpose is for counting us," or, "I feel honored. Whatever Yahweh assigns us to do, we will be honored to do it."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 3:14–20 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Yahweh speaks to Moses in the **wilderness** of Sinai. Remember, Yahweh is the personal name for God, and it is used throughout this passage. Use the same name for Yahweh and the same word for wilderness that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh and wilderness, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh instructs Moses to number, or count, all of the **Levite** males who are one month old or older. The Levites were one of the 12 tribes of Israel. They were the descendants of Jacob's son, Levi. Yahweh specially chose the Levites to serve him in the tabernacle and to care for it. Use the same word or phrase for Levites that you have used in previous passages. For more information on the Levites, refer to the Master Glossary.

So Moses numbers the Levites according to the **Word of Yahweh**, or just as Yahweh commanded Moses. The Word of Yahweh means everything that Yahweh tells people. In this case, Yahweh is speaking to the people through Moses.

Stop here and discuss as a group what phrase you will use for the **Word of Yahweh**. Look up Word 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 counts the Levites by **clans**, which were divided into their father's houses. Remember that a clan refers to a larger group of relatives and is composed of several houses or families. The Hebrew word for "house" in this context refers to an extended family, which includes three or four generations. Use the same words for clans and families, or father's houses, that you have used in previous passages.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 3:14–20

Audio Content

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Numbers 3:21–26

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 3:21–26 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 3:21–26 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 3:21–26 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Moses and the Israelites are in the wilderness of Sinai. In the previous passages, Yahweh told Moses to take a census of the Levites, or the descendants of Levi. As we learned previously, Levi had three sons: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. Now, Moses reports the number of Gershon's clans and what their camping position will be in relation to the tabernacle.

As you remember, Yahweh set apart the Levites for the special purpose of caring for and guarding the tabernacle, or the house of Yahweh. Moses has already officially counted the rest of the Israelites and given them their positions around the tabernacle for camping and marching.

Gershon was the ancestor of the Gershonites, who divided into two clans, Libni and Shimei. The descendants of Libni were the Libnites, while the descendants of Shimei were the Shimeites. Moses lists the total of the Gershonites as 7,500 males who were at least one month of age.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How do people in your culture talk about and respect their ancestors? How do people pass down names in your culture? Pause this audio here.

Moses says the Gershonites will camp on the west side of the tabernacle, or the side that faces the setting sun. As you remember, the camp of Ephraim will also be on the west side of the tabernacle. However, the Levites will camp closer to the tabernacle and will be in between the camp of Ephraim and the tabernacle. In this way, the Levites will serve both to protect the tabernacle and to protect the Israelites from Yahweh's wrath. Moses says the leader or chief of the Gershonite clans is Eliasaph, the son of a man named Lael.

Stop here and look as a group at a diagram of the tabernacle and Levite camping positions and guard duties. Pause this audio here.

Moses then lists the Gershonites' guard duties and responsibilities for the tabernacle. These are tasks the Gershonites will do continually as the Israelites travel. They are also responsibilities that only the Levites can do since all the parts of the tabernacle are holy, or set apart for Yahweh. The Gershonites will be responsible for the tabernacle, or the tent with its covering. This includes both an inner and outer covering. The tent of meeting and the tabernacle refer to the same "House of Yahweh," or the place where Yahweh lives among his people.

Stop here and look as a group at a picture of the assembled tabernacle with its covering and courtyard. Pause this audio here.

The Gershonites will also be responsible for the screen that serves as the door or curtain of the tabernacle entrance. They will care for the hangings of the court or courtyard, or the curtain that forms a fence around the tabernacle and its courtyard. They will also be responsible for the screen that serves as the door of the courtyard. This is the curtain that covers the entrance to the tabernacle's courtyard where the altar is. Remember, this altar refers to the place in front of the entrance of the tabernacle where the Israelites would make sacrifices to Yahweh. It does not refer to the incense altar inside the tabernacle. Finally, the Gershonites will care for the cords or the ropes that hold the tabernacle's coverings in place. The Levites will tie the ropes to tent pegs and then drive the pegs into the ground.

Stop here and look as a group at pictures of:

- the tabernacle's entrance curtain,
- the hanging curtains of the courtyard,
- the entrance curtain to the tabernacle courtyard,
- the courtyard altar,
- and cords with tent pegs.

Pause this audio here.

Moses says the Gershonites will be responsible for setting these items up and taking them down.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 3:21–26 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: Moses counts the males of Gershon who are one month old or older and then directs them to camp on the west side, or the back, of the tabernacle. Moses says the chief of the Gershonites is a man named Eliasaph.

In the second scene: The Gershonites guard and care for the tabernacle coverings, the tabernacle's entrance curtain, the hangings of the court, the entrance curtain to the tabernacle courtyard, and the cords with tent pegs.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Gershonites, including the Libnites and Shimeites
- Eliasaph

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

It is important to remember that Yahweh chose the Levites to serve Aaron and the whole community of Israelites by caring for and serving in the tabernacle, or the house of Yahweh.

It is important to remember that Yahweh told Moses to list, or officially count, all the Levites because Yahweh chose them to serve.

It is important to remember that Yahweh told Moses to organize the Levites by family and clan.

It is important to remember that Moses repeats the same style of description for each of the three descendants of Levi. Moses first mentions the clans and who they belong to, then the number of males one month old or older. Then Moses mentions where each clan camps and who leads each clan. To end each official counting, Moses lists each group's responsibilities for the tabernacle.

Moses explains that the father's house, Gershon, consisted of two clans: the Libnites and the Shimeites.

Moses counts the total of Gershonite males who were one month old or older. The total was 7,500 people.

Moses explains that the clans of Gershon will camp behind the tabernacle, or on the west side. Moses says Eliasaph the son of Lael was the leader of the Gershonites. Moses once again uses the word "camping," an action that the Gershonites will do many times as the Israelites move from place to place.

It is important to notice that Moses uses both terms, the tabernacle and the tent of meeting, to refer to the same structure. However, in this passage they have slightly different meanings. More specifically, tabernacle refers to Yahweh's dwelling place under the tent coverings while the tent of meeting refers to the whole structure.

Moses explains that the Gershonites' function is to guard and care for the tabernacle coverings, the tabernacle's entrance curtain, the hanging curtains of the courtyard that surrounded the tabernacle, the entrance curtain to the tabernacle courtyard, and the cords with tent pegs. It is important to remember that the hanging curtains of the courtyard surrounded the burnt offering altar that was in the courtyard. This means the Gershonites will assemble and disassemble these items every time the Israelites move to a new place. They will also be responsible for carrying them as the Israelites journey.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 3:21–26 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:

- Moses
- Gershonites, including the Libnites and Shimeites
- Eliasaph

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 counting the males of Gershon who are one month old or older, a total number of 7,500. Moses then directs them to camp on the west side, or the back, of the tabernacle. Moses says the leader, or chief, of the Gershonites is a man named Eliasaph.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Eliasaph, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I am honored to be in charge of both clans of my people," or, "I am determined. We will guard the west side of the tabernacle well. No one will get past us," or, "I feel in awe. I wonder what it will be like camping so close to the presence of Yahweh."

Act out Moses assigning the Gershonites to care for different parts of the tabernacle. This can be represented by the actor for Moses bringing the different items and placing them in the hands of the Gershonites. The Gershonites protect and care for the tabernacle coverings, the tabernacle's entrance curtain, the hanging curtains of the courtyard, the entrance curtain to the tabernacle courtyard, and the cords with tent pegs.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Gershonites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel thoughtful. This will be a lot of cloth to carry, but I must care for it well because it is set apart for Yahweh," or, "Right now this seems like a huge responsibility, but I am sure once we set up the tabernacle a few times, it will get easier each time," or, "I am in awe of how organized Yahweh is. He has specific responsibilities for all of us."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 3:21–26 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Moses reports the number of males older than one month in Gershon's clans. As you remember, a **clan** refers to a larger group of relatives and consists of several houses, or families. Use the same word or phrase for clans that you used in previous passages.

Moses says the Gershonites will camp on the west side of the tabernacle. Although Moses uses both the **tabernacle** and the **tent of meeting** to refer to the same structure, they have slightly different meanings in this passage. Here tabernacle more specifically means Yahweh's dwelling place under the tent coverings. He also says the Gershonites will be responsible for the tent and its coverings. The tabernacle was a large portable tent where the presence of Yahweh lived. Tabernacle, or the tent of meeting, refers to the place where people could meet Yahweh safely and worship him. The Gershonites will be responsible for guarding and caring for the inner and outer coverings of the tabernacle. Use the same words and phrases for tabernacle and tent of meeting that you have used in previous passages, and remember that tabernacle is in the Master Glossary.

The Gershonites will also be responsible for the tabernacle's entrance curtain, the hanging curtains of the courtyard, the entrance curtain to the tabernacle courtyard that surrounds the courtyard altar, and cords with tent pegs. Here, the courtyard altar was bronze and it was the place where the Israelites killed and burned animals as an offering to God.

Stop here and review all of the words you have used in previous passages about the tabernacle and the tabernacle's coverings. Look at a picture of the assembled tabernacle if needed. Use the same words in this passage for curtains and other parts of the tabernacle as you have used in previous books of the Bible, especially in Exodus chapters 35–38. Discuss as a group what word you will use for **altar**. Look at a picture of the tabernacle courtyard altar as a group if needed. Use the same word or phrase for altar as you used in previous books of the Bible. For more information on altar, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 3:21–26

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (9520786 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Numbers 3:27–32

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 3:27–32 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 3:27–32 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 3:27–32 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Moses and the Israelites are in the wilderness of Sinai. Yahweh commanded Moses to count the Levites carefully by name of clan and name of the father for each family group. As we know, Levi had three sons: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. In the previous passage, Moses counted the Gershonites. Now, Moses reports the number of Kohath's clans and what their responsibilities will be for the tabernacle.

All of the Levites have the special purpose of caring for and guarding the tabernacle, or the house of Yahweh. As you remember, both Moses and Aaron are descendants of Kohath. Moses reports the number and responsibilities of the Kohathites in the same way Moses reported the Gershonites. First, Moses lists the descendants of Kohath by clans. This is another way for Moses to show that Moses obeyed Yahweh's commands. The descendants of Kohath consisted of four clans: the Amramites, the Izharites, the Hebronites, and the Uzzielites.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How do people in your culture describe the relationship between an ancestor and their descendant? In your culture, how important is it to know who your ancestors are? Pause this audio here.

Moses lists the total of the Kohathites as 8,600. This number makes Moses' later count of the Levites slightly different. We are not sure why the numbers are different. As you remember, this was an official counting of males who were one month old or older.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How do you count people in your culture? How important are exact numbers and total counts of people? Pause this audio here.

Moses says the Kohathites will camp on the south side of the tabernacle, or the left side of the entrance if you are facing the tabernacle from the outside. This is the side the Kohathites will guard and where they will camp every time they set up the tabernacle. As you remember, the camp of Reuben will also be on the south side of the tabernacle. However, the Levites will camp closer to the tabernacle and will be in between the camp of Reuben and the tabernacle. In this way, the Kohathites will guard the tabernacle from anyone getting too close.

Stop here and look as a group at a diagram of the tabernacle and Levite camping positions and guard duties. Pause this audio here.

Moses says the family leader, or chief, of the Kohathite clans is Elizaphan, the son of a man named Uzziel. Moses then lists the Kohathites' guard duties, or responsibilities, for the sanctuary. The word sanctuary means a holy place, or a place that is set apart for the worship of God. Here, sanctuary refers to the tabernacle. These are tasks the Kohathites will do continually as the Israelites travel. Although Kohath is not the oldest son, his descendants receive the greatest honor of caring for the most sacred or holy things in the tabernacle.

The Kohathites are responsible for carrying the ark of the covenant, or the sacred box where Moses keeps the stone tablets that represent Yahweh's covenant, or binding promise. The Kohathites will also carry the table where the Israelites place the sacred loaves of bread that symbolize Yahweh's presence and provision. They will also carry the golden lampstand with its seven oil lamps, and the altars. As you know, there are two altars, one for sacrificing animals in the courtyard and one for burning incense inside the tent. The Kohathites will also carry the utensils the priests use to serve in the sanctuary, or Holy Place, and the curtain at the entrance to the Most Holy Place. This is the curtain that separates the two rooms in the tabernacle and blocks off Yahweh's presence from everyone but the high priest. Remember, only the priests can touch the holy items used inside the Holy Place of the tabernacle. First the priests cover the items and pack them up for moving, and then the Kohathites carry the items while the Israelites travel. The Kohathites are responsible for guarding these holy items while they were moving.

Stop here and as a group look at pictures of

- the ark of the covenant,
- the table,
- the lampstand,
- the two altars,
- the priestly utensils,
- and the entrance curtain to the Most Holy Place.

Pause this audio here.

Moses says the chief leader of the Levites was Eleazar, one of the sons of Aaron. This means that Eleazar is the leader of not just the Kohathites but of all the Levites. Both Aaron and Aaron's sons were priests. As you remember, Yahweh appointed the priests to offer sacrifices on behalf of the people inside the tabernacle. Priests were the only ones allowed to enter and serve Yahweh in the tabernacle. The rest of the Levites' duties had to do with guarding the outside of the tabernacle as well as the physical labor of assembling, disassembling, and carrying the different parts of the tabernacle. Yahweh appointed Eleazar to be in charge of caring for the sanctuary, or of carrying out the priestly duties in the Holy Place. Since the Kohathites would be in more danger than the other Levite clans, because they were responsible for the most holy items, Eleazar had a very specific responsibility to ensure they were all safe.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 3:27–32 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 visualize this passage.

This passage has three scenes.

In the first scene: Moses counts the males of Kohath who are one month old or older and then directs them to camp on the south side of the tabernacle. Moses says the chief of the Kohathites is a man named Elizaphan.

In the second scene: The Kohathites guard and carry the most holy tabernacle items: the ark of the covenant, the table, the lampstand, the two altars, the priestly utensils used inside the tabernacle, and the entrance curtain to the Holy of Holies, or Most Holy Place.

In the third scene: Aaron's son, Eleazar, is a priest who is in charge of all the Levites. Eleazar is responsible for everything that happens inside the tabernacle in the Holy Place.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Kohathites, including the Amramites, Izharites, Hebronites, and Uzzielites
- Elizaphan
- Eleazar, the son of Aaron
- Priests

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

Moses is taking a census, or officially counting, of all the Levites and assigning different tabernacle responsibilities to each family group.

As you remember, Kohath was one of Levi's three sons. Moses and Aaron belong to the Kohathites.

It is important to remember that Moses repeats the same style of description for each of the three descendants of Levi. Moses first mentions the clans and who they belong to, then the number of males one month old or older. Then Moses mentions where each clan camps and who leads each clan. To end each official counting, Moses lists each group's responsibilities for the tabernacle.

Moses explains that Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel are the clans that belong to the Kohathites. In total they are 8,600 males one month old or older. Their responsibility is to take care of the sanctuary, or the tabernacle.

The Kohathites will camp on the south side of the tabernacle. As you remember, Moses uses the word "camp" to describe the action that the Kohathites will do every time the Israelites travel. The name of the Kohathite leader is Elizaphan. Elizaphan is the son of Uzziel.

Moses explains that the four clans, Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel are responsible for taking care of the ark of the covenant, the table, the lampstand, the altars, the different objects that were used in the sanctuary, and the inner curtain.

It is important to know that the Kohathites are only allowed to carry the most holy items after the priests cover them and prepare them for travel. The Kohathites are not allowed to touch these items.

Eleazar is one of the sons of Aaron. Aaron is the high priest. Eleazar is the leader of all the Levites. As a priest, Eleazar can go in and out of the tabernacle and oversee the Levites who guard the sanctuary.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 3:27–32 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
- Kohathites, including the Amramites, Izharites, Hebronites, and Uzzielites
- Elizaphan
- Eleazar, the son of Aaron
- Priests

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 counting the males of Kohath who are one month old or older. The total is 8,600. Moses tells them to camp on the south side of the tabernacle. Moses says the chief of the Kohathites is a man named Elizaphan.

Act out the Kohathites guarding and carrying the most holy tabernacle items: the ark of the covenant, the table, the lampstand, the two altars, the priestly utensils used inside the tabernacle, and the entrance curtain to the Holy of Holies.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing a Kohathite, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel worried. This is a huge responsibility. What happens if the covering slips and I accidentally touch one of the holy items?" or, "I feel honored. We will guard and carry the ark, the place where Yahweh dwells. I will guard it with my life," or, "I feel thankful. I am glad the priests are responsible for covering the most holy items before we carry them."

Act out Aaron's son, Eleazar, being in charge of all the Levites. Eleazar is responsible for all the priest's work inside the tabernacle.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Eleazar, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel honored. I will do my best to follow all of Yahweh's commandments just like Yahweh said," or, "I am thankful I have my dad to help me," or, "I feel in awe. I can't believe I get to represent the people before Yahweh."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 3:27–32 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

The descendants of Kohath consisted of four **clans**, or large family groups. Be sure to use the same word for clan that you used in previous passages.

The Kohathites are responsible for caring for the **sanctuary**. The word sanctuary is a general word for a place that is holy, or a place that is set apart for the worship of God. Here, the sanctuary is a general word for the tabernacle.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **sanctuary**. Look up sanctuary 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 Kohathites will set up camp on the south side of the **tabernacle**, which is a portable tent where the Israelites worship Yahweh and where Yahweh lives among his people. Use the same word for tabernacle that you used in previous passages. For more information on the tabernacle, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Kohathites will carry the most holy objects, or the objects the priests use inside of the tabernacle.

Stop here and review as a group the words you have used in previous books for the **ark of the covenant**, the table, the lampstand, the **altars**, the utensils, and the entrance curtain or screen to the Most Holy Place. For more information about the ark of the covenant and altar, refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh appointed one of Aaron's sons, Eleazar, as the chief leader of all the Levites. Eleazar was a **priest**. Priests served in the tabernacle by offering sacrifices on behalf of the people and teaching them how to live. They performed rituals that symbolized that people became clean. Priests were in between Yahweh and people, and they made it possible for people to have a good relationship with Yahweh. Use the same word for priest that you used in previous passages. For more information on priest, refer to the Master Glossary.

Eleazar was responsible for the care of the sanctuary. Here, the sanctuary specifically refers to the inside of the tabernacle, or the room known as the Holy Place. Eleazar was in charge of all the priestly duties inside the Holy Place.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 3:27-32

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (10789494 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Numbers 3:33-39

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 3:33–39 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 3:33–39 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 3:33–39 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Moses and the Israelites are in the wilderness of Sinai. In the previous passages, Yahweh told Moses to take a census of, or to count, the Levites, or the descendants of Levi. As we learned previously, Levi had three sons: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. Now, Moses reports the number of Merari's clans and what their camping position will be in relation to the tabernacle.

As you remember, Yahweh set apart the Levites for the special purpose of caring for and guarding the tabernacle, or the house of Yahweh. Merari was the ancestor of the Merarites, who divided into two clans, or large family groups: Mahli and Mushi. Moses lists the total of the Merarites as 6,200 males who are at least one month of age.

Moses says the leader, or chief, of the Merarite clans is Zuriel, the son of a man named Abihail. Moses says the Merarites will camp on the north side of the tabernacle. As you remember, the camp of Dan will also be on the north side of the tabernacle. However, the Levites will camp closer to the tabernacle and will be in between the camp of Dan and the tabernacle. In this way, the Levites will both guard the tabernacle and protect the Israelites from getting too close.

Stop here and look as a group at a diagram of the tabernacle and Levite camping positions and guard duties. Discuss this question as a group: How do your people organize themselves to protect or guard something that is valuable? Pause this audio here.

Moses then lists the Merarites' guard duties and responsibilities for the tabernacle. These are tasks the Merarites will do continually as the Israelites travel. They are also responsibilities that only the Levites can do since all the parts of the tabernacle are holy or set apart for Yahweh. The Merarites will be responsible for the frames of the tabernacle, the crossbars, the posts, the bases, all the framework equipment, the courtyard posts with their bases, and the tent pegs and ropes.

Stop here and look as a group at a picture of the tabernacle frames, crossbars, posts, bases, courtyard posts with their bases, and tent pegs and rope. Pause this audio here.

As you remember, the frames, or wooden planks, crossbars, posts, and bases all made up the framework of the tabernacle. The wooden posts slotted into metal bases. All the equipment could refer to fittings or accessories for the framework. The Merarites will also be responsible for all the posts that support the courtyard wall as well as the ropes and metal pegs that help support the curtains on the courtyard wall. This means the Merarites will carry, set up, and take these items down every time the Israelites move to a new place.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Where you live, if a family has to move to a new place, how do they bring their things? Discuss how people pack and organize their things in your culture. Who carries the most important or valuable things, and why? Pause this audio here.

Then Moses says that he, Aaron, and Aaron's sons will camp on the east side in front of the tent of meeting, or the tabernacle. The entrance of the tabernacle was on the east side and it faced the sunrise. This was the place of the highest honor. As you remember, Yahweh chose Aaron and Aaron's sons to be priests, or to be in between the Israelites and Yahweh. The priests will make sacrifices on behalf of the people so the people can have a good relationship with Yahweh. Only Moses, Aaron, and Aaron's sons can actually enter the tabernacle. Only they can do the duties, like performing sacrifices, in the sanctuary, or the holy place. Moses and the priests will camp in front of the sanctuary on behalf of all the Israelites. In this way, they will protect the Israelites from getting too close to the sanctuary and dying. Yahweh emphasizes that anyone who is not a priest or Levite who approaches the sanctuary will die.

When Moses and Aaron finish counting all the Levites, the Levites total 22,000 males who are one month old or older. You will remember that this number is 300 people short based on the total of each clan.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 3:33–39 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 continues his census of the Levites. Moses explains that the clans of the Mahlites and Mushites belonged to Merari. All the male descendants of Merari who are one month old or older are 6,200. The leader of the Merarites is Zuriel, the son of Abihail. Moses tells the Merarites to camp on the north side of the tabernacle.

In the second scene: Moses lists the duties of the Merarites. The Merarites will take care of the frames of the tabernacle, the bars, the pillars, the bases, and all the accessories. Moses also explains that the Merarites will guard the pillars around the court and their bases, cords, and pegs.

In the third scene: Moses explains that Moses, Aaron, and Aaron's sons, the priests, are guarding the tabernacle to protect the people of Israel. They are camping on the east side of the tabernacle in the direction of the sunrise. Anyone who comes too close to the tabernacle has to be killed. Moses says that he counted all the Levites and their total was 22,000.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Aaron
- Aaron's sons
- Merarites, including the Mahlites and Mushites
- Zuriel
- The rest of the Levites

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

It is important to remember that Moses repeats the same style of description for each of the three descendants of Levi. Moses first mentions the clans and who they belong to, then the number of males one month old or older. Then Moses mentions where they camp and finally who is the leader. To end each official counting, Moses lists the tabernacle responsibilities of that group.

Moses continues his census of the Levites. Moses has already counted and described the function of the other two families that are descendants of Levi. Now Moses counts the descendants of Merari.

Moses lists the Merarite males who are one month old or older; they total 6,200. The clans under Merari are Mahli and Mushi. Remember that clans are large family groups.

Moses chooses Zuriel, the son of Abihail, as the leader of the Merarites. Moses says the Merarites will camp on the north side of the tabernacle. The Merarites will take responsibility for the frames of the tabernacle, the crossbars, the posts, the bases, all the framework equipment, the courtyard posts and their bases, and the tent pegs and ropes. This means they will carry, assemble, and disassemble all these parts of the tabernacle every time the Israelites move from place to place.

It is important to notice that Moses has now finished counting and mentioning all the groups that belong to each son of Levi.

It is important to remember that the entrance of the tabernacle always faces east towards the horizon where the sun rises.

It is important to remember that the camp of Judah was also camping on the east side of the tabernacle, but the camp of the priests was closer to the tabernacle.

Moses, Aaron, and Aaron's sons camp on the east side of the tabernacle, towards the sunrise. Aaron is the high priest and Aaron's sons are priests. Along with Moses, they represent the Israelites before Yahweh and are the only ones who can enter the tabernacle.

It is important to know that all the responsibilities of the Levites are considered the job that they have to do; it is their work. But for the priests, protecting the sanctuary is different from work. Protecting the sanctuary is Yahweh's calling on the life of the priests. It is something that they have to do to fulfill the special role that Yahweh gave them.

Moses, Aaron, and Aaron's sons guard the sanctuary to protect the Israelites. If any outsider comes too close, they would have to kill that person.

Moses and Aaron list the Levites just as Yahweh commanded. The total of the Levites males who are one month old or older is 22,000. You will remember that this number is 300 people short when you add together the total number of each clan. It is possible that these numbers are not exact numbers.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 3:33–39 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
- Aaron's Sons
- Merarites, including the Mahlites and Mushites
- Zuriel
- The rest of the Levites

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 counting the descendants of Merari. The clans that belong to Merari are the Mahlites and the Mushites. Moses only counts the males that are one month old or older. The total number is 6,200. Moses chooses Zuriel as the leader of the Merarites. Zuriel is the son of Abihail. Zuriel may represent his leadership by walking in front of the two clans. You can use different colors to distinguish each clan. The Merarites camp on the north side of the tabernacle.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Zuriel, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I'm honored to be the leader of our family clans," or, "I feel anxious. This is a lot of people to be responsible for," or, "I feel curious. I wonder what parts of the tabernacle we will take care of."

Act out the Merarites carrying and taking care of the frames of the tabernacle, the crossbars, the posts, the bases, all the framework equipment, the courtyard posts and their bases, and the tent pegs and ropes.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing a Merarite Levite, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel amazed. Yahweh thinks every peg used for the courtyard of the tabernacle is important," or, "There are so many different pieces, but all of them are important for the whole," or, "I feel thoughtful. Yahweh has such specific responsibilities for each of our families, but we must all work together to assemble the tabernacle each time."

Act out Moses, Aaron, and the sons of Aaron camping on the east side of the camp at the entrance of the tabernacle. They are guarding the sanctuary to protect the Israelites. They are ready to put to death any outsider who comes too close.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Aaron, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel worried. I really hope we do not have to kill anyone else," or, "I feel determined. Yahweh is holy and I know I must guard the entrance to his house well," or, "I am in awe of how holy Yahweh is, and yet Yahweh wants to have a relationship with us. I will do everything I need to do to represent our people before Yahweh."

Act out Moses counting the total number of Levite males who are one month old or older as Yahweh commanded. The Levites total 22,000.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 3:33–39 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Moses continues his census of the **Levites** and counts the **clans** of Merari. Be sure to use the same word for clan that you used in previous passages.

Moses says the Merarites will camp on the north side of the **tabernacle**, or the house of Yahweh. This is the portable tent that Yahweh lives in and where the Israelites worship Yahweh. Use the same word or phrase for tabernacle that you used in previous passages. For more information on the tabernacle, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Merarites will be responsible for the frames of the tabernacle, its crossbars, posts, bases, and everything that goes with these items, as well as the posts, bases, tent pegs, and ropes for the courtyard.

Stop here and review the words and phrases you used in previous books for the framework of the tabernacle. Use the same words in this passage. Pause this audio here.

The camp of Moses, Aaron, and Aaron's sons will be in front of the **tent of meeting**. This is another name for the tabernacle, which means tent. Use the same word or phrase for tent of meeting that you used in previous passages.

Moses and the priests will be in charge of all the duties of the **sanctuary**. Sanctuary means holy place, and here it refers to the Holy Place in the tabernacle. This is where priests make sacrifices and perform rites on behalf of the Israelites so that the Israelites can have a good relationship with Yahweh. Use the same word or phrase for sanctuary that you used in previous passages. For more information on sanctuary, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses and the priests camp in front of the sanctuary to guard the sanctuary on behalf of all the **Israelites**. Israelites refers to the people who are the descendants of Abraham. They are Yahweh's chosen people. Use the same word or phrase for Israelites that you used in previous passages. For more information on the Israelites, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses gives the total number of **Levites** as 22,000 males who are one month old or older. Remember, the Levites are the descendants of Levi. Yahweh chose the Levites to guard and care for the tabernacle. Use the same word or phrase for Levites that you used in previous passages. For more information on Levites, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 3:33-39

Audio Content

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Numbers 3:40-51

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 3:40-51 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 3:40-51 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 3:40–51 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Moses and the Israelites are in the wilderness of Sinai. Moses followed Yahweh's instructions and has just taken a census of, or counted, the Levites, or the descendants of Levi.

As you remember, Yahweh set apart the Levites for the special purpose of caring for and guarding the tabernacle, or the house of Yahweh. This was a special service they did on behalf of all the Israelites. Yahweh has already said that the Levites will replace, or take the place of, all the firstborn sons of Israel. Now Yahweh gives Moses more specific instructions.

Yahweh tells Moses to count and list the names of all the firstborn Israelite sons who are one month old or older. As you remember, all the firstborn sons of the Israelites belonged to Yahweh ever since they left Egypt. The Israelites could only redeem, or buy back, their firstborn sons by offering a lamb to Yahweh in place of the firstborn son. But now Yahweh tells Moses that Yahweh wants all the male Levites one month old or older for himself in place of all the firstborn males from the other Israelite tribes. And even though the Israelites' firstborn animals belong to Yahweh, Yahweh says he will accept the animals of the Levites instead. This includes cattle and other livestock. This implies that all the Levites' animals also belong to Yahweh. Yahweh says "I am Yahweh" to remind the Israelites of who Yahweh is and to emphasize that Yahweh set the Levites apart for himself.

Moses obeys Yahweh and counts the Israelite firstborn males just as Yahweh commanded. Their number is 22,273. As you know, this is just 273 more sons than the total number of Levite males. Yahweh once more states his name, "I am Yahweh," and then instructs Moses on what to do with the remaining 273 firstborns.

Since there are more Israelite sons than Levite males, Yahweh says that the Israelites must redeem, or free, the remaining firstborns. Remember, redeem means to free someone or something, or to transfer ownership of one thing to someone else. Instead of costing the firstborns their lives as a sacrifice to Yahweh, the Israelites will need to pay 5 shekels per firstborn to free them. Usually, shekels were pieces of silver that weighed around 11.4 grams, so 5 shekels was around 57 grams of silver. Five shekels was around the amount a person might be paid for 6 months of work.

Stop here and look at a picture of a shekel as a group. In your culture, what happens when payment for something is not enough? How do you negotiate with each other or make the payment enough? Pause this audio here.

The shekels the Israelites use must be according to the sanctuary shekel. It is unclear what Moses meant by "sanctuary shekel," but it is possible that the Levites used a different standard of weight in service of the tabernacle than in normal buying and selling. Moses states that the sanctuary weight of the shekel must equal twenty gerahs. The gerah was the smallest unit of weight, which was less than 0.6 grams. It is clear that however the Israelites measured their shekels for the redemption price, it had to be by the same standard that the tabernacle used.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How are forms of payment standardized, or made to equal the same, where you live? If there is no standardized system of payment, what common object does everyone have to trade? Pause this audio here.

Moses obeys Yahweh's commands and collects the silver from the Israelites to redeem, or free, the remaining 273 firstborns. All the silver pieces Moses collects are weighed according to the sanctuary standard. Moses then gives the 1,365 pieces of silver to Aaron and his sons, or the priests. In this way, Moses follows all of Yahweh's commands concerning the Levites and the Israelite firstborns.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 3:40–51 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 three scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh tells Moses to count and list the names of all the Israelite firstborn males. Yahweh says that Yahweh will take the Levites and their animals instead of the firstborns and that the Levites will belong to Yahweh because he is Yahweh. Moses obeys Yahweh and counts 22,273 Israelite firstborns.

In the second scene: Yahweh repeats his instructions to Moses about the Levites replacing the Israelite firstborns. Because there are 273 more firstborns than Levites, Yahweh says the Israelites must pay 5 shekels per person for the 273 remaining firstborns. The Israelites must measure the shekels by the tabernacle standard. Yahweh tells Moses to give the money that Moses collects to Aaron and Aaron's sons.

In the third scene: Moses obeys everything Yahweh instructed; Moses collects 5 shekels according to the tabernacle standard for each of the remaining 273 firstborn sons. Moses gives the collected money, 1,365 shekels, to the priests.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- Aaron's sons
- Israelite firstborns
- The rest of the Levites
- The animals of the Levites

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

Yahweh tells Moses to count and list the names of all the Israelite firstborns. These were the Israelite sons who were born first in a family and were one month old or older.

It is important to remember that Yahweh has told Moses before that the Levites will redeem or take the place of the Israelite firstborns. But now, Yahweh gives more details about how this will happen.

Yahweh tells Moses that the Levites and their animals belong to Yahweh, and the Levites and their animals will take the place of the Israelite firstborn sons and animals. Yahweh states his personal name, "I am Yahweh," to remind the Israelites of his relationship to them and to emphasize the important role of the Levites.

Moses emphasizes his obedience to all of Yahweh's commandments by repeating several times that Moses did things "just as Yahweh said." Moses counts the Israelite firstborns just as Yahweh said. The number of firstborns is 22,273.

It is important to remember that when Moses counted the Levites, they totaled 22,000 males one month old or older. The total number of firstborn sons was only 273 people more than the Levites!

Yahweh gives the same instructions to Moses once again and says the Levites will redeem, or take the place of and free, the Israelite firstborn sons. Yahweh uses his personal name again, "I am Yahweh," to emphasize that the Levites belong to him. Only this time, Yahweh gives specific details on how the Levites will redeem the firstborn males.

Because there are 273 more firstborn males than Levites, Yahweh says the Israelites must pay 5 shekels per person for the 273 remaining firstborn males. When Yahweh says to measure the shekels by the sanctuary shekel, this most likely means according to the standard that the tabernacle uses.

One way to show this is by having the Israelites measure their shekels, or pieces of silver, to ensure they are all the same weight.

Yahweh tells Moses to give the money Moses collects to Aaron and Aaron's sons. It is important to remember that Aaron is the high priest and his sons are priests. Besides Moses, they are the only ones Yahweh allows to enter the tabernacle.

Moses takes 1,365 shekels for the Israelite firstborns and gives those shekels to Aaron and Aaron's sons. This is 5 shekels for each of the 273 extra Israelite firstborn males.

Moses does everything just as Yahweh commanded. This repetition shows a major theme throughout Numbers - that Moses follows all of Yahweh's instructions exactly.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 3:40–51 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
- Aaron's sons
- Israelite firstborns
- The rest of the Levites
- The animals of the Levites

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 count and list the names of all the Israelite firstborn males. Yahweh says that Yahweh will take the Levites and the Levites' animals instead of the firstborns and that the Levites will belong to Yahweh because he is Yahweh. Moses obeys and counts 22,273 Israelite firstborns.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing an Israelite firstborn son, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel relieved. I'm so thankful Yahweh provided a way for me to freely stay with my family," or, "I admire the Levite's dedication to Yahweh. Everything the Levites have belongs to Yahweh and they use it for Yahweh's purposes," or, "I feel in awe. I can't believe that the number of firstborn sons is almost the same as the number of Levites."

Act out Yahweh repeating his instructions to Moses about the Levites replacing the Israelite firstborn sons. Yahweh says the Levites will redeem the Israelite firstborn sons and their animals. Because there are 273 more firstborn sons than Levites, Yahweh says the Israelites must pay 5 shekels each for the 273 remaining firstborn sons.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing an Israelite family who has a firstborn son, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel relieved. I was afraid of the consequences for the remaining firstborn sons, but once again, Yahweh provided a way to have a good relationship with him," or, "I am happy to pay five shekels if it means keeping my son whom I love," or, "I feel thankful. I'm thankful the Levites are carrying this burden for us and devoting their lives to Yahweh on our behalf."

Act out the Israelites measuring the shekels by the tabernacle standard. Yahweh tells Moses to give the money Moses collects to Aaron and Aaron's sons.

Act out Moses obeying everything Yahweh said. Moses collects 5 shekels according to the tabernacle standard for each of the remaining 273 firstborn sons. Moses gives the collected money, 1365 shekels, to Aaron and Aaron's sons.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Aaron, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel honored. I'm honored that Yahweh chose our family to belong to Yahweh," or, "I feel amazed. Yahweh has everything in control, from our replacement for the firstborns to collecting money for the service of the tabernacle," or, "I trust Yahweh to provide for us. Everything we have is Yahweh's, and I know Yahweh will take care of us."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 3:40–51 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Yahweh tells Moses to count all the firstborn sons of the **Israelites**. Yahweh says the **Levites** will be a substitute for the firstborn sons of the Israelites. Remember, Israelites refers to all of the descendants of Abraham, or the chosen people of Yahweh. Even though the Levites are also Israelites, they are descendants of Levi, and Yahweh specially chose them to guard, or take care of, the tabernacle. Be sure to use the same word or phrase for Israelites and Levites that you have in previous passages. For more information on Israelites or Levites, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh says he will accept the Levites as a substitute for the Israelite firstborns. The Levites belong to Yahweh because he is Yahweh. Yahweh is the personal name of God and is used throughout this passage. Be sure to use the same word or phrase for Yahweh that you have in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh says that all of the Levites' **livestock** also belong to Yahweh. Here, livestock not only refers to cattle, but also to sheep, goats, camels, and donkeys.

Yahweh provides a way for the Israelites to **redeem** the remaining 273 firstborns. Here redeem means to buy back or set free. By paying 5 shekels, the Israelites could free their firstborn sons. Be sure to use the same word or phrase for redeem that you have in previous passages. For more information on redeem, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Israelites must be sure to use the same standard of shekel as the **sanctuary** shekel. A shekel is a unit of measurement made of silver. The sanctuary, which means holy place, refers to the tabernacle. Whatever weight of silver the Levites used in the tabernacle, the Israelites must also use when they redeem their firstborns. Use the same word or phrase for sanctuary that you used in previous passages. For more information on sanctuary, refer to the Master Glossary.

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

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 3:40–51

Audio Content

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Numbers 4:1-20

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 4:1-20 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 4:1-20 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 4:1-20 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passages, Yahweh told Moses to make a census of the Levites as well as all of the firstborn males. Then, Yahweh told Moses that the Levites would be the substitutes for the firstborn males. The Levites belong to Yahweh. Now Yahweh will tell Moses the responsibilities of the Levites. Moses and Aaron are listening to Yahweh in the tabernacle. The skilled workers among the Israelites made and put together the tabernacle in

the wilderness near Mount Sinai. In previous passages, Yahweh gave an overview of what each clan of the Levites was responsible for in the tabernacle. Now, in these passages, Yahweh goes into more detail about the responsibilities of each clan when the Israelites travel from Mount Sinai to the land that Yahweh has promised to the Israelites. Yahweh also gives instructions to Moses and Aaron about how the people should wrap and carry the special items for each journey on the way to the land that Yahweh had promised to the Israelites.

Yahweh instructs Moses and Aaron to take a census, a careful count of people, of the descendants of Kohath, a son of Levi. Kohath was not the oldest son of Levi. However, Aaron, the high priest, was a Kohathite, a descendant of Kohath, and this is probably why Yahweh chose the Kohathites for the special work of carrying the tabernacle items.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about a time when a person in your community gave an important task to someone else, simply because that person was part of a certain family. How are family connections important when people choose specific people for important jobs? Why are particular people chosen to do a task? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh wants Moses and Aaron to arrange the information from the census by name of clan and by name of the father for each family group. Yahweh wants Moses and Aaron to count the men who are 30 to 50 years old. The men this age are old enough to be strong and responsible to do the skilled work for Yahweh. We know from other passages in the Bible that men serve in the tabernacle from 25 to 50 years old. Men from 25 to 30 years old may serve as apprentices, learning to do the work. We don't know why younger adult men are not suitable to do this work of carrying the tabernacle items. It is possible that the Israelites need the younger men to defend them while they travel as the younger men were the best age for fighting battles. Yahweh wants the Kohathite men to serve Yahweh in the tabernacle and to do skilled work that is physical, using their strength and bodies, to carry the tabernacle items when the Israelites move camp.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What particular duties or responsibilities are only for a certain age in your community? What are the lower and upper age limits for different duties? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh gives instructions to Moses and Aaron about getting ready to move the tabernacle to a new place. The Israelites will move many times as they journey from the wilderness by Mount Sinai to the land Yahweh has promised the Israelites. Aaron, the high priest, and his sons, the priests, are responsible for preparing the tabernacle and its special items for moving camp. The tabernacle is holy, set apart for God. Only Aaron and Aaron's sons, Eleazar and Ithamar, can look at the special items in the tabernacle. You will remember from Exodus that Yahweh will kill anybody else who sees the special items in the tabernacle, because the special items are holy, set apart for God.

Stop here and look at a drawing of the tabernacle and the location of the different pieces of furniture as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this task as a group: Describe a special place for your culture that only one or some people can go to, or special items that only one or some people can touch. What happens to someone who goes there or touches them who is not allowed to? Pause this audio here.

Aaron and his sons are responsible for preparing each item in the tabernacle for the Kohathites to carry from one camp to another. Yahweh tells Aaron and Moses that when the camp needs to move, the high priest and priests should enter the tabernacle and take down the screening curtain, or veil, that separates the Most Holy Place, or the Holy of Holies, from the front room of the tabernacle, the Holy Place. The priests will cover the ark of the covenant and the golden atonement cover, or mercy seat, with the screening curtain. The priests will then cover both the ark of the covenant and the screening curtain with fine leather to protect them from the weather. This fine leather is sometimes called goatskin or leather, but the Israelites may have made the leather covering from the skin of a sea animal called a dugong, which lives in the Red Sea, or from a dolphin or a porpoise.

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

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

The Israelites made the leather cover from the same material as the fourth, most outer covering of the main tabernacle structure. The priests cover the fine leather covering with a final blue covering cloth. The blue of all

the coverings is a blue/purple colour. We don't know what the Israelites used to make the coloured covering cloths the priests covered the items in the tabernacle with. The material is likely to be strong and able to protect the precious items inside.

Stop here and look at a picture of blue/purple cloth as a group.

The priests will place the acacia poles for carrying the ark of the covenant into the gold rings on the sides of the ark. People take acacia wood from an acacia tree and it is a strong wood that people can work easily with. You might remember that in Exodus, Yahweh instructs the priests to place the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark of the covenant and to not remove the poles. We don't know why, in this passage, Yahweh instructs the priests to put the carrying poles in place. It might be that the priests need to arrange the poles and coverings to be accessible through the coverings.

Stop here and do this activity as a group: Take a small box and attach two sticks to it, one on each side. Wrap the item in three layers of paper or cloth. Be careful to keep the item covered, but use the sticks to lift the item. Pause this audio here.

The priests will also prepare the table in the front room of the tabernacle for the Kohathites to carry. On the table is the bread of the presence and gold plates, gold dishes for incense, gold bowls, and gold containers for the drink offering. The priests will take these items off the table, place a blue/purple cloth on the table, and place the items on the blue/purple cloth. The priests cover the bread, gold items, the blue/purple cloth, and the table with a bright red cloth. The red cloth makes the table look different for the priests and Kohathites. The priests place a final covering of fine leather, the same as for the ark of the covenant, over everything. The priests place the carrying poles for the table into the gold rings on the side of the table.

The priests will also prepare the gold tree-shaped lampstand in the front room of the tabernacle for the Kohathites to carry. The priests will use a blue/purple cloth to cover the lampstand, the lamps, tongs, trays, and containers for oil. The priests will then wrap the covered lampstand and items in the same fine leather the priests wrapped around the ark of the covenant and the table. The priests will put the wrapped lampstand and items on a carrying frame. The Israelites probably made the carrying frame from one or more wooden poles. The lampstand was tied onto or sat on the frame. The outer coverings of the ark, table, and lampstand all look different from each other. This helps the Kohathites to tell the difference between the items after the priests wrap the items.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you carry large items over distances if a vehicle or animal is not available to help you? Pause this audio here.

The priests will prepare the altar of incense in the front room of the tabernacle in the same way as the lampstand. The priests wrap the altar in a blue/purple cloth and then fine leather. The altar of incense has gold rings and the priests place the carrying poles into the rings so that the Kohathites can carry the altar. Yahweh gives instructions for the priests to wrap any remaining items that the priests use in their special service or ministry to Yahweh in the tabernacle. The priests wrap the remaining items with blue/purple cloth and fine leather. The priests will place these items on a carrying frame. The priests might add the wrapped items to the lampstand carrying frame or a different frame.

Yahweh gives instructions to Moses and Aaron for the preparation of the bronze altar in the court of the tabernacle and for the tools for the bronze altar. The priests must clean the altar first by removing the ashes and then cover it with a purple cloth. The purple is a red/purple colour. The priests place the tools on the red/purple cloth and then wrap the altar and the tools in fine leather. The skilled workers made rings on the sides of the bronze altar and the priests will place carrying poles into these rings.

Stop here and look at a picture of red/purple cloth and blue/purple cloth as a group.

Yahweh says that the Kohathites must only come to carry the tabernacle items after the priests have finished preparing the items for travel. The Kohathites will die if they touch the items from the tabernacle. It is the Kohathites' special responsibility to carry the tabernacle items.

Stop here and look at pictures of the ark of the covenant, screening curtain, table, lampstand, altar of incense, and bronze altar as a group if required.

As we know, Eleazar is the oldest living son of Aaron, and Eleazar is a priest. Since only priests can handle these important items, Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron that Eleazar is responsible for transporting the special oils for the lamp, and the oils for the anointing, and the incense that the priests use in the tabernacle. Eleazar is also responsible for the grain offering. This is probably the offering of ground wheat or another grain that the priests burn a part of on the bronze altar in the court of the tabernacle. The priests then bake the remaining part of the grain offering into unleavened bread and eat it. This offering is holy and only the priests can offer it and eat it. Eleazar is responsible for all the correct preparation and carrying of the tabernacle and all of its items.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story of when an oldest child in your family or community was given a more important job than a younger child. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh wants to protect the Kohathites when they do their special work in the tabernacle. We know that protecting the Kohathites is important to Yahweh because Yahweh repeats the warnings to Moses and Aaron. Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron that the priests are responsible for directing the Kohathites when the Kohathites carry the items. The priests are responsible for making sure the Kohathites do not look at the holy items of the tabernacle. If the Kohathites look at the holy items, the Kohathites will die.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 4:1-20 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 four scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh instructs Moses and Aaron to count the Kohathite men who are 30 to 50 years old. Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron that the Kohathites will serve Yahweh by helping with the tabernacle.

In the second scene: Yahweh instructs Moses and Aaron that the priests must prepare all the special furniture and items the priests use in service to Yahweh for the Kohathites to carry to a new campsite.

In the third scene: Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron that Aaron's oldest son, Eleazar, is responsible for carrying the oils, incense, and grain offering from one camp to the next camp. Eleazar is also responsible for the furniture and items in the tabernacle.

In the fourth scene: Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron that the priests must keep the Kohathites safe. The priests must be careful so that the Kohathites do not see the holy items. If the Kohathites see the items, they will die.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- Aaron's son Eleazar
- Aaron's son Ithamar, one of the priests
- Kohathite workers between 30 and 50 years old

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

Moses and Aaron are in the tent of meeting, the tabernacle. The Israelites had made the tabernacle the month before. The Israelites left Egypt just over one year ago. The tabernacle and the surrounding camp of the Israelites is in the wilderness next to Mount Sinai.

Stop here and look at a map of the land around Mount Sinai, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron that the Kohathites will serve Yahweh by helping with the tabernacle. The Kohathites are given this responsibility because they are closely related to Aaron, the high priest. Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron to make a count of the special people who Yahweh says will be responsible for moving the holy items in the tabernacle. Yahweh wants mature, adult men from 30 to 50 years old from the clans of the Kohathites to do this special work. Younger men might be doing other duties while the camp is moving, and older men might not be strong enough to carry the holy items.

Yahweh talks about holy things and the most holy things many times in this passage. He is reminding the Israelites that the items in the tabernacle are special and set apart for Yahweh, and that the Israelites must treat them with respect.

Yahweh spends time with Moses and Aaron telling them how the priests should cover and wrap the furniture and special items that the priests use in the tabernacle. This is to protect the Kohathite workers who must not touch or see the furniture and the items from the tabernacle. If the Kohathite workers see or touch the holy objects, Yahweh must kill them. Yahweh does not want this to happen to the Kohathite workers. The Israelites will move camp many times on the way to the promised land. The priests—Aaron, Eleazar, and Ithamar—will need to prepare the tabernacle items for travelling every time the camp moves. After the priests have covered everything, the Kohathites will carry the items every time the camp moves.

Stop here and do this activity as a group: Pick up your items that you have with you and move to another place nearby. Put down all of your items as if you are going to carry on working. Then pick up all of your items and move to another place nearby. Put your items down again, ready to carry on. Discuss what happened when you moved? What items were moved, and who moved them? How did people prepare items to move? Who prepared the items, and who moved them? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh gives instructions for the priests to wrap each piece of furniture and each group of tools used in the tabernacle. The wrappings are not the same for each item, which makes it easier for the Kohathites to identify the different items that they are to carry. Yahweh includes a waterproof and weatherproof layer of fine leather for each load that the Kohathites will carry. The priests wrap the ark of the covenant in the screening curtain, then in fine leather, and then in blue/purple cloth. The priests wrap the table in the same kind of blue/purple cloth, then in a bright red cloth, and then in fine leather. The priests wrap the lampstand in blue/purple cloth and then in fine leather. The priests wrap the gold altar in blue/purple cloth, and then they wrap fine leather around the covered table and items. The priests wrap the bronze altar in a red/purple cloth and then in fine leather. The blue/purple outer covering of the ark of the covenant is different from all the other items, which have an outer covering of leather. The priests wrap the items first and then put the carrying poles in place or put the items onto a carrying frame. Only when the priests have prepared everything, and the camp is ready to move, can the Kohathites come to carry the items.

Yahweh gives Eleazar responsibility for the oils and incense that the priests use in the tabernacle, and for the grain offering that the priests eat in the tabernacle. These items are set apart for Yahweh and can only be touched by priests. We think Eleazar may have carried the oils, incense, and grain offerings himself, but he probably oversaw the Kohathites carrying the tabernacle furniture and special items.

The passage ends with Yahweh giving Moses and Aaron a warning to protect the Kohathites. The priests could cause a Kohathite worker to die if they do not take care to prepare the tabernacle items properly. If a Kohathite worker enters the front room of the tabernacle before the priests cover the items, Yahweh will kill the Kohathite worker. After Aaron and the priests cover the items, they are personally responsible for going with the Kohathite workers into the tabernacle to carry the prepared items. The priests will tell each Kohathite worker what to carry.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Discuss how you give important instructions in your culture. What do you say or do when you want to give instructions to keep people safe?

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 4:1–20 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
- Aaron
- Aaron's son Eleazar
- Aaron's son Ithamar, one of the priests
- Kohathite workers 30 to 50 years old

During the drama, have Aaron's sons and the Kohathite workers act out the instructions that Yahweh gives to Moses 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.

Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron to take a census of the Kohathite men from 30 to 50 years old. Yahweh says that these Kohathite men will serve Yahweh by looking after the holy items of the tabernacle.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I have a special type of work for the older Kohathite men of the Levite tribe," or, "Aaron and Aaron's sons will need help to move the holy items in the tabernacle."

Yahweh gives detailed instructions to prepare the tabernacle items for moving camp. Yahweh wants to make sure the Israelites are kept safe from the holy items. The priests will cover the items in cloth and fine leather to protect them from the weather and stop the Israelites from seeing or touching the items. The priests, who are Aaron and Aaron's two sons, wrap the ark of the covenant with the inner curtain, and then the priests wrap the table and its items. The priests put in place the carrying poles. The priests cover the lampstand and its items and put them on a carrying frame. The priests cover the incense altar and put carrying poles in place. The priests wrap the remaining items that the priests use for the altar and put them on a carrying frame. The priests take the ashes off the bronze altar and cover the altar with a cloth. The priests place the items that the priests use with the bronze altar on top of the cloth, wrap the items together with the bronze altar, and then put the carrying poles in place.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Aaron, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I must be careful to wrap each item completely," or, "If we are not careful, we could cause one of our relatives to die."

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I am holy and the items in my tabernacle are set apart for me," or, "My priests must follow my instructions carefully to keep the Kohathite workers safe."

Ask the Kohathite workers, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "We are honoured to serve Yahweh by carrying the tabernacle items," or, "I must trust the priests to wrap the tabernacle items properly," or, "The tabernacle items will be heavy to carry."

Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron that Aaron's son, Eleazar, is responsible for the oils, incense, and grain offering in the tabernacle. Eleazar is also responsible for overseeing the furniture and other items in the tabernacle.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Eleazar, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "Yahweh killed my brothers for making a wrong offering, and I don't want more people to die," or, "I am honoured to look after the holy oils, incense, and offerings."

Yahweh repeats Yahweh's warning to the priests to make sure that the priests do not let the Kohathites get killed. The priests are to direct the Kohathite workers in the tabernacle and make sure that the Kohathite workers do not see the holy items.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Aaron's son, Ithamar, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I will take care of the Kohathite workers," or, "It is our responsibility to make sure all of the holy items are covered and ready to be moved."

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "Yahweh has a good plan for when we need to move our camp," or, "The Kohathite men will help us get closer to the promised land."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 4:1-20 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Before you translate this passage, it might be helpful to review the words you used in the book of Exodus chapters 35-38 for the items in the tabernacle. Use the same words in this passage that you used in your translation of Exodus.

Pause this audio here and review your translation of the tabernacle items.

Yahweh gives instructions to Moses and Aaron. Yahweh is the personal name for God. In this passage, God is called Yahweh. Be sure to translate Yahweh in the same way that you have in previous passages, and remember that Yahweh is in the Master Glossary.

Moses and Aaron are told to take a **census** of the Kohathite **clans**. Use the same words or phrases for census and clans that you used in previous passages.

The Kohathites, like all of the Levites, will **serve** Yahweh. To serve someone is to do personal and important work for them. Yahweh uses this action of serving to show how important the work of the Levites is.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **serve**. 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.

However, the Kohathites do special work, as they carry the holy items from the tent of meeting, or **tabernacle**. The Kohathites are the only Levite group to do this special kind of work. Look up tabernacle in the Master Glossary for more information.

The priests will prepare the **holy** items when the Israelites will move their camp to a new place. Use the same word or phrase for holy and camp as you used in previous passages. Look up holy in the Master Glossary for more information.

Stop here and look at a drawing of the tabernacle and the location of different pieces of furniture as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

The priests will take down the screening curtain, or inner veil, between the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place, and the priests will use it to cover the **ark of the covenant**. Use the same words or phrases for the inner curtain and the ark of the covenant that you used in previous passages. Look up ark of the covenant in the Master Glossary for more information.

The priests cover the ark of the covenant in **fine leather**, which is waterproof, and which the skilled workers have probably made from a sea animal, possibly a dugong.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **fine leather**. If you have already translated these words in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

The priests will cover the ark of the covenant and the fine leather with **blue** cloth. The blue colour is a blue/purple colour.

Stop here and look at a picture of blue/purple cloth, if needed, as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **blue**. 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 priests will put carrying **poles** into the ark of the covenant and other furniture.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **poles**. 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 priest will cover the table of the bread of the presence, the jars for the **drink offering**, and the other items on the table. People made an offering of wine as the drink offering. The priests will use a **bright red** or scarlet cloth to cover the table.

Stop here and discuss what phrase you will use for **drink offering**. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information about drink offering. If you have translated drink offering in another book of the Bible, use the same phrase here. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of bright red cloth, if needed, as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **bright red**. 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 priests will cover the **lampstand**, lamps, and other items in cloth. Use the same word or phrase for lampstand that you used in previous passages.

The priests will put the covered lampstand and items on a **carrying frame**.

Stop here and look at a picture of a carrying frame as a group. Discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for carrying frame. Pause this audio here.

The priests will cover the golden **altar** and other items in the Holy Place and make them ready for carrying. Use the same word or phrase for altar that you used in previous passages. Look up altar in the Master Glossary for more information.

The priests will clean the ashes from the bronze altar and cover the altar with a purple cloth. This is a red/purple colour.

Stop here and look at a picture of red/purple cloth, if needed, as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **purple**. 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's oldest living son, Eleazar, is responsible for carrying the oil the priests use in the lampstand, and the special incense, which is a blend of spices that smell good when people burn them.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **incense**. 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.

Eleazar, son of Aaron the **priest**, is also responsible for carrying the regular **grain offering** and the **anointing oil**, and for everything that is in the tabernacle. Look up grain offering and anoint in the Master Glossary for more information. Use the same word for priest that you have used in previous passages, and remember that priest is in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh does not want the Kohathites to die when they are serving Yahweh in the tabernacle. Yahweh wants the priests to be careful when the priests prepare everything in the **sanctuary** or tabernacle for when the camp will move. Yahweh does not want the Kohathites to see the holy items in the tabernacle and die. Use the same word or phrase for sanctuary that you used in previous passages. Look up sanctuary in the Master Glossary for more information.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 4:1-20

Audio Content

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Numbers 4:21–28

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 4:21–28 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 4:21–28 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 4:21–28 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this passage, Yahweh gives instructions to Moses in the tabernacle. The Israelites are camping in the wilderness near Mount Sinai. Yahweh continues to give instructions about how the Israelites will move the tabernacle when the Israelites move camp on the way to the land Yahweh promised to the Israelites.

Yahweh is talking to Moses, but we don't know if Aaron is with Moses. In the previous passage, Yahweh gave instructions about the Kohathites. Yahweh now continues to give instructions and asks Moses to take a census, a careful count of people, of the descendants of Gershon, a son of Levi.

Just like the census of the Kohathites, Yahweh wants Moses and Aaron to arrange the information from the census by name of clan and by name of the father for each family group. Yahweh wants Moses and Aaron to count the men from 30 to 50 years old. These men are old enough to be strong and responsible to do the skilled work for Yahweh. We know from other passages in the Bible that men serve in the tabernacle from 25 to 50 years old. Men from 25 to 30 years old may serve as apprentices as they learn to do the work. We don't know why younger adult men are not suitable to do this work. It is possible that the Israelites need the younger men to defend them while they travel, as the younger men are the best age for fighting battles. Yahweh wants the Gershonite men to do work that is physical, using their strength and bodies. This work is different from the service in the tabernacle that Yahweh gave to the Kohathites. The Gershonites will serve Yahweh by taking down, carrying, and putting up the tent of the tabernacle.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What jobs are seen as more special or important among your people? What makes them special or more important than other jobs? Pause this audio here.

The Gershonites will carry the curtains that make the walls and roof of the tabernacle. Curtains are pieces of fabric that hang from a fastening or pole at the top. Curtains may cover windows to stop light from coming through or be used to form a barrier between one place and another. The curtains of the tabernacle form the walls of the tent. The Gershonites will carry both the inner and outer layers of the tabernacle.

Stop here and look at a picture of the tabernacle and the outer courtyard, if needed, as a group. Pause this audio here.

The Israelites have made the outer layer of the tabernacle of fine leather. This is sometimes called goatskin or leather. However, the Israelites may have made the leather covering from the skin of a sea animal called a dugong, which lives in the Red Sea, or from a dolphin or a porpoise.

Stop here and look at a picture of a dugong, if needed, as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of a dolphin, if needed, as a group. Pause this audio here.

The Gershonites will carry the screen, or entrance curtain, that is at the entrance to the tabernacle. The Gershonites will also carry the curtains of the outer courtyard and the screen or entrance curtain at the entrance to the courtyard. The Gershonites will also carry the cords, or ropes, which hold the curtains and screens onto the supporting poles. The Gershonites will carry all the curtains and ropes in the tabernacle and outer courtyard.

The Gershonites are not responsible for carrying the wooden frames, pillars, and bases for the tabernacle or the courtyard. The Gershonites will not carry the items by hand. Though not mentioned here, we will learn in a later passage that the Gershonites will use two wagons and four oxen to carry the items.

Stop here and look at a picture of two oxen in a harness with a wagon. Pause this audio here.

Aaron and his sons, Eleazar and Ithamar, the priests, will manage all the work the Gershonites do.

Stop here and discuss this question: Discuss a time when your community worked together on a large project. How did you divide up the tasks, and who was responsible for making sure everyone did their job? Pause this audio here.

Ithamar, Aaron's youngest son, will tell the Gershonites what to do when the Gershonites protect the tabernacle as part of the Levites' guard duty.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about when someone gave an unexpected person a job to do. Perhaps this could be when someone gave a younger son a job that would normally go to an older son, or when a woman did the job of a man. Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 4:21–28 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 three scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh instructs Moses to count the Gershonite men who are 30 to 50 years old. Moses must record the number of men and write down the clan and family that each man belongs to.

In the second scene: Yahweh tells Moses that the Gershonite men will carry all the material of the curtains and ropes of the tabernacle and the outer courtyard.

In the third scene: Yahweh tells Moses that Aaron and Aaron's sons Eleazar and Ithamar, the priests, will oversee the work of the Gershonites at the tabernacle. Ithamar will tell the Gershonites how to do the work.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- Eleazar
- Ithamar
- Gershonite men from 30 to 50 years old

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

Moses is in the tent of meeting, the tabernacle. It has been one month since the Israelites put the tabernacle together and just over one year since the Israelites left Egypt. The tabernacle and the surrounding camp of the Israelites is in the wilderness next to Mount Sinai.

Stop here and look at a map of the land around Mount Sinai, if needed, as a group. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh is giving more instructions to Moses about the Israelites moving the tabernacle from one camp to a new camp. We don't know if Aaron is with Moses or is not with Moses. Yahweh might be giving Moses the instructions about the Gershonites immediately after Yahweh gave instructions about the Kohathites, or Yahweh might be giving Moses these instructions at a different time.

Yahweh wants Moses to make a count of the special people that Yahweh wants to be responsible for moving the curtains and ropes of the tabernacle. Yahweh wants mature, adult men from 30 to 50 years old from the clans of the Gershonites to do this work. You will remember from the previous passage that younger men might be doing other duties while the camp is moving, and older men might not be strong enough to move the items.

Yahweh tells Moses that the Gershonites will move everything to do with the curtains and outer layers of the tent of the tabernacle and courtyard, the screens or entrance curtains for the tabernacle, and the courtyard and the ropes for the curtains of the tabernacle and courtyard. The Gershonites will do everything that the priests need the Gershonites to do to move these items from one camp to a new camp.

Stop here and do this activity as a group: How would you take down a temporary structure that people live or sleep in to pack it for taking to a new place? In what order would you pack the different parts or layers? Pause this audio here.

Aaron, the high priest, and his sons Eleazar and Ithamar will oversee the work of taking down the items, carrying the items, and putting the items back up. Ithamar tells the Gershonites what to do as the Gershonites do their work.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 4:21–28 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
- Eleazar
- Ithamar
- Gershonite men from 30 to 50 years old

During the drama, have Aaron, Eleazar, Ithamar, and the Gershonite men 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 gives instructions to Moses to count the Gershonite men who are 30 to 50 years old. Yahweh wants Moses to record the men by clan and by family name.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I want Moses to know which Gershonites will serve me by carrying the tabernacle," or, "I have work for the Gershonites to do."

Yahweh tells Moses that the Gershonites will serve Yahweh by carrying the curtains, outer coverings, screen, and ropes of the tabernacle from one camp to the next camp. The Gershonites will also carry the curtains, screen, and ropes for the outer courtyard around the tabernacle from one camp to the next camp.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Gershonites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I am happy that Yahweh trusts our clans with this work," or, "The curtains are beautiful but will be very heavy to move," or, "We will need lots of our people to take the curtains apart. How will we ever transport all of these heavy curtains?"

Yahweh wants Aaron and Aaron's sons, Eleazar and Ithamar, to oversee the Gershonites' work. Ithamar will be responsible for the work of the Gershonites when the Gershonites work to protect the tabernacle structure.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Eleazar, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I will make sure that the Gershonites look after the tabernacle when we need to move it."

Ask the person playing Aaron, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "We must make sure that the Gershonites carry everything Yahweh tells the Gershonites to carry."

Ask the person playing Ithamar, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I will make sure that the Gershonites will carry the tabernacle well to our new camp," or, "I will serve Yahweh well as I tell the Gershonites what to do."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 4:21–28 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 and Aaron. Yahweh is the personal name for God. In this passage, God is called Yahweh. Be sure to translate Yahweh in the same way that you have in previous passages, and remember that Yahweh is in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron to take a **census** of the Gershonite **clans**. Use the same words or phrases for census and clans that you used in previous passages.

The Gershonites will do physical work to **serve** Yahweh in the tabernacle. Use the same words or phrases for the special way that the Levites will serve that you used in previous passages. However, the kind of work the Gershonites will do to serve Yahweh is different from the Kohathites; the Gershonites' work is physical labor and takes physical strength.

Use the same word for **tabernacle** that you used in previous passages. For more information on tabernacle, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Gershonites will carry the **curtains**, the wall hangings of the tabernacle. Use the same word for curtains that you have used in previous passages.

The Gershonites will carry the outer layer of the tabernacle, which was made by skilled workers from **fine leather**. This leather is waterproof and is probably made from a sea animal, possibly a dugong. Use the same word or phrase for fine leather that you used in previous passages.

The Gershonites will carry the **screen**, or entrance curtains, from the entrance of the tabernacle, and the entrance curtains from the entrance to the court around the tabernacle. Use the same word or phrase for screen that you used in previous passages.

Aaron and his sons will oversee the service of the Gershonites. Use the same word or phrase for the Levites' special kind of service that you used earlier in this passage and in previous passages.

Ithamar, son of Aaron the **priest**, will tell the Gershonites how to do their **guard duty** of the tabernacle. Use the same word or phrase for guard duty that you used in previous passages. Use the same word for priest that you used in previous passages, and remember that priest is in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 4:21–28

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Numbers 4:29–33

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 4:29–33 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 4:29–33 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 4:29–33 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this passage, Yahweh is giving instructions to Moses in the tabernacle. The Israelites are camping in the wilderness near Mount Sinai. Yahweh continues to give instructions about how the Israelites will move the tabernacle when the Israelites move camp on the way to the land Yahweh promised to the Israelites.

Yahweh is talking to Moses, but we don't know if Aaron is with Moses. In the previous passage, Yahweh gave instructions about the Gershonites. He now continues to give instructions and tells Moses to take a census, a careful count of people, of the descendants of Merari, a son of Levi.

Just like the census of the Kohathites and the Gershonites, Yahweh wants Moses and Aaron to arrange the information from the census by name of clan and by name of the father for each family group. Yahweh wants Moses and Aaron to count the men from 30 to 50 years old. The men are old enough to be strong and responsible to do the work for Yahweh. We know from other passages in the Bible that men serve in the tabernacle from 25 to 50 years old. Men from 25 to 30 years old may serve as apprentices, learning to do the work. We don't know why younger adult men are not suitable to do this work. It is possible that the Israelites need the younger men to defend them while they travel, as the younger men are the best age for fighting battles. Yahweh wants the Merarite men to do work that is physical, using their strength and bodies. This work is not the same as the special work Yahweh has given to the Kohathites, but it is similar to the work Yahweh has given to the Gershonites.

The Merarites' work is part of the Levites' service in looking after, or guarding, the tabernacle. Yahweh wants the Merarites to carry the wooden frames and bars, the pillars, and the silver and bronze bases of the tabernacle. Yahweh also wants the Merarites to carry the bronze pillars and bases of the court of the tabernacle, the silver attachments, and any other equipment for the court.

Stop here and look at a picture of the tabernacle and the outer courtyard as a group. Pause this audio here.

The Merarites are responsible for packing the items and unpacking the items. The Merarites are responsible for looking after the items as the Israelites move from one camp to the next camp. The Merarites will not carry the items by hand. Though not mentioned here, we will learn in a later passage that the Merarites will use wagons and oxen to carry the items.

Stop here and look at a picture of two oxen in a harness with a wagon. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh wants the priests to tell the Merarites what item each person will carry. This is all the physical work at the tabernacle that the Merarites will do. Ithamar will tell the Merarites what to do. Ithamar is the youngest living son of Aaron, the high priest.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your community, how do you decide who will do each job when people come together to do a physical job as a group? Is one person given responsibility for telling people what to do, or do you decide together?

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 4:29–33 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 two scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh instructs Moses to count the Merarite men who are 30 to 50 years old. Moses must record the number of men and write down the clan and family that each man belongs to.

In the second scene: Yahweh tells Moses that the Merarite men will carry all the wooden structures and metal bases of the tabernacle, and the outer courtyard and the items needed for these tabernacle structures. Ithamar is responsible for overseeing the work of the Merarites.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Merarite men 30 to 50 years old
- Ithamar, son of Aaron

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

Moses is in the tent of meeting, or the tabernacle. It has been one month since the Israelites put together the tabernacle and just over one year since the Israelites left Egypt. The tabernacle and the surrounding camp of the Israelites is in the wilderness next to Mount Sinai.

Stop here and look at a map of the land around Mount Sinai, if needed, as a group. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh is giving more instructions to Moses about the Israelites moving the tabernacle from one camp to a new camp. We don't know if Aaron is with Moses or is not with Moses. We do not know if Yahweh is giving the instructions about the work of the Merarites immediately after giving instructions about the work of the Gershonites, or if perhaps Yahweh is giving the instructions at a different time.

Yahweh wants Moses to make a count of the Merarites who will serve Yahweh at the tabernacle. Yahweh wants mature, adult men from 30 to 50 years old from the clans of the Merarites to do this work. Men under 30 years old might need to do other duties while the camp is moving, and men over 50 years old might not be strong enough to move the items.

Yahweh tells Moses that the Merarites will move everything to do with the wooden structures and metal bases of the tabernacle and courtyard. This includes taking down and packing the items, transporting the items, and unpacking the items. The priests will tell each Merarite man exactly what to carry. Yahweh wants Ithamar to tell the Merarites how to do the work to serve Yahweh at the tabernacle. Ithamar oversees the work of the Merarites and the Gershonites. The work of the Merarites and Gershonites is not as skilled as the work of the Kohathites. You may remember from an earlier passage that Ithamar's elder brother, Eleazar, oversees the Kohathites' work.

Stop here and do this activity as a group: Talk through the different items that the Merarites will carry, and notice that the items are in the order of the structure they support. 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**Embodying the Text*

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 4:29–33 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
- Merarite men 30 to 50 years old
- Ithamar, son of Aaron

During the drama, have the Merarite men and Ithamar 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 gives instructions to Moses to count the Merarite men who are 30 to 50 years old. Yahweh wants Moses to record the men by clan and by family name.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I need the priests to know which Merarite men will be able to serve at the tabernacle."

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "The Merarite clans will also help the priests when we move camp."

Yahweh tells Moses that the Merarites will carry the frames, crossbars, posts, and bases of the tabernacle. The Merarites will also carry the posts, bases, and all the items for them from the courtyard.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Merarite men, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "We will use our strength to serve Yahweh at the tabernacle," or, "Yahweh gives us honour as we move the heavy items that hold up the tent of meeting," or, "We will need the oxen and wagons to move the wooden and metal items to our new camp."

The priests will tell each man what to carry. Ithamar will oversee the work of the Merarites.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "It is important that each man knows what to do when my Israelites move camp," or, "I trust my priest, Ithamar, to make sure the Merarites move the structure of the tabernacle and courtyard safely."

Ask the person playing Ithamar, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I will direct the Merarites as they serve Yahweh at the tabernacle," or, "I will make sure the Merarites take care of the tabernacle structure as we move to our new camp," or, "I am nervous about being responsible for the Merarites carrying the tabernacle structure."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 4:29–33 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 and Aaron. Yahweh is the personal name for God. In this passage, God is called Yahweh. Be sure to translate Yahweh in the same way that you have in previous passages, and remember that Yahweh is in the Master Glossary.

Moses and Aaron are told to take a **census** of the Merarite **clans**. Use the same words or phrases for census and clans that you used in previous passages.

The Merarites will do **physical work** to **serve** Yahweh in the **tabernacle**. Use the same words or phrases for serving Yahweh, for physical work, and for tabernacle that you used in previous passages. For more information on tabernacle, refer to the Master Glossary.

The physical work will form part of the **guard duty** that the Levites will do for Yahweh. Use the same word or phrase for guard duty that you used in previous passages.

Yahweh wants the Merarites to carry the frames, bars, pillars, and bases of the tabernacle. Use the same words or phrases for frames, bars, pillars, and bases that you used in previous passages.

Yahweh wants the Merarites to carry the pillars, bases, pegs, cords, and all the items needed for them in the courtyard. Use the same words or phrases for pegs and cords that you used in previous passages.

Ithamar, the son of Aaron the **priest**, will tell the Merarites how to do their guard duty of the tabernacle. Use the same word for priest that you have used in previous passages, and remember that priest is in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 4:29–33

Audio Content

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Numbers 4:34–49

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 4:34–49 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 4:34–49 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 4:34–49 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Moses was listening to Yahweh in the tabernacle. Yahweh gave Moses, and possibly Aaron, instructions for how to move the tabernacle from camp to camp when the Israelites travel to the land Yahweh has promised to the Israelites. At this time, the Israelites are still camping beside Mount Sinai in the wilderness. Yahweh has given the Levites the responsibility for carrying the tabernacle and courtyard items, furnishings, curtains, and structures. Each clan of the Levites will be responsible for a different part of the tabernacle and courtyard. Yahweh also told Moses to count the men in each clan from 30 to 50 years old who are able to serve in this work.

Now, in this passage, Moses counts and records how many men are available in each Levite clan just as Yahweh told Moses to do. Aaron and the leaders of the Israelite people help Moses count the Levite clans. You may remember from an earlier passage that Yahweh told Moses to have a man from each Israelite tribe help Moses and Aaron count the people. It is likely that the same men, the leaders of the tribes, are the men who now help Moses and Aaron to count the Levite clans.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Who in your community helps your leader or leaders to carry out important tasks? How does your community choose them? Pause this audio here.

Moses, Aaron, and the leaders of the tribes count and record the different clans of the Levite tribes. They first count and record the Kohathites, the descendants of Kohath. You might remember that Kohath was not the first son of Levi, and that Gershon was Levi's eldest son. Kohath was the grandfather of Aaron, the high priest. Yahweh honours the Kohathites and wants Moses to count them first. Moses and Aaron count and record the Kohathite men from 30 to 50 years old according to their clans and families. Moses records 2,750 men. You may remember from earlier passages that the counts of the Israelites may only give an idea of the number of people rather than the exact number at the time.

This count of Kohathite men is all of the Kohathite men that can serve Yahweh by doing the physical work in the tabernacle, or the tent of meeting. Moses and Aaron obey Yahweh's instructions to Moses by counting these men and recording the number.

Moses, Aaron, and the leaders of the Israelite tribes also count the Gershonites, the descendants of Gershon. Moses and Aaron count and record the Gershonite men from 30 to 50 years old according to their clans and families. Moses records 2,630 Gershonite men who were able to serve Yahweh in the tabernacle, or the tent of meeting. Moses and Aaron counted the Gershonite men according to Yahweh's instructions.

Moses, Aaron, and the leaders of the Israelite tribes also count the Merarites, or the descendants of Merari. Moses and Aaron count and record the Merarite men from 30 to 50 years old according to their clans and families. Moses records 3,200 Merarite men who were able to serve at the tent of meeting, or the tabernacle. Moses and Aaron obey Yahweh's instructions to Moses by making the count and recording the number.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What records, or numbers, of different groups of people do your community leaders keep? How do your leaders record these numbers in your community? Pause this audio here.

Moses, Aaron, and the leaders of the Israelite tribes count and record the three clans of Levites by clan and family; they count all the Levites of the right age who can serve Yahweh by carrying the items of the tabernacle and courtyard. Moses records the total number of men as 8,580. The smaller numbers of the individual counts add up correctly to this large number. The priests—Aaron, Eleazar, and Ithamar—tell the Kohathites, Gershonites, and Merarites what to do at the tabernacle and what to carry when the Israelites move their camp. The priests obey Yahweh's instructions as they tell the people what to do.

Moses and Aaron count the men of the Levite tribes from 30 to 50 years old because Yahweh told Moses to do it. They were obedient to Yahweh.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 4:34–49 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, Aaron, and the leaders of the community count the Kohathite men from 30 to 50 years old, the men who will serve Yahweh at the tabernacle. Moses and Aaron record 2,750 men by their clans and families. Moses and Aaron obey Yahweh's instructions.

In the second scene: Moses, Aaron, and the leaders of the community count the Gershonite men from 30 to 50 years old, the men who will serve Yahweh at the tabernacle. Moses and Aaron record 2,630 men by their clans and families. Moses and Aaron obey Yahweh's instructions.

In the third scene: Moses, Aaron, and the leaders of the community count the Merarite men from 30 to 50 years old, the men who will serve Yahweh at the tabernacle. Moses and Aaron record 3,200 men by their clans and families. Moses and Aaron obey Yahweh's instructions.

In the fourth scene: Moses, Aaron, and the leaders of the community count and record 8,580 Levite men from 30 to 50 years old. The priests tell each Levite man his work in the tabernacle. Moses and Aaron do all of this to obey Yahweh.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Aaron
- Leaders of the Israelite community
- Kohathite men from 30 to 50 years old
- Gershonite men from 30 to 50 years old
- Merarite men from 30 to 50 years old

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

In this passage, Moses and Aaron follow Yahweh's instructions that Yahweh gave to them in the previous passages. Moses and Aaron obey Yahweh by counting and recording the men from the different Levite clans who will serve Yahweh by helping to carry the tabernacle. Moses and Aaron need help to do this work, so the leaders of the Israelite community help them. Moses and Aaron count and record each clan separately. Moses and Aaron count and record the Kohathites first. Then Moses and Aaron count and record the Gershonites. Finally, Moses and Aaron count and record the Merarites. Yahweh used this order to give instructions to Moses and Aaron.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What groups of people in your community do you people count and record, if any? What order do your people count groups of people in, and why? Pause this audio here.

Moses and Aaron obey Yahweh as they count and record the Levites. They follow the instructions from Yahweh to record each person by their clan and family. Moses wants the reader of the passage to understand the importance of obeying Yahweh. Moses makes this clear by saying at the end of each section, or scene, that Moses and Aaron did everything as Yahweh wanted them to do it. Moses and Aaron counted and recorded each clan of the Levites as Yahweh told Moses to do it.

At the end, Moses gives a summary of the counting and recording of the Levites. Moses, Aaron, and the leaders of the community did not make another count of the Levites all together. Moses records that the priests told

each Levite what to do to show people who read or hear this passage that the priests obeyed Yahweh's instructions.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 4:34–49 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
- Aaron
- Leaders of the Israelite community
- Kohathite men from 30 to 50 years old
- Gershonite men from 30 to 50 years old
- Merarite men from 30 to 50 years old

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, and the leaders of the Israelite community count the Kohathites. They record the men from 30 to 50 years old by their clans and families. Moses and Aaron obey Yahweh's instructions to Moses.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I will count the Kohathite men because Yahweh told me to do it," or, "There are many Kohathite men who can help serve Yahweh at the tabernacle."

Ask the person playing the leaders of the community, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "We must do this correctly to follow Yahweh's instructions to Moses and Aaron," or, "I am honoured to help Moses and Aaron count the Kohathite clan."

There are 2,750 Kohathite men from 30 to 50 years old.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Kohathite men, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "There are many of us to serve Yahweh at the tabernacle," or, "I am happy to serve Yahweh at the tabernacle," or, "I am nervous to carry the special items from the tabernacle and courtyard."

Moses, Aaron, and the leaders of the Israelite community count the Gershonite men from 30 to 50 years old and record them by their clans and families. There are 2,630 men to serve Yahweh at the tabernacle. Aaron and Moses obey Yahweh's instructions.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Aaron, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I am happy that there are so many men to carry the curtains and ropes of the tabernacle and courtyard," or, "We must follow Yahweh's instructions."

Ask the person playing the Gershonite men, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "We are ready to work with the priests at the tabernacle," or, "It is an honour to carry the parts of the tabernacle and courtyard to a new camp."

Moses, Aaron, and the leaders of the Israelite community count the Merarite men from 30 to 50 years old and record them by their clans and families. There are 3,200 men to serve Yahweh at the tabernacle. Aaron and Moses obey Yahweh's instructions to Moses.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "It is good to obey Yahweh," or, "I am pleased that we have counted the last of the men in the Levite clans."

Ask the person playing the Merarite men, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "We are ready to take the pillars and bases to a new camp when Yahweh needs us," or, "I am glad there are lots of us to move the heavy pillars and bases."

Moses and Aaron record the whole number of the Levite clans—the Kohathites, the Gershonites, and the Merarites—who were able to serve Yahweh at the tabernacle, or the tent of meeting. Aaron and the priests give each man his job to do, just as Yahweh instructed Moses.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I am pleased that we have finished counting and recording the Levite men who will help move the tabernacle to a new camp," or, "We have done what Yahweh has asked us to do."

Ask the person playing Aaron, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "We have told each person his job when we move camp," or, "I am happy that we have lots of people to help us move the tabernacle and courtyard."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 4:34–49 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Moses, Aaron, and the **leaders of the community** count the Kohathites. Use the same word or phrase for leaders of the community that you used in previous passages.

Moses and Aaron record the Kohathites, Gershonites, and Merarites by **clans** and families. Use the same word or phrase for clan as you used in previous passages.

Moses and Aaron record the men who could **serve** in the **tabernacle**, or the tent of meeting. Use the same words or phrases for serve and tabernacle that you used in previous passages. For more information on tabernacle, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Gershonites and Merarites serve in the **work**, or physical labour, of the tabernacle. Use the same word for work that you did in previous passages about the Gershonites and the Merarites.

Moses and Aaron make the counts and records of men in obedience to Yahweh's commandment 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 that you have in previous passages, and remember that Yahweh is in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh commanded, or told Moses, that Moses and Aaron should make records of the numbers of Kohathites, Gershonites, and Merarites. Moses and Aaron do everything according to what Yahweh told them.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 4:34-49

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Numbers 5:1-4

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 5:1-4 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 5:1-4 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 5:1-4 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

You will remember that in the previous stories, Yahweh gave instructions for how the people of Israel should organize themselves, both when they travel and when they stop to rest. In both of these situations, the tent of meeting represents Yahweh's presence and is at the center of the camp. In the present and the next stories, Yahweh will give more instructions to the Israelites about holiness and purity. Yahweh is holy, so the people must ensure that they are always pure and holy so that Yahweh will remain in their midst, even when they move into the promised land.

In this passage, Yahweh tells the people of Israel what to do with ritually unclean people. Ritually unclean people are people who have things in or on their bodies that are connected to illness or death. Because these things do not represent the holy Yahweh, Yahweh sees people who have these things as ritually unclean. Yahweh does not permit people who are ritually unclean to stay in the camp where Yahweh lives or to participate in worshiping Yahweh. So Yahweh tells Moses to instruct the people of Israel to take outside of their camp three kinds of ritually unclean people. For Yahweh, these types of uncleanness make the whole Israelite camp unclean or impure.

First, the Israelites should bring outside of their camp everyone who suffers from a severe skin disease. We don't know the exact skin disease that Yahweh refers to here, but it likely refers to skin diseases that can infect other people.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What common skin diseases can infect other people in your culture? Pause this audio here.

Second, the people should bring outside of their camp everyone who has a discharge, or anyone who has fluid coming out of their sexual organs. We don't know the exact discharge that Yahweh is talking about here, but it likely means fluids like menstruation, or fluids that come from a sexual disease.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What do people in your culture do with people who have discharges like menstruation or discharges from disease? Pause this audio here.

Third, and finally, the people should bring outside of their camp everyone who becomes unclean because they touch a dead person or animal.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What do people in your culture think about how dead bodies can affect living people? Pause this audio here.

The people must take them outside of the camp because the outermost part of the camp is the least holy place. The most holy place of the camp is the center, where the tabernacle is, because that is where Yahweh's presence lives. The holy place is the Israelite camps surrounding the most holy place. The least holy place is the place outside of the Israelite camps. Yahweh said that both men and women who are ritually unclean should stay outside of the camp so that they will not defile the camp. Here, defiling the camp means making the camp unclean, or unfit for Yahweh's holy presence. Yahweh lives in the midst of the people, so the Israelites must keep the camp holy and pure by removing from the camp anyone who is connected to illness or death. The Israelites must stay outside of the camp until they recover and complete the required ritual for purity so that they can go back to the camp.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What might people in your culture do to make sure that Yahweh, or their local gods, remain living with them or helping them? Pause this audio here.

The people did as Yahweh instructed. They took outside of the camp everyone who had a skin disease, or a discharge, or who had touched a dead person or animal. This shows that the people of Israel obeyed Yahweh.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 5:1–4 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 tells Moses to instruct the people of Israel to take out of their camp everyone who has a severe skin disease, a discharge, or has touched a dead body.

In the second scene: The people of Israel obey Yahweh.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- The people of Israel

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

In visualizing this passage, it is important to remember that Moses and the people were in Sinai. Sinai has a wilderness and a mountain. In this passage, Yahweh speaks to Moses, but we don't know where Moses is during this time. Moses may be on the mountain with Yahweh, or Moses may be in the tabernacle where Yahweh often speaks to Moses. What is clear is that they are still in Sinai.

In the first scene, Yahweh speaks to Moses. The introduction "Yahweh said to Moses" is the same each time that Yahweh gives instructions to Moses. Yahweh tells Moses to instruct the people of Israel to take out of their camp everyone who has a severe skin disease. Yahweh also says to take out of their camp everyone who has a discharge. Because Yahweh commanded this, Yahweh expects that everyone who has a discharge will admit to Moses or the priest that they have a discharge.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: These skin conditions or discharges might be culturally inappropriate to talk about in public. How will you translate these things appropriately in your culture and language? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh also says that the Israelites must take out of their camp everyone who has touched a dead body. Because Yahweh commanded this, Yahweh expects that everyone who has touched a dead body will admit to Moses or the priest that they have touched a dead body.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How would you list these three conditions of impurity or uncleanness? Pause this audio here.

After these instructions, Yahweh repeats that the Israelites should take out of the camp both male and female individuals who are ritually unclean and unable to be in Yahweh's holy presence. Yahweh adds the reason why the people of Israel need to do this: so that these people who are ritually unclean will not defile the camp, or make the camp unclean too. Yahweh, their Yahweh, lives among them, so the camp must remain pure and holy. In this scene, three times Yahweh explicitly mentions the instruction to take the unclean people out of the camp. This means that Yahweh's command to take the unclean people out of their camp is very important.

In the second scene, the people of Israel obey Yahweh. They take out of their camp everyone who has a severe skin disease, a discharge, or has touched a dead body. Moses describes what the people did using the same descriptions of the problems that Yahweh used to instruct them. The repetition of the descriptions emphasizes that the Israelites did exactly as Yahweh told Moses.

It is important to show that the people did not use force or violence when they took these people outside of their camp. The people did not want to become ritually unclean themselves, so they probably only spoke to the unclean people in order to get them to leave the camp. It is also important to note that the unclean people stayed outside the camp only for a short time, until they could become ritually clean again and return to the camp.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 5:1-4 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 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 following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

In scene one, Yahweh tells Moses to instruct the people of Israel to take out of their camp everyone who has a severe skin disease, a discharge, or who has touched a dead body.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I am really delighted when my people keep their camp clean, pure, and holy. Because I am pure and holy, my people and their camp should always be pure and holy," or, "I'm really sad and upset when my people do not keep their camp clean, pure, and holy. I am pure and holy, so my people and their camp should always be pure and holy."

In the second scene, the people of Israel obey Yahweh.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the people, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "We are happy to obey Yahweh, because Yahweh loves us, and Yahweh cares for us!" or, "We are anxious because Yahweh might be upset if we don't keep ourselves and our camps pure and holy. We don't want to upset and anger Yahweh, our Yahweh!"

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 5:1–4 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

In this passage, **Yahweh** tells the people of Israel what to do with ritually unclean people. Remember that Yahweh is God's personal name. Translate it in the same way you have translated it before. For more information about Yahweh, you may refer to the Master Glossary.

The passage begins with Yahweh telling Moses to give instructions to the people. Yahweh says that the people of Israel must put out of the camp everyone who has a **severe skin disease**, a **discharge**, or who is **unclean** because that person has touched a dead person. Some translations talk about a specific skin disease called leprosy, while others do not specify the disease. The modern disease of leprosy is not the same as the leprosy described in the Bible. Whatever the exact skin disease is here, it is likely contagious, which means it could also infect other people. A person who has a discharge has fluid coming out of his or her sexual organ, probably because of a disease. A ritually unclean person has things in or on that person's body that are connected with illness or death. People who are ritually unclean cannot stay in the same place where Yahweh lives, so they must stay outside of the camp until they have fully recovered.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **severe skin disease** or **leprosy**, **discharge**, and **unclean**. If you have already translated these words in another book of the Bible, use the same words that you have used there. You may look up leprosy and clean/unclean in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh says that the people of Israel should put these people outside of their camp, both male and female, so that they will not defile the camp in which Yahweh lives in their midst. Here, "defiling the camp" means making the camp unfit for Yahweh's holy presence.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **defile**. See the Master Glossary for more information about profane, or defile. 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 people of Israel obeyed Yahweh.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 5:1-4

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (9133959 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Numbers 5:5-10

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 5:5-10 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 5:5-10 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 5:5-10 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Yahweh told Moses to instruct the people of Israel to take out of their camp anyone who had a severe skin disease, or a discharge, or who had touched a dead body. In this passage, Yahweh tells Moses to instruct the people of Israel what to do with people who have sinned against other people, and how to take care of the priests among them. Yahweh wants even the relationships between people to be holy in order for the entire camp of Israelites to remain holy and pure.

In Yahweh's first instruction, Yahweh talks about any person who is unfaithful to Yahweh. A person is unfaithful when that person is not loyal to someone that they promised to be loyal to. The Israelites had promised to obey Yahweh and to be loyal to Yahweh. In this passage, a person is unfaithful to Yahweh when that person sins against another person. Sin means disobedience to Yahweh. We don't know the exact sin that Yahweh is talking about here, but it likely refers to cheating, deceiving, stealing, or lying that results in damages to another person. Yahweh said that anyone who commits any of these sins, whether a man or a woman, is guilty. This means that he or she is responsible for the consequences of his or her sins.

Any guilty person must confess, or admit, the sin that they have done. Also, that person must pay for the damages that resulted from their sin. The amount that the person needs to pay is the full value of the damages,

but they also need to add twenty percent, or a fifth, of the total damages. A fifth is a portion of the total value. If a person equally divides the total value into five portions, each of those five portions is a fifth of the total value.

If the person who this guilty person offended has already died, the guilty person must give the payment to the closest relative of the person who they harmed. If the person who was harmed has no close relative, the guilty person must give the payment to Yahweh by giving it to the priest. Whether the person who was harmed is dead or alive, the person who is guilty must, in addition, offer the priest a ram of atonement. A ram is a male sheep.

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

Atonement is the ritual that priests perform for a guilty person so that the guilty person can be in a good relationship with Yahweh again. In this ritual, the guilty person must give a ram to the priest, which the priest will then sacrifice to Yahweh on behalf of the guilty person.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What do people in your culture expect that a guilty person will do to make up for their sin? You may also discuss this question as a group: How does a guilty person in your community restore or pay back what they have taken from someone or the harm they have caused someone? Pause this audio here.

We can sum up Yahweh's instructions in this way: Any person who sins against another person is unfaithful to Yahweh and is guilty, or responsible, for the consequences of their sin. The guilty person must do three things: first, they must confess their sin; second, they must pay for the damages resulting from their sin, plus a fifth of the total value of the damages; and third, they must give a ram to the priest so the priest can make an atonement for the guilty person. In addition to the ram, the person who sins must give the payment for their damages to the priest, whether the person they offended has died or not.

Yahweh also said that every donation, or gift, that the people of Israel gave to the priests was holy and belonged to the priests. These gifts could include remaining portions of the peoples' offerings or the payment that the people gave to the priests because of their guilt. The people could not take the gifts back. Yahweh's instruction teaches the people of Israel to provide for the priests. This passage shows how much Yahweh wants Yahweh's people to live in peace with each other.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture take care of the priests or religious leaders who help them keep their relationship with God?

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 5:5–10 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 two scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh tells Moses to instruct the people about what to do with guilty and unfaithful people who do wrong things to each other.

In the second scene: Yahweh tells Moses to instruct the people about how to take care of the priests.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- The Israelites
- The priests

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

In visualizing this passage, it is important to remember that Moses and the people were in Sinai. Sinai has a wilderness and a mountain. In this passage, Yahweh speaks to Moses, but we don't know where Moses is during this time. Moses may be on the mountain with Yahweh, or Moses may be in the wilderness below the mountain with the people. What is clear is that they are still in Sinai.

The passage records Yahweh's speeches. In acting out the passage, it is important to act out the scenes using the very words that Yahweh spoke in the passage.

In scene one, Yahweh says that when a man or woman sins against another person, that man or woman is being unfaithful to Yahweh and is guilty. We don't know the exact sin that Yahweh is talking about here, but it likely involves sins that result in the loss of money, property, or honor of another person. Committing any of these sins not only harms the victim, but it also hurts Yahweh, because Yahweh considers such sins as disobedience and disloyalty to Yahweh. Any person who does these sins, whether a man or a woman, is guilty. A guilty person is a person who has harmed or offended another person and must pay for the consequences of their actions.

Stop and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture describe or talk about a guilty person? You may share a story about someone who did something wrong and had to pay for the consequences of their actions. Pay attention to the story about the guilty person, and listen for the words and emotions that the storyteller uses. Pause this audio here.

Any guilty person must take responsibility for their sin by doing three things: first, the guilty person must confess their sin; second, they must pay the person they have wronged for the damages resulting from their sin, plus a fifth of the damages; and third, they must give a ram to the priest so the priest can make an atonement for their sin. Remember that a fifth is a portion of the total value. If a person equally divides the total value into five portions, each of those five portions is a fifth of the total value.

Stop and discuss this question as a group: How might people in your culture describe a fifth of the total value of an object? Try this activity as a group: Gather five items together, like five stones or five sticks. One fifth of these items is one of these items. Therefore, add one more item to this group, so that you have six items now. You have added one fifth of the amount to the full amount. You may work out an activity to show how this might look like in your culture. How do you talk about adding percentages to a full amount? How will you talk about repaying and adding on a fifth? Pause this audio here.

Moses also talks about what to do if the person the wrongdoer has harmed, or one of that person's close relatives, is not alive. This is extra information about how to handle an unusual situation. Moses includes this information in the middle of the information about the three things a person must do if they have harmed someone else. The guilty person must give the payment for their damages to Yahweh by giving the payment to the priest if the person they offended has already died. You may re-order this information in a way that makes sense in your language, if you would like.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How will you talk about the three things a person who has harmed another person must do? And then how will you talk about the special situation when they must pay the priest if there is no one else to whom to make the payment? Pause this audio here.

In scene two, Yahweh says every holy contribution that the people of Israel give to the priest belongs to Yahweh. Whatever the priest receives is considered a gift to Yahweh, and it now belongs to the priest. The people cannot take it back from the priest.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 5:5–10 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 Israelites
- The priests

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 tells Moses that anyone who harms someone else is guilty and should confess that they have done something wrong. The guilty person should pay back whatever they owe to the person they wronged, and the guilty person should add one fifth to whatever they pay back.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I'm really sad and upset when my people hurt each other, because they are being unfaithful to me," or, "I love my people, and I want them to love one another too. That is why they need to know that when they hurt another person, they are also hurting themselves, and they're hurting me."

In the second scene, Yahweh says that if the victim has died, the wrongdoer should give the repayment to the closest relative. If there is no closest relative, the wrongdoer should give the repayment to the priest. The wrongdoer should also give a ram to the priest so that the priest can make an atonement for the wrongdoer. Anything that an Israelite gives to the priest always belongs to the priest.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "We are grateful for the priests because they work hard to help the camp remain pure and holy so that Yahweh will remain with us," or, "We should love our priests and help find ways to support them for the very important work that they do!" Ask the person playing the priest, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel really thankful that Yahweh remembers us and takes care of us," or, "I always want to do a good job being the person who makes atonement for the Israelites."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 5:5–10 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

In the present passage, **Yahweh** tells Moses to instruct the **Israelites** about what to do with people who commit a sin and how to provide for the priests among the Israelites. Yahweh gives these instructions so that relationships among the people of Israel and with Yahweh will remain holy and pure. In turn, Yahweh will remain in the midst of the Israelites. Use the same words for Yahweh and Israelites that you have used in previous passages, and refer to the Master Glossary for more information about Yahweh and Israelites.

Yahweh says that any man or woman who sins against another person in any way is **unfaithful** to Yahweh and is **guilty**. A person is unfaithful if they do not do everything that they promise to do in a covenant. Unfaithfulness even includes acting wrongly or being disloyal to someone—it is a betrayal of the relationship. People are guilty when they do something that hurts others, and they must pay for it.

Stop here and discuss as a group what words or phrases you will use for **unfaithful** and **guilty**. If you have already translated these words in another book of the Bible, use the same words here that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh says that any guilty person must **confess** the **sin** they have committed. To confess means to tell the truth about something you did wrong. Sin means to disobey Yahweh.

Pause the drama.

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

Yahweh also says that any guilty person must make full **restitution**, or pay for the damages, that result from their sin, adding a fifth of the total value of the damages. Restitution means paying back what a person owes to another person. A fifth is a portion of the total value. If the total value is equally divided into five portions, each of those five portions is a fifth of the total value. In other words, the guilty person must pay back the person they offended with the full amount, plus a fifth of the total value of the damages.

Stop here and discuss as a group what words or phrases you will use for **restitution** or repayment, and **one-fifth** of an amount. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh continues and says that if the person who was harmed has no close relative to whom the guilty person must give their payment, the guilty person must give their payment to Yahweh by giving it to the **priest**. Priests were people who helped the Israelites to know Yahweh, and the priests led people to Yahweh. The priests also helped restore the relationship between Yahweh and people whenever that relationship was broken because of the people's sins. Use the same word for priest that you have used in previous passages and remember that priest is in the Master Glossary.

The guilty person must give the payment to the priest. The guilty person must also give the **ram of atonement** to the priest so that the priest can atone for the guilty person. A ram is a male goat. Atonement is the ritual that the priests perform for the Israelites so that the Israelites can have a good relationship with Yahweh again.

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

Yahweh also says that when an Israelite gives a **contribution**, or gift, to Yahweh, it becomes **holy**, or sacred, because it is set apart for Yahweh. All of these holy things belong to the priests. These gifts are the things that people give to the priests such as remaining portions of offerings or payments because of their guilt. All of these things are considered special, or holy, things just for Yahweh and the priests' use. Use the same word for holy that you have used in previous passages, and refer to holy in the Master Glossary for more information.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **contribution** or gift to Yahweh. Translate contribution in the same way that you have translated it before.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 5:5–10

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (11372649 KB)

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Numbers 5:11–31

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 5:11–31 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 5:11–31 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 5:11–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The previous passage was Yahweh's instructions to the people of Israel about what they should do with people who commit sin and how to provide for the priests among the Israelites. The present passage is about Yahweh's instructions for a ritual when a husband suspects his wife is being unfaithful to him. The purpose of the ritual is to determine the wife's guilt or innocence. Yahweh gives these instructions so that the people of Israel will remain holy and pure. In turn, Yahweh will remain in the midst of the Israelite people.

The passage begins with Yahweh telling Moses what the people of Israel should do when a husband suspects, but is not sure, that his wife has been unfaithful to him by having sex with another man. Yahweh is very serious that husbands and wives must stay faithful to each other, because marriage symbolizes the covenant, or strong promise, between Yahweh and Yahweh's people. A person is unfaithful when he or she is not loyal to their covenant partner. When people defile themselves by having sex with someone they are not married to, they become unfit to be in the presence of Yahweh.

Yahweh says to Moses that if a husband does not have evidence that his wife has been unfaithful, because nobody saw what she did, yet her husband feels jealous and suspects that his wife has been unfaithful, then the husband must take his wife to a priest. In ancient Israelite law, when people accuse someone of a crime, Yahweh requires at least two or three witnesses to determine the person's guilt or innocence. Because the husband is not sure if his wife has been unfaithful, the only way for him to be sure is to consult Yahweh, since the Israelites in general believe that Yahweh sees everything and can make fair judgments even in cases where there are no witnesses. The priest serves as Yahweh's representative among them. By bringing the matter to the priest, the husband is bringing the matter before Yahweh. This protects wives from being unjustly accused just because the husband is jealous.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What do people in your culture do when they have to decide difficult cases where they suspect that someone has done something wrong, but they have no proof? Pause this audio here.

When the husband brings his wife to the priest, the husband must also bring an offering, or a gift, on behalf of his wife. The offering should be a tenth of an ephah of barley flour. Barley was a grain, like wheat and rice, and a tenth of an ephah of barley is about one basket, or 3 to 4 kilograms. Because the wife needs to prove her innocence, she cannot make the offering herself, which is why the husband should do this on behalf of his wife. In addition, the husband should not pour olive oil on the barley or put incense on it. People make olive oil out of olives. Incense is a substance that comes from a tree. People commonly dry and reduce this substance to powder, which then produces a pleasing aroma. When people use it in grain offerings, they put it with olive oil so that when they burn the offering on the altar, the aroma of the offering will be pleasing to Yahweh. In this instance, it is not clear why Yahweh said that the grain offering should be dry and should not include olive oil and incense. It is possible that Yahweh required the grain offering to be dry because we do not know yet if the woman is guilty. If she is guilty, the offering she would give would be dry. In any case, this grain offering is called the grain offering of jealousy, or a grain offering of remembrance. Its purpose is to remind the wife of the unfaithfulness that her husband suspects her of doing.

Stop here and, as a group, look at a picture of barley flour, olive oil, and incense. Pause this audio here.

After the husband performs these steps, the priest shall perform a ritual which Yahweh explains in great detail because the suspected sin is very serious to Yahweh. When people do this sin, they defile themselves as well as the whole camp, and they make the camp unfit for Yahweh's holy presence. Thus, there should be no hint of unfaithfulness in the Israelite community. Yahweh gives clear and repeated instructions for this ritual to ensure that the truth will come out and that the people will take the right course of action.

The first thing that the priest shall do is to lead the woman to the altar where she will stand before Yahweh. The altar is an elevated platform inside the tabernacle where the priest offers sacrifices to Yahweh. You will remember that the altar inside the tabernacle is the incense altar. The priest shall take holy water, which is water that priests use to wash their hands and feet before serving in the tabernacle, and he will put it in a jar made of clay. Then the priest will put some dust or dirt that is on the floor of the tabernacle into the holy water.

Stop here and, as a group, look at a picture of a clay jar, the altar inside the tabernacle, and the tabernacle. Pause this audio here.

The priest shall again present the woman before Yahweh. Then, the priest must unbind or uncover the hair of the woman and put in her hands the grain offering. In Israelite culture, women typically covered their hair, but sometimes, they uncovered their hair as a sign of uncleanness or shame. When the priest uncovers the woman's hair, he shows that she might be unclean or shamed because she may have been unfaithful to her husband. Meanwhile, the priest shall hold in his hand the bitter water that brings a curse. This is the clay jar with holy water and dirt from the tabernacle floor. When the woman drinks the water at the end of the ritual, Yahweh will curse her if she is guilty. Her life will become difficult.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What might a person in your culture look like if he or she is cursed by God? What might other people do to individuals who they think God has cursed? Pause this audio here.

Before the woman drinks the water, the priest will make the woman take an oath, or a promise, before Yahweh. The woman has to agree to Yahweh's condition. If she has not had a sexual relationship with any man other than her husband while she is legally married to her husband, then the bitter water that brings a curse will not harm her. But if the woman has defiled herself by having a sexual relationship with another man while she is legally married to her husband, then the priest shall speak a curse upon the woman. The priest shall ask Yahweh to curse the woman among her people. Any person who Yahweh curses suffers shame and rejection. Other people will also curse the woman and make her an example for future cases.

In addition, Yahweh's curse will also prevent the unfaithful woman from conceiving. If she is already pregnant, the child inside of her will die. The woman's abdomen, or stomach area, will swell so that she will no longer be able to conceive; she will be barren. Her barrenness will be a sign of Yahweh's curse. The priest shall ask for the bitter water that brings a curse to enter the woman's body and this is what will cause her abdomen to swell, and her baby will die inside her if she is pregnant. After the priest speaks this oath, the woman must agree to the oath by saying, "Amen, amen." The word "amen" means "so be it" or "I agree." Here, it is said twice to express the woman's full agreement to the oath that Yahweh has set before her. The priest shall write these curses on a scroll or a book. A scroll is a piece of material that people used to write on.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What materials do people in your culture use to write on? Pause this audio here.

After the priest writes these curses on a scroll, he then must wash the curses off by putting the scroll into the bitter water. In this way, the curses will mix with the water. The priest shall make the woman drink the water that brings the curse so that it will enter the woman's body and cause her great pain. But before the priest makes the woman drink the water, the priest shall first take the grain offering of jealousy from the woman's hand and wave it before Yahweh, perhaps by lifting it up. Then the priest shall bring the offering to the altar. The priest shall take a portion of the grain offering as the memorial offering and burn it on the altar. Yahweh wants the Israelites to remember this ritual so that they will avoid unfaithfulness at all costs.

After this, the priest shall ask the woman to drink the water. If the woman is guilty of defiling herself and being unfaithful to her husband, the water that brings a curse shall enter the woman's body and cause her great pain. Then the woman's body will swell, and if she is pregnant, the baby will die. Also, the woman shall be a curse among her people. This means that Yahweh will curse the woman and people around her will also curse her.

But if the woman is not guilty of defiling herself, and she is clean and therefore fit to be in the presence of Yahweh, then she shall be free from punishment and shall be able to conceive children. It is important to understand that the water itself does not have magical powers. It is Yahweh who causes either punishment or blessing.

Yahweh said that this is the law in cases where a woman is unfaithful or where a woman's husband suspects her of being unfaithful. Yahweh repeats the purpose of the law so that everyone will understand it. The husband should bring his wife to the priest. The priest shall lead the woman to the altar, present her before Yahweh, and perform all the rituals that Yawheh commanded. The husband will be innocent of wrongdoing, which means that Yahweh will not punish the husband for his jealousy or suspicion. But the woman will suffer the consequences of her sin. This means that Yahweh will hold her responsible for her sin. This law, therefore, recognizes Yahweh as the judge in either case. It is Yahweh who determines what to do and what the punishment is. The community cannot punish someone just because the community suspects that person of wrongdoing. The law lets the accused person prove they are innocent. Yahweh is serious about maintaining the holiness in the camp, and that is why Yahweh does not allow anyone among his people to be unfaithful.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What do married men and women in your culture do when they suspect their spouse of being unfaithful?

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 5:11–31 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 gives instructions about what a husband must do when the husband feels jealous of his wife because he suspects her of being unfaithful.

In the second scene: Yahweh gives instructions to the priest about how to prepare for the ritual that the suspected wife must perform to determine her guilt or innocence.

In the third scene: Yahweh gives instructions to the priest about how to perform the ritual with the suspected wife to know her guilt or innocence.

In the fourth scene: Yahweh summarizes the law about jealousy.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- A priest
- A husband
- A wife

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

In visualizing this passage, it is important to remember that Moses and the people were in Sinai. Sinai has a wilderness and a mountain. In this passage, Yahweh speaks to Moses, but we don't know where Moses is during this time. Moses may be on the mountain with God, or Moses may be in the wilderness below the mountain with the people. What is clear is that they are still around Sinai.

Most of the passage records Yahweh's speeches to Moses. In acting out the passage, it is important to act out the scenes using the very words that Yahweh spoke in the passage.

In scene one, Yahweh gives instructions about what to do when a husband suspects that his wife has been unfaithful to him by having sexual relations with another man while she is legally married to her husband. The husband does not know if the wife has been unfaithful because her unfaithfulness may have been hidden from his eyes, meaning that the husband did not catch his wife in the act of unfaithfulness. Furthermore, there are no witnesses.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture describe the behavior of a married person who has sex with a person who is not their spouse? What word or words do they use? Pause this audio here.

When the husband feels this way, he must bring his wife to the priest. In other words, whether the wife was unfaithful or not, if the husband feels jealous of his wife, the husband must bring his wife to the priest. Then, the priest must perform a ritual with the woman to determine whether she is innocent or guilty.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture describe jealousy? What word or words do they use? Pause this audio here.

In scene two, the priest begins the preparation for the woman's ritual by leading her to stand before Yahweh. Because the ritual involves an offering, the priest will likely lead the woman to stand by the altar. The priest will put some dust from the tabernacle floor into water that is in a clay jar—this is the holy, or bitter, water. After this, Yahweh repeats the command to the priest to have the woman stand before Yahweh. This repetition shows that this command is important. Then the priest will prepare the woman by making her hair loose—nothing should tie up her hair. Then the priest will put the grain offering into the woman's hands. The priest will hold the holy water for the ritual. After this, the priest shall ask the woman to make an oath. This means that the priest shall have the woman agree to the curse that Yahweh will set forth to decide her guilt or innocence. At this point, Yahweh tells the priest the exact words to use. Yahweh says that if no other man than the woman's husband has had sex with her, and it turns out that the woman did not defile herself and become unfaithful, then the woman will be free from the bitterness that would have resulted from Yahweh's curse. But if the woman went astray while legally married to her husband, and defiled herself by having sex with another man, then Yahweh will make her a curse among her people. Yahweh will do this by causing her thigh, or upper leg, to fall away and her body to swell. This means that the woman will not be able to have babies anymore. As a result, the baby inside her will die if she is pregnant, and she will not conceive a baby again. The priest shall mention that it is the bitter water that Yahweh will use to curse her so that her body will swell, and the baby will die if she is pregnant. This repetition emphasizes Yahweh's curse upon the woman if she is proven unfaithful. At the end of this scene, the woman shall agree by saying, "Amen, Amen."

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will say in your language the things that the priest should say to the woman. How do you talk about women not being able to have children anymore? Here, the people talk about the woman's thigh falling away and her womb swelling. What special ways do you talk about this subject? Pause this audio here.

In scene three, the priest begins to perform the ritual. First the priest will write the curse on a scroll, and then the priest will wash the writing off into the water that is mixed with dust. We do not know exactly how the priest will wash off the writing. The order of the actions of the priest may sound confusing here. First the priest will take the grain offering that the woman is holding, and the priest will wave it, or lift it up in front of the altar to Yahweh. Then the priest will take a handful of the grain and burn it on the altar. Then, the priest will ask the woman to drink the bitter water that brings a curse. If the woman defiled herself and was unfaithful to her husband, then when the woman drinks the water, the water that brings a curse will enter the woman's body and cause her great pain. The woman's thigh will fall away, her womb will swell, the baby will die if the woman is pregnant, and the woman will be a curse among her people. These are all ways to talk about the woman no longer being able to have children.

But if the woman did not defile herself by having sexual relations with any man other than her husband, then the woman will be free from Yahweh's punishment, and she will be able to conceive children.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How would you describe, or list in your language, each of the steps that the priest must take in the ritual? Pause this audio here.

In scene four, Yahweh summarizes the law of jealousy. When a wife goes astray and becomes unfaithful to her husband while she is still legally married to him, or when the husband feels jealous of his wife because he suspects she has been unfaithful to him, the husband must present his wife before Yahweh by bringing her to a priest, and the priest must do everything that Yahweh instructed in this law. People will not punish the man, or husband, for his jealousy or suspicion, but the woman will bear her iniquity if she is guilty, which means that she will be responsible for her sin.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 5:11–31 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:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- A priest
- A husband
- A wife

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 instructions about what a husband must do when he feels jealous of his wife because he suspects her of being unfaithful.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the husband, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel like my wife is being unfaithful to me, but I have no way to prove that. I am upset, and I don't know what to do! But I know Yahweh knows the truth, so I must bring this case before Yahweh," or, "I am hurt just thinking about the possibility that my wife might have been unfaithful to me. I wonder what I did wrong that encouraged her to do that to me!"

In the second scene, Yahweh gives instructions to the priest about preparing for the trial that the suspected wife must undergo to determine her guilt or innocence.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the priest, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "This is a difficult task for me because I know that the woman will feel pain. But I love Yahweh, so I will obey

Yahweh's instructions," or, "This is a difficult trial, but I hope that this will help reveal the truth, and this will serve as a lesson to everyone about how important faithfulness is to Yahweh."

In the third scene, Yahweh gives instructions to the priest about how to perform the trial with the suspected wife.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the wife, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I know that I was faithful to my husband, so I am sure that I will not be harmed by the water that brings a curse. Thank Yahweh for this law that protects me from being unjustly accused! Maybe I can have a good relationship with my husband now!" or, "Oh no! I was unfaithful to my husband, and I am about to suffer the consequences of my sin! I am worried and scared because I will surely suffer from Yahweh's curse after this!"

In the fourth scene, Yahweh summarizes the law about jealousy.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I am very upset when there is any hint of unfaithfulness among my people," or, "I hope that my people realize how much I hate unfaithfulness, and how much I love faithfulness."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 5:11–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Yahweh tells Moses what to tell the Israelites when a husband feels jealous of his wife. The name of God used throughout this passage is God's personal name, Yahweh. Look up Yahweh in the Master Glossary for more information.

Yahweh says to Moses that when a wife has sexual relations with someone who is not her husband, she **defiles** herself. When someone defiles themselves, they become **impure**, or unfit to serve Yahweh. So you may say that the woman became impure, that the woman defiled herself, or that the woman became **unclean**.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How will you talk about the woman becoming impure or defiling herself? For more information about this action, see the words pure, clean/unclean, and profane or defile in the Master Glossary. If you have translated these words in another book of the Bible, use the same words here that you used there. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh also says that perhaps a man's wife defiled herself by having sexual relations with another man, but there is no **witness** against her. A witness is a person who saw an event or a crime take place.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How will you translate the word **witness**? If you have translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word here that you used there. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh says that even if there is not a witness against a man's wife, if a **spirit of jealousy** comes over the husband, then the husband should bring his wife to the **priest**. A spirit of jealousy refers to the unpleasant feeling a husband feels if he suspects his wife has been unfaithful to him. Use the same word for priest that you have used in previous passages, and remember that priest is in the Master Glossary.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How will you talk about the **spirit of jealousy**? If you have translated the term for jealousy in previous books of the Bible, use the same word here. Pause this audio here.

When the husband brings his wife to the priest, he must also bring the offering that a wife who is unfaithful should bring. The offering is a tenth of an ephah of barley flour, or barley flour that is enough to fill one small basket. He shall not pour olive oil on the barley flour, or put incense on the barley flour, because it is a **grain offering** of jealousy, or a grain offering of remembrance that reminds the woman of her **iniquity**. Iniquity is the same thing as sin or guilt. The Israelites bring their grain offering to Yahweh at an **altar**. Translate altar and

grain offering in the same way you have translated them in previous passages. Look up grain offering and altar in the Master Glossary for more information.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for a tenth of an **ephah** of barley flour. See the Master Glossary for more information about ephah. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **iniquity**. For more information about the idea of guilt, or iniquity, see the word sin in the Master Glossary. You may use the word for sin here. Pause this audio here.

After the priest presents the woman before Yahweh, the priest must take holy water and put it in an earthen jar, or a clay jar. Then the priest should take some dust from the floor of the tabernacle and put it into the water. The holy water is the water that priests use to wash themselves before serving in the **tabernacle**. The tabernacle is the tent where Yahweh resides among the people. Then the priest should uncover the woman's hair, and place in her hands the grain offering, while he holds in his hand the bitter water that brings a **curse**. Cursing is when a person wishes something bad to happen to another person. This water is called water of bitterness that brings a curse because if the woman is guilty, and she drinks this water, then Yahweh's curse will take effect on her, and her life will be difficult. Translate the words curse and tabernacle in the same way you have translated them before. Curse and tabernacle are in the Master Glossary if you need more information.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **holy water** and the **water of bitterness** that brings a curse. Remember that holy is in the Master Glossary. Use the same word for holy that you have used in previous passages. Pause this audio here.

Then the priest shall make the woman take an **oath** that she is not guilty. An oath is a strong promise in which the person says that, if they do not keep their promise, Yahweh can punish them.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **oath**. See the Master Glossary for more information about oath. Pause this audio here.

After the priest tells the woman what will happen to her if she is guilty, the woman shall say, "Amen, amen." **Amen** is an expression that means "I agree" or "May it be true."

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **amen**. Look up amen in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

The priest should write the curse on a **scroll** and then put the scroll in the bitter water that brings curses. A scroll is a long piece of paper or material that people can write on and then roll up.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word you will use for **scroll**. Look at the photo again if needed. Pause this audio here.

This is the **law** of jealousy, or God's command about jealousy.

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

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 5:11–31

Audio Content

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Numbers 6:1–12

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 6:1–12 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 6:1–12 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 6:1–12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passages, Yahweh instructed Moses to prepare the Israelites for living in Canaan, the land Yahweh has promised to give to the Israelites. Yahweh particularly instructed Moses how to organize the Levites. You will remember that Yahweh chose and set apart the Levites for special service as Yahweh's priests.

In this passage, Yahweh continues to give Moses instructions. Yahweh gives directions for anyone who wants to set themselves apart as a special servant of Yahweh by making a Nazirite vow. This kind of vow will set someone apart for special service to Yahweh for a certain amount of time. Sometimes Nazirites may make the vow for their whole life, but usually a person will make the vow for a specific amount of time. Nazirites must follow some similar laws to what the priests follow.

When a person makes a vow, it means they promise to do something for another person or for a deity. If they break their vow by not doing what they promised, then the person or deity that they made the vow to can punish them. When someone vows to be a Nazirite, that person vows to be specially devoted to Yahweh for a period of time. In English translations of the Bible, the word Nazirite is used as a title of the person who makes this vow. However, the word in the original language simply describes someone who is separated. Nazirites are similar to priests in the way they are specially set apart and dedicated to Yahweh's service.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What kinds of vows do people in your community make? Why do they make the vow? Tell a story about someone you know who made a vow to do something for a particular purpose. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses that the person who makes this special vow must show that they are set apart from the other Israelites. Yahweh instructs Moses that Nazirites must show their separation by avoiding three things: drinking alcohol and anything made from grapes, cutting the hair on their head, and touching dead bodies. The Nazirite must live like this for the entire time they vow to live as a Nazirite.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about someone who lived a certain way or gave up something for a particular purpose. What rituals do people in your community follow to set themselves apart from the rest of the community? Pause this audio here.

The first mark of a Nazirite is that the man or woman must separate themselves from, or not drink, wine or any other alcoholic drink. The Nazirite must also not drink vinegar, or fermented drinks, made from wine or any other alcohol.

Wine is fermented grape juice that is alcoholic. Grapes are small round fruits that grow in clusters on a vine. Grapes have seeds inside them and a thin red or green skin that can be eaten. People ate whole grapes fresh or dried. People also drank fresh grape juice or fermented it into wine. When wine fermented longer, the wine became sour vinegar that could be used in cooking. People made other alcoholic drinks by fermenting other fruits or grains like barley and wheat. This kind of alcohol could also be fermented further to make a sour vinegar.

Stop here and look at a picture of grapes on a grapevine as a group. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh emphasizes to Moses that the Nazirite must be separated from grapes in any form. The Nazirite must not drink any kind of liquid, such as juice that people made from grapes, and they must not eat fresh or dried grapes, not even the seeds or the skin of the grape. This restriction is one of Yahweh's instructions to a Nazirite to symbolize his or her separation from the other Israelites and their dedication to Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What foods do people commonly eat in your community? What foods are important and have special meaning in your community? What would you think if someone stopped eating that food for a certain period of time? Pause this audio here.

The second mark of a Nazirite is that during all the days of the Nazirite's vow to be set apart, they must not allow a razor to shave or cut the hair on their head, because their hair is a sign that everyone will see. A razor is a sharp tool, like a knife, used for cutting hair or shaving. Yahweh tells Moses that anyone who takes the Nazirite vow will be holy and they must let their hair grow long.

The third mark of a Nazirite is that all the days the Nazirite is set apart to Yahweh, they must not go near a dead body. Just being near a dead body is enough to make the Nazirite unclean and no longer able to serve Yahweh. Even if the dead body is the Nazirite's father, mother, brother, or sister, he or she must not go near the dead body because the dead body will defile the Nazirite, or make them unclean. To become unclean does not mean to be physically dirty but to become unfit for service to God. The Nazirite is also no longer able to worship Yahweh in the tabernacle until the Nazirite becomes clean again.

Yahweh explains that the dead body makes a Nazirite unclean because the separation to Yahweh is on the Nazirite's head. This means that if the man or woman is living as a Nazirite, their long hair on their head represents their holiness and special dedication to Yahweh, but a dead body spoils that person's holy status, or state, before Yahweh.

Yahweh then tells Moses what the Nazirite should do to become clean if he or she is accidentally near a dead body. If anyone dies suddenly near the Nazirite, it will cause their hair, which symbolized their vow to Yahweh, to become ritually unclean. When this happens, the Nazirite must shave their head on the day of their purification. That day is the seventh day after they become unclean.

On the eighth day after the Nazirite becomes unclean, the Nazirite must bring sacrifices for his or her cleansing to the priest at the entrance of the tent of meeting. The Nazirite must bring either two turtledoves or two pigeons. The priest will offer one of the birds as a sin or purification offering and the other bird as a burnt offering. The sin offering, or purification offering, makes the Nazirite ritually clean again. The burnt offering is also called the whole burnt offering because the priest burned the whole animal. The priest offered this offering also as a ritual sacrifice to make the Nazirite ritually clean again.

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

The priest offers the sacrifices to make atonement for the Nazirite, because he or she sinned by being near a dead body and became impure and unable to worship Yahweh. In this passage, the Nazirite did not sin in a way that disobeyed God's moral law. But the Nazirite did fail to stay holy to Yahweh. This failure made the Nazirite ritually impure. You will remember that when the priest makes atonement for someone, they are often sacrificing the animal in order to purify that person, or make that person ritually clean, so that the person can have a right relationship with Yahweh again.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What kind of rituals or activities do people in your community do to deal with impurity and restore that person to a good relationship with God? Pause this audio here.

On the same day the priest offers the sacrifices, the man or woman will re-dedicate themselves to be holy to Yahweh. The days of their previous vow will not count. The Nazirite must live for the full number of days they first vowed to live as a Nazirite.

On the day the person sets themselves apart again to Yahweh, he or she must bring a one-year-old ram, which is a male sheep, to the priest to offer as a guilt offering, or reparation offering.

Stop here and look at a picture of a one-year-old male sheep as a group. Pause this audio here.

A reparation offering is an offering to pay back Yahweh because the person is no longer holy. Some translations call this offering a guilt offering because its purpose was to take away the person's guilt before Yahweh and restore the person to a non-guilty state in relation to Yahweh. This offering is the celebration offering. The Nazirite is now ritually clean but needs to have a restored relationship with Yahweh. The reparation offering restores the Nazirite to Yahweh.

Even though the Nazirite did not defile themselves on purpose, all these sacrifices must be offered to make the Nazirite a holy servant of Yahweh again. After the priest offers the Nazirite's sacrifices to Yahweh, and the Nazirite re-dedicates themselves to their vow, the Nazirite is again in a holy and ritually pure state.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 6:1-12 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 two scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh instructs Moses to tell the Israelites Yahweh's instructions about a man or woman who makes a special kind of vow to be set apart and holy to Yahweh.

In the second scene: Yahweh instructs Moses what the Nazirite, the man or woman who makes this special kind of vow, must do if they accidentally become unclean by being near a dead body.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Nazirite man or woman
- Priest

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

Notice what the Nazirite must not do while they live as a Nazirite, where the Nazirite must go to offer sacrifices, how the Nazirite might become unclean because of a dead body, and what the priest must do for the Nazirite.

This story records what Yahweh told Moses to tell the Israelites. Yahweh is speaking directly to Moses. Yahweh is continuing to give Moses instructions for how the Israelites should live and organize their community.

In the first scene, Yahweh instructs Moses about the requirements for being set apart as a Nazirite. Yahweh tells Moses that if a man or woman makes a vow to be set apart as a Nazirite, the Nazirite must show their separation by avoiding three things for the entire time of their vow. Yahweh starts each of his instructions to the Nazirites with the phrase, "all the days of his vow." Yahweh repeats this phrase in order to emphasize that the Nazirites must obey Yahweh's instructions for the entire length of time of their vow.

Yahweh's first instruction for the Nazirites' separation is that they must not drink wine or alcohol. The Nazirite must also not drink vinegar, or fermented drinks, made from wine or any other alcohol. Yahweh emphasizes to Moses that the Nazirite must be separated from grapes in any form. The Nazirite must not drink any kind of liquid, such as juice, made from grapes, and the Nazirite must not eat fresh or dried grapes. The whole time the Nazirite is set apart, that man or woman must not eat anything grown from a grapevine, not even the seeds or the skin of the grape.

All the days of the Nazirite's vow to be set apart, they must not allow a razor to shave or cut the hair on their head. Anyone who vows the Nazirite vow will be holy, and they must let their hair grow long.

All the days the Nazirite is set apart to Yahweh, they must not go near a dead body. Even if the dead body is the Nazirite's father, mother, brother, or sister, the Nazirite must not go near the dead body and become ritually unclean by the corpse, because the separation to Yahweh is on the Nazirite's head. This means that if the man or woman is living as a Nazirite, their long hair on their head represents their holiness and special dedication to Yahweh, but a dead body spoils that person's holy status, or state, before Yahweh. All the days the Nazirite is set apart, that person is holy to Yahweh.

In the second scene, Yahweh tells Moses what the Nazirite should do to become clean if they are near a dead body and become ritually unclean. If someone dies suddenly near a Nazirite, the Nazirite must shave their head on the day of their purification, the seventh day.

Stop here and act out this part of the story as a group. Pause this audio here.

On the eighth day after the Nazirite became unclean, the Nazirite must bring sacrifices to the priest at the entrance of the tent of meeting. The Nazirite must bring either two turtledoves or two pigeons. The priest will offer one of the birds as a sin or purification offering and the other bird as a burnt offering. The priest will offer the sacrifices to make atonement for the Nazirite, because the Nazirite sinned and became impure by being near a dead body.

Stop here as a group and look at the picture of the tent of meeting and the place where the priest would offer the sacrifices. Then act out this part of the story as a group. Pause this audio here.

On the same day the priest offers the sacrifices, the Nazirite will re-dedicate themselves to their vow for the full time they vowed to live as a Nazirite. The repetition in this part emphasizes that once made clean, the Nazirite must re-dedicate themselves to live as a Nazirite for the full amount of time they vowed when they first made their vow. On the day the person sets themselves apart again to Yahweh, he or she must bring a one-year old male sheep to the priest to offer as a guilt, or reparation, offering. Then the Nazirite is again holy to Yahweh for the entire time of their dedication.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 6:1-12 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
- A priest
- A Nazirite

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 told Moses to speak to the Israelites and tell them these instructions.

In the first scene, Yahweh tells Moses that if a man or woman makes an extraordinary, or special, vow to be set apart as a Nazirite to Yahweh, that person must not drink wine or alcohol. The Nazirite must also not drink

vinegar made from wine or any other alcohol. Yahweh emphasizes to Moses that the Nazirite must be separated from grapes in any form. The Nazirite must not drink anything made from grapes and must not eat fresh or dried grapes. The whole time the Nazirite is set apart, that man or woman must not eat anything grown from a grapevine, not even the seeds or the skin of the grape.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "Wine and grapes are common and important foods for us, so this seems strange," or, "Yahweh is really emphasizing that the person who makes this vow should not eat or drink anything made from grapes," or, "This vow must be very special."

Ask the person playing the Nazarite, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "Wine and grapes are common and important foods for us. This will be difficult!" or, "I can see that this vow is serious—I very much want to focus on Yahweh," or, "This vow must be very special. I am worried that it will be difficult to keep."

All the days of the Nazirite's vow to be set apart, they must not allow a razor to shave or cut the hair on their head. Anyone who vows the Nazirite vow will be holy, and they must let their hair grow long.

All the days the Nazirite is set apart to Yahweh, they must not go near a dead body. Even if the dead body is the Nazirite's father, mother, brother, or sister, they must not go near the dead body. The Nazirite must not become ritually unclean by the corpse because the separation to God is upon the Nazirite's head. All the days the Nazirite is set apart, that person is holy to Yahweh.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "This sounds like the laws the priests have to follow," or, "The person who makes this vow must take it very seriously," or, "This law is severe because the Nazirite cannot be near even a family member if they die."

In the second scene, Yahweh says to Moses that if anyone dies suddenly near the Nazirite, causing the hair that has been set apart to become ritually unclean, the Nazirite must shave their head on the day of their purification, which is the seventh day. On the eighth day after the Nazirite became unclean, the Nazirite must bring sacrifices to the priest at the entrance of the tent of meeting. The Nazirite must bring either two turtledoves or two pigeons. The priest will offer one of the birds as a sin offering and the other bird as a burnt offering. The priest will offer the sacrifices to make atonement for the Nazirite, because the Nazirite sinned by being near a dead body.

On the same day the priest offers the sacrifices, the Nazirite will re-dedicate themselves to their vow for the full time they vowed to live as a Nazirite. On the day the person sets themselves apart again to Yahweh, he or she must bring a one-year-old male sheep to the priest to offer as a guilt, or reparation, offering.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "These laws sound like the laws for the priests," or, "Nazirites must be very holy to Yahweh."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 6:1-12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

The story begins with **Yahweh** talking to Moses. Throughout most of this story, the original language uses God's proper name, Yahweh. Use the same word or phrase for Yahweh that you used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses to speak to the **Israelites** and tell them these instructions. The Israelites refer to the people who are descendants of Abraham. Use the same word or phrase for Israelites that you used in previous passages. For more information on Israelites, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses that if a man or woman makes an extraordinary, or special, vow, they should be set apart as a Nazirite to Yahweh. Both the word Nazirite and the word holy refer to the idea of being set apart. It is important to translate the ideas of being set apart as a Nazirite and of being holy with two separate words.

A **vow** is a solemn promise people make to Yahweh, usually in return for Yahweh's favor. The vow can be to do something or to not do something. A vow can also show great devotion to Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **vow** and then what word you will use for Nazirite. Look up vow 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.

To show their dedication and separation to Yahweh, the Nazirite must not drink **wine** and must not drink alcohol. Wine is fermented grape juice and is alcoholic. Grapes are soft juicy fruits that grow on a vine. A vine has a short trunk like a tree, but it does not have strong limbs like a tree. A vine has long vine branches called a grapevine. Grapes are an important fruit throughout the whole Bible. It is important that you do not substitute another fruit when you translate wine or grape. If your language does not have a word for wine or grape, you can describe them using a phrase.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **wine**. Look up wine 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 Nazirite must also not drink vinegar made from wine and must not drink vinegar made from other alcoholic liquids. When wine or alcoholic liquids ferment for a long time, they turn into vinegar. Vinegar tastes very sour.

All the days of the Nazirite's vow to be set apart, they must not allow a razor to shave or cut the hair on their head. Anyone who vows the Nazirite vow will be **holy**, and they must let their hair grow long. Any place, person, or object that is dedicated to God is called holy. That means that the object or person is set apart for God's special purposes—they are no longer common or ordinary. Use the same word or phrase for holy that you used in previous passages. For more information on holy, refer to the Master Glossary.

The final sign of a Nazirite is they must not go near a dead body, even if their father, mother, brother, or sister dies. If the Nazirite is near a dead body, they become ritually unclean because the separation to **God** is on the Nazirite's head. The word God is the general term that means divine or supreme being. The name god is sometimes used to refer to false gods or idols that people believe are divine beings. The name God can also refer to Yahweh, the one true God. In this story, God refers to Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **God**. Look up 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.

Yahweh continues instructing Moses that if anyone dies suddenly near the Nazirite, causing the hair that has been set apart to become ritually **unclean**, the Nazirite must shave their head on the day of their purification, or cleansing. That day is the seventh day after the Nazirite became unclean. A person who is unclean is unfit for service to God. Use the same word or phrase for unclean that you used in previous passages. For more information on clean/unclean, refer to the Master Glossary.

Purification is the process by which a person or thing that is considered unclean or impure is made clean or pure, and therefore able to worship or serve Yahweh again. Some English translations translate the original-language word as cleansing.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **purification**. Look up purify 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.

On the eighth day after the Nazirite became unclean, the Nazirite must bring sacrifices to the priest at the entrance, or door, of the **tent of meeting**. Use the same word or phrase for tent of meeting that you used in

previous passages. For more information on tabernacle, which means the same thing as the tent of meeting, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Nazirite must bring either two turtledoves or two pigeons. The priest will offer one of the birds as a sin or purification offering and the other bird as a burnt offering.

A **sin offering** can also be called a **purification offering**, because its purpose is to purify someone after they have become unclean, or unfit for service to Yahweh. It is a form of sacrifice that people bring to Yahweh. When the person brings this offering to Yahweh, part of the offering is burned on an altar to Yahweh, and the remainder of the offering belongs to the priest.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **sin or purification offering**. Look up sin offering or purification 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.

A **burnt offering** is also a kind of sacrifice that people bring to Yahweh. When a person brings Yahweh a burnt offering, the priest burns this offering completely on an altar to Yahweh. Some translations may say whole burnt offering. The purpose is to please Yahweh with a pleasing aroma, or smell. When a person brings Yahweh a burnt offering, they are saying to Yahweh, "Just as I am completely burning this offering, I am completely devoted to you."

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. Pause this audio here.

The priest will offer the sacrifices to make **atonement** for the Nazirite, because the Nazirite sinned by being near a dead body. The priest offers these sacrifices to atone for the person, or restore the person's relationship with Yahweh. Use the same word or phrase for atonement as you used in previous passages. For more information on atonement, refer to the Master Glossary.

Sin is an act that breaks Yahweh's law and makes the person guilty and unclean before Yahweh. Use the same word or phrase for sin or sinned as you used in previous passages. For more information on sin, refer to the Master Glossary.

On the same day the priest offers the sacrifices, the Nazirite will re-dedicate themselves to their vow. Afterwards, the Nazirite must bring a one-year-old male sheep to the priest to offer as a **guilt offering**. A guilt offering is an offering to compensate, or pay back, for the violation of the holy state of the person or thing. Some translations call this offering a reparation offering because its purpose is to reconcile or restore the person to an unguilty and clean state in relation to Yahweh. The sacrifice serves as payment to Yahweh for not staying holy to Yahweh. This offering is also part of the ceremonial offerings that serve to reconcile the person to Yahweh and restore their good relationship.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **guilt offering**. Look up guilt 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

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.

Numbers 6:1–12

Audio Content

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Numbers 6:13–21

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 6:13–21 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 6:13–21 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 6:13–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Yahweh gave Moses instructions for a person who makes the special Nazirite vow.

In this passage, Yahweh now tells Moses the laws for when a Nazirite finishes the time-period they dedicated to living as someone set apart. The Nazirite must bring himself or herself to the entrance of the tent of meeting, or tabernacle, and bring certain animals to offer as special offerings to Yahweh.

The Nazirite must bring the following animals: a one-year-old male lamb without defect for a burnt offering; a one-year-old female lamb without defect for a sin, or purification, offering; a ram without defect for a peace, or fellowship, offering; and a basket of cakes, which is bread made of fine flour mixed with olive oil without yeast, and wafers spread with olive oil, along with the regular grain offerings and drink offerings.

The animals must be without defect. They must not have anything wrong with them such as a lame leg, blindness, or any other physical imperfection. People can only offer perfectly healthy animals as an offering to Yahweh. A lamb is a young sheep. A ram is a male sheep or goat and is older than the one-year-old male sheep, or lamb, that was listed first.

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

The final offering the Nazirite must offer is the peace offering. This offering celebrates the fellowship and peaceful relationship the Nazirite now has with Yahweh. The offering is not a sacrifice to make peace with Yahweh but to celebrate being at peace with Yahweh. When the priest offers this animal, he burns part of the animal on the altar to Yahweh. The priest sets aside another part of the animal for himself to eat, and the last part he gives to the person who offered it so that they can eat it. When people eat part of the offering, it is like they are sharing a meal with Yahweh in peace. People always offer the peace offering last because it celebrates the restored relationship with Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about what people do to celebrate peace and fellowship in your community. Do they eat a meal? Do they do a ritual? Pause this audio here.

The basket of bread had two kinds of bread in it, both made without yeast. Some translations may say unleavened bread, meaning the bread does not rise like it would if it had yeast. People made the first kind of bread by mixing the high-quality wheat flour with water and olive oil and then cooking it into thick round loaves, or cakes, of bread. People also made the second kind of bread from flour and water but cooked them into thin flat loaves, or wafers, of bread. People then spread, or coated, the bread with olive oil.

Stop here and look at the pictures of the two kinds of unleavened bread and the basket of bread as a group. Pause this audio here.

The grain offering, or cereal offering, is an offering of flour from the best wheat that people mix with oil and sometimes incense. The drink offering is an offering of wine. The priest offers the grain and drink offerings as a gift to be a pleasing smell to Yahweh.

The priest will take the animal sacrifices and all the offerings brought by the Nazirite and offer them before Yahweh on the altar of the tabernacle, or tent of meeting. All the sacrifices and offerings the priest makes are the ones the Nazirite brings to the tent of meeting.

The final instruction is that the Nazirite must shave his or her head and burn the hair in the fire under the peace offering sacrifice to Yahweh. The priest must then take the shoulder, or front leg, of the ram after he boiled it.

The priest must also take one thick bread and one thin bread from the basket. The part of the ram is the priest's portion of the peace offering. The priest must put these in the hands of the Nazirite after the Nazirite has shaved the hair from their head. The priest must then wave, or lift up, the part of the ram together with the different kinds of bread as a wave, or lifted-up, offering. The priest must lift these offerings up as the sign of dedicating them to Yahweh.

Yahweh makes sure Moses knows what parts of the offerings go to the priest for the priest's contribution or portion. This is how Yahweh takes care of the priests whom Yahweh chose to serve Yahweh. The priest can take parts of the ram and two breads for himself to eat.

After the priest and the Nazirite complete all these sacrifices and rituals, the man or woman who made the Nazirite vow has now completed the time of their vow and symbolizes this completion by drinking wine. They are no longer set apart as specially dedicated to Yahweh, and they can return to normal life as an Israelite.

All these instructions are the rules, or law, for the Nazirite. The person who can afford to vow offerings to Yahweh beyond, or more than, the required sacrifices should offer them in addition to the regular sacrifices of a Nazirite.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 6:13–21 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 one scene.

In the first scene: Yahweh instructs Moses what the Nazirite must do when they finish the time they vowed to live as a Nazirite.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Nazirite man or woman
- Priest

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

This passage records what Yahweh told Moses to tell the Israelites. Yahweh is speaking directly to Moses. Yahweh continues to give Moses instructions for how the Israelites should live and organize their community.

In the first scene, Yahweh instructs Moses for when a Nazirite finishes the time-period they vowed to live as someone set apart. The Nazirite must bring himself or herself to the entrance of the tent of meeting and must bring a one-year-old male lamb without defect for a burnt offering, a one-year-old female lamb without defect for a sin or purification offering, a ram without defect for a peace or fellowship offering, and a basket of bread made without yeast. The two kinds of bread are cakes of fine flour mixed with olive oil and wafers spread with olive oil. The Nazirite must also bring the required grain offerings and drink offerings.

The priest will take the animal sacrifices and all the offerings brought by the Nazirite and offer them before Yahweh on the altar in the courtyard of the tent of meeting. The Nazirite must also shave his or her head and burn the hair in the fire under the peace offering sacrifice to Yahweh.

Stop here and look at the picture of the altar in the tabernacle courtyard as a group. Then act out this part of the story as a group. Pause this audio here.

The priest must then take the shoulder, or front leg, of the ram after it was boiled, and one thick bread and one thin bread from the basket. The priest must put these in the hands of the Nazirite after the Nazirite has shaved

their dedicated hair from their head. The priest must then wave, or lift up, the part of the ram and the two pieces of bread as a wave, or lifted-up, offering to Yahweh.

Stop here and act out the priest putting the portions of the ram and bread into the Nazirite's hands and lifting them up as a wave offering as a group. Pause this audio here.

The ram shoulder and two pieces of bread are a holy portion for the priest, together with the breast that is waved, or lifted-up, and the thigh that is offered. After the priest and the Nazirite complete all these sacrifices and rituals, the Nazirite can drink wine.

All these instructions are the rules, or laws, for the Nazirite. The person who can afford to vow offerings to Yahweh beyond the required sacrifices should offer them in addition to the regular sacrifices of a Nazirite. This part concludes and summarizes Yahweh's instructions to Moses for the Nazirite vow.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 6:13–21 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:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- A priest
- A Nazirite

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 speak to the Israelites and tell them these instructions about men and women who have completed a Nazirite vow.

Yahweh instructs Moses that when a Nazirite has completed their vow, they must come to the entrance of the tent of meeting and bring a one-year-old male lamb without defect for a burnt offering, a one-year-old female lamb without defect for a sin offering, a ram without defect for a peace offering, and a basket of bread made without yeast. The two types of bread in the basket are cakes of fine flour mixed with olive oil and wafers spread with olive oil. The Nazirite must also bring the required grain offerings and drink offerings.

The priest will take the animal sacrifices and all the offerings brought by the Nazirite and offer them before Yahweh on the altar of the tent of meeting. The Nazirite must also shave his or her head and burn the hair in the fire under the peace offering sacrifice to Yahweh.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Nazirite, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "It is special to watch all of that hair burning as an offering to Yahweh," or, "I am sad that my special time dedicated to Yahweh is ending."

The priest must then take the shoulder, or front leg, of the ram after it is boiled, and one thick piece of bread and one thin piece of bread from the basket. The priest must put these in the hands of the Nazirite after the Nazirite has shaved the dedicated hair from their head. The priest must then wave, or lift up, the part of the ram and the pieces of bread as a wave, or lifted-up, offering to Yahweh.

The ram shoulder and two pieces of bread are a holy portion for the priest, together with the breast that is waved, or lifted-up, and the thigh that is offered. After the priest and the Nazirite complete all these sacrifices and rituals, the Nazirite can drink wine.

All these instructions are the rules, or laws, for the Nazirite. The person who can afford to vow offerings to Yahweh beyond the required sacrifices should offer them in addition to the regular sacrifices of a Nazirite.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "These laws sound like the laws for the priests," or, "Nazirites must be very holy to Yahweh."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 6:13-21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

The story continues with **Yahweh** talking to Moses about the Nazirite vows. Throughout most of this story, the original language uses God's proper name, Yahweh. Use the same word or phrase for Yahweh and for Nazirite that you used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses the **laws** for when the Nazirite completes the time they vowed to live as a Nazirite. A law is a rule, or a set of rules, that people have to keep. The original term in the Bible that we translate into English as "law" is a term that people can use in legal settings when someone breaks a law of a country. If someone does not keep a rule, we say that he breaks the law. Use the same word or phrase for law that you used in previous passages. For more information on law, refer to the Master Glossary.

When the Nazirite completes the time of their vow, the Nazirite must bring several kinds of animal offerings to the entrance of the tent of meeting, or **tabernacle**. Use the same word or phrase for tent of meeting that you used in previous passages. For more information on tabernacle refer to the Master Glossary.

The Nazirite must bring animals for a **burnt offering**, a sin or **purification offering**, and the sacrifices for a peace or fellowship offering. Use the same words or phrases for burnt offering and sin or purification offering that you used in previous passages. For more information on burnt offering, and sin or purification offering, refer to the Master Glossary.

A **peace offering**, also called **fellowship offering**, was to celebrate being at peace with Yahweh and enjoying fellowship with Yahweh. The offering is not a sacrifice to make peace with Yahweh but to celebrate having a peaceful and good relationship with Yahweh. The peace offering always comes after the other offerings for sin, guilt, or reparation.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **sacrifice** and for **peace offering**. Look up sacrifices and peace or fellowship 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.

The Nazirite must also bring the required grain offerings and drink offerings.

The regular **grain offering**, sometimes translated cereal offering, was an offering of flour from the best wheat mixed with oil and sometimes with incense. Yahweh required this offering as a regular offering that goes with the animal sacrifices as a gift and pleasing aroma to Yahweh. The **drink offering**, sometimes called liquid offering, is an offering of wine, sometimes mixed with a spice. Use the same words or phrases for grain offering and drink offering that you used in previous passages. For more information on grain offering and drink offering, refer to grain offering and drink offering in the Master Glossary.

The priest then makes all the burnt offerings and the **wave offerings** before the tent of meeting. The Nazirite shaves his or her head and burns the hair. A wave offering, sometimes translated as elevated offering, was an offering that the priest lifted up into the air to symbolize being offered to Yahweh. Use the same phrase for wave offering that you used in previous passages. Look up wave offering in the Master Glossary for more information, if needed.

The ram shoulder and two pieces of bread, together with the breast of the ram that is waved and the thigh of the ram that is offered, are a **holy** portion for the priest. Some translations may say ram instead of male sheep. A ram is a male sheep or goat. Use the same word or phrase for holy and contribution, or gift, that you used in previous passages. For more information on holy, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and, as a group, look at a picture of a ram with the different parts of the animal labeled as shoulder, breast, and thigh, if needed. Pause this audio here.

After the priest and the Nazirite complete all these sacrifices and rituals, the Nazirite can drink **wine**. All these instructions are the rules, or laws, for the Nazirite. The person who can afford to **vow** offerings to Yahweh beyond the required sacrifices should offer them in addition to the regular sacrifices of a Nazirite. Use the same words or phrases for wine and vow that you used in previous passages. For more information on wine and vow, refer to the Master Glossary.

An **offering** is a general word for a gift or sacrifice offered in a ritual to God, usually in the temple or on a special altar. Use the same word or phrase for offering that you used in previous passages. For more information on offering, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 6:13–21

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Numbers 6:22–27

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 6:22–27 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 6:22–27 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 6:22–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This passage is the conclusion of Yahweh's laws for the priestly duties and the religious organization of the Israelites. Yahweh has given Moses many laws and instructions for the Levite tribe who will be Yahweh's priests. Now, Yahweh gives Moses a final instruction specifically for Aaron and Aaron's sons. Aaron and Aaron's sons will have the duty of declaring Yahweh's blessing over the Israelites. Yahweh tells Moses to tell Aaron and Aaron's sons that this is the way they are to bless the Israelites.

Yahweh gives Aaron and Aaron's sons the exact words to say and the way to say them. The blessing is in the form of a poem, or special language that shows the importance and emotion of something. Some people say the blessing is like a prayer in which Aaron and Aaron's sons are praying for Yahweh to do the things in the blessing. Other people say that the blessing is a declaration of Yahweh's blessing that becomes true as Aaron or Aaron's sons say the declaration. It is important to understand that these words are not magical words. Even though the priests are speaking the blessing, it is only Yahweh who can do what the blessing says.

The poem has three parts. In the first part, the priests are to say that Yahweh blesses Yahweh's people and keeps, or guards, his people. Yahweh's blessing towards, or upon, the Israelites means that Yahweh is pleased with his people and will do good things for his people. Yahweh's blessing declares that Yahweh has a good relationship with his people, is at peace with them, and lovingly cares for them. The blessing declares that Yahweh keeps, or guards, his people. Yahweh preserves his people from danger and takes care of them.

Then Yahweh gives his people a strong picture of his kindness and compassion towards them. The words of the blessing that describe Yahweh's shining face turned towards his people are like a happy parent who is pleased with his child. Yahweh will be kind to his people and give them good gifts they do not deserve because Yahweh loves his people.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you describe someone who deeply loves and is pleased with someone else? How do you describe the way someone looks at a person he or she loves? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh's graciousness means his act of kindness towards people who have no reason to demand or claim his kindness. Yahweh is not kind to his people just because they do something for him, but because he wants to give his people good gifts. Yahweh's graciousness comes from his gracious character, because that is the kind of God Yahweh is.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a time when someone did something good for someone who did not deserve it. What words do you use to describe the person who did the good thing? Pause this audio here.

The third part of the blessing says Yahweh lifts his face upon, or toward, his people and gives them peace. The same kind of human language is used again here to describe Yahweh. The opposite of Yahweh lifting his face towards someone is Yahweh hiding his face from someone. When Yahweh hides his face, it means Yahweh is angry and unhappy with his people. When Yahweh lifts up his face upon his people, it means Yahweh is looking at them with favor because he is pleased with his people.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about someone who was angry at someone else but then became happy and pleased with the other person. How did you describe the person when he or she was angry? How did you describe the person when he or she was pleased with the other person? Pause this audio here.

In this part of the blessing, Yahweh promises to give, or establish, the people in peace. This kind of peace is a full and whole life. When a person has this kind of peace with God, they have everything they need to live according to Yahweh's purpose. Yahweh does not just "give" this wholeness of life; Yahweh puts, or establishes, this kind of peaceful life for his people so that it will not end. This is the end of the blessing poem.

Yahweh has said his name over his people several times in this poem. Now Yahweh explains that through these words, Aaron and Aaron's sons will put Yahweh's name on the Israelites. By doing this, Aaron and Aaron's sons mark the Israelites as a people group belonging to and cared for by Yahweh. Yahweh's blessing marks the Israelites as Yahweh's special and beloved people who live with Yahweh.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 6:22–27 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 three scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh instructs Moses to say to Aaron and Aaron's sons that they are to bless the people of Israel with a particular blessing.

In the second scene: Yahweh gives Moses the blessing that Aaron and Aaron's sons are to say to the people of Israel.

In the third scene: Yahweh tells Moses the purpose of the blessing and emphasizes that he, Yahweh, will bless the people of Israel.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- Aaron's sons
- The Israelites

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

Notice that Yahweh is talking to Moses the whole time, Yahweh's blessing is to be declared over the people by the priest Aaron and his sons, and the blessing itself is in the form of a poem for emphasis and to show great emotion.

In the first scene, the passage begins with Yahweh speaking to and instructing Moses. Yahweh tells Moses to tell Aaron and Aaron's sons that this is the way they are to bless the Israelites. It is important to make it clear that the job of declaring Yahweh's blessing to the people is for Aaron and Aaron's sons. We know from other passages in the Bible that Aaron or Aaron's sons perform the blessing by raising their hands. The blessing was usually said after they offered sacrifices to Yahweh for themselves and the people of Israel.

In the second scene, Yahweh gives the exact words that Aaron and Aaron's sons are to say for the blessing. They are to say:

Yahweh bless you and guard you.

Yahweh cause his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you.

Yahweh lift his face toward you and establish you in peace.

It is important that the name Yahweh is said in each part of the blessing poem. It is important to remember that this blessing would be memorized and recited the same way every time Aaron or Aaron's sons blessed the people. It is important that the form of this blessing is translated in a way that communicates powerfully and impactfully in your language.

This blessing has three parts. Each part is stronger and more emotional than the part before it. The personal name for God, Yahweh, is spoken three times in the poem, once in each line. In the original language, poetry uses special expressions and describes meaningful images to communicate more powerfully and visually.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Have someone from your group tell a poem or sing a song. What kind of special language do you use to say something important or emotional? When do you say these poems

or songs? Who says them? How do you express something deeply meaningful in a beautiful way? Pause this audio here.

In each part of the poem, the first word or phrase uses special language to give the people a picture of Yahweh's blessing. The second word or phrase explains the meaning of the special language and says specifically what Yahweh will do. For example, Yahweh blesses his people, and he shows his people that blessing when he keeps or protects them. Yahweh makes his face shine upon his people, and he shows his people his shining face when he is gracious to them. Yahweh turns his face towards his people, and he shows his turned face when he establishes peace with them.

Yahweh repeats his name throughout the blessing because Yahweh is putting his name on his people. You should make sure to include this repetition in your translation.

Two times in this poem, Yahweh talks about his affection and favor towards Yahweh's people using special language about Yahweh's face. Yahweh's face shining shows his affection and kindness. Some translations may say Yahweh smiles or shows kindness instead of using language about Yahweh's face. Yahweh's face turned towards his people shows he is at peace with his people and is pleased with them.

Stop here and discuss as a group the phrases "Yahweh make his face shine" and "Yahweh turn his face." How will you translate these phrases in a powerful way in your language? Pause this audio here.

In the third scene, Yahweh ends his instruction with a summary of the blessing. Yahweh instructs Moses that they, meaning Aaron and Aaron's sons, will put Yahweh's name upon the people of Israel and he, Yahweh, will bless them. It is important to note that this is not part of the blessing poem. In this part, Yahweh is instructing Moses on what Aaron and Aaron's sons are doing by giving the blessing. Aaron and Aaron's sons are putting Yahweh's name on the people of Israel and communicating Yahweh's blessing. The blessing does not come from Aaron and Aaron's sons or from Moses. At the very end of this passage, Yahweh emphasizes that Yahweh is the one who will bless his people. Aaron and Aaron's sons are only speaking on behalf of Yahweh.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 6:22–27 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:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- Aaron's sons
- 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, the passage begins with Yahweh instructing Moses. Yahweh tells Moses to tell Aaron and Aaron's sons that this is the way they are to bless the Israelites.

In the second scene, Yahweh gives the exact words the priests are to say for the blessing: The priests are to say Yahweh blesses the Israelites and guards, or protects, them; the priests are to say Yahweh makes, or causes, his face to shine upon his people, and he will be gracious to them; and the priests are to say Yahweh lifts his face towards his people and will give them peace.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "We are comforted and encouraged by Yahweh's care and favor towards us," or, "I feel at peace knowing Yahweh is blessing us," or, "We are overwhelmed with gratitude and praise for Yahweh's love, graciousness, and faithfulness to us by blessing us this way."

In the third scene, Yahweh ends his instruction with a summary of the blessing. He instructs Moses that this is how they, meaning Aaron and Aaron's sons, will put the name Yahweh on the people of Israel, and he, Yahweh, will bless the people of Israel.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I am encouraged Yahweh will always take care of the Israelites," or, "I am amazed Yahweh would bless us like this," or, "Praise Yahweh for his blessings to us, for being gracious and faithful to his people."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 6:22–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

The story begins with **Yahweh** talking to Moses. Throughout this passage, the original language uses God's proper name, Yahweh. Use the same word or phrase for Yahweh that you used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses to instruct Aaron and Aaron's sons that they are to bless the **Israelites** in this way. The Israelites, or sons of Israel, refer to the people who are descendants of Abraham. Use the same word or phrase for Israelites that you used in previous passages. For more information on Israelites, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses to tell Aaron and Aaron's sons that this is the way they are to bless the Israelites. When Yahweh blesses a person or community, Yahweh is saying he is pleased with them and is at peace with them. Yahweh often promises to do kind things for the Israelites, to love them, and to care for them in a special way.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **bless**. Look up bless 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. Use the same word for bless throughout this passage. Pause this audio here.

When Aaron and Aaron's sons bless the people of Israel, Aaron and his sons are to say Yahweh blesses the Israelites and guards, or protects, them. Then they are to say that Yahweh makes, or causes, his face to shine upon his people and will be gracious to them.

When Yahweh is **gracious**, he gives or shows grace to his people. When someone shows us grace, they do something good for us or give us something good that we do not deserve. God, whose name is Yahweh, shows grace to people when he forgives them for their sins and makes them his children. People deserve to be separated from God because of their disobedience, but God loves the people so much that he wants to forgive them. Therefore, God does something good to the people that they do not deserve: he forgives them. This is grace. Some English translations may say Yahweh will show kindness or be kind. It is important that you translate this part in a way that means Yahweh acts with kindness or graciousness towards people who do not deserve, or have no right to demand, his kindness.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **gracious**. Look up grace 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 third part of the blessing, Aaron and Aaron's sons are to say Yahweh lifts up his face upon, or toward, Yahweh's people and gives them **peace**.

The word translated peace has deep meaning in the original language. This word for peace means both an absence of conflict and a fullness, or completeness, of life. Peace does not just mean no war or conflict. Peace means people live together in unity and love for one another.

Stop here and discuss as a group: What word will you use for **peace** in your translation? If you have translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word here. For more information on peace, refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

The passage ends with Yahweh telling Moses that they, meaning Aaron and Aaron's sons, will put the name Yahweh upon the people of Israel. Yahweh promises that he, Yahweh, will bless the Israelites.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 6:22-27

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (13111973 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Numbers 7:1–9

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 7:1–9 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 7:1–9 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 7:1–9 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This passage happens when Moses has finished the task of setting up the tabernacle following the instructions Yahweh gave to Moses. You will remember that Yahweh's instructions for making and setting up the tabernacle are found in the book of Exodus. This passage is a narrative account of Moses setting the tabernacle apart for Yahweh, and then the leaders of Israel bringing offerings which Moses gives to the Levites.

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

This passage does not tell us how long it took Moses to set up the tabernacle or when this took place. However, we know from the book of Exodus that Moses set up the tabernacle on the first day of the first month in the second year. This means that the Israelites had left Egypt a little more than one year before this. You will recall that 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 Yahweh's people. This was a very important day for the Israelite people.

In this passage, Moses anoints, or puts oil on, the tabernacle, its furnishings, the altar, and all the altar utensils to show that he consecrated these things. Moses would have used anointing oil, which was made from olives, to make it clear that these objects now had a special purpose. These were now Yahweh's objects; Moses consecrated them, or made them holy or sacred for Yahweh. The people would only use these objects for the special service of worship to Yahweh.

Stop here and, as a group, look at pictures of some of the furnishings in the tabernacle, the altar, and the altar utensils. Pause this audio here.

You will recall from the book Exodus that Yahweh instructed Moses to take anointing oil and to anoint the tabernacle and everything in it to make it holy, or set apart, for Yahweh. Yahweh also told Moses that Moses must anoint the altar of burnt offering and all of the utensils or items that the priest used for the offerings, as well as the basin and its stand. Here, Moses is following Yahweh's instructions.

In this passage, the leaders of Israel now make offerings. These are the same leaders who were in charge of the people who were counted in the census. You will recall that these leaders were the chiefs or leaders of each of the twelve tribes of Israel, and they represented their tribes when they brought their offerings. The leaders each brought one ox, and they brought one cart for every two leaders, which makes a total of six carts and twelve oxen. Moses, the author of this passage, describes the carts using two words which both mean cart or wagon, and we do not know why he does this or exactly what these carts looked like. The carts may have had two or four wheels, and people would use two oxen to pull each cart. People would use the carts to transport the tabernacle and its furnishings, so there might have been a covering over the carts to make sure nobody other than the Levites would look at these holy objects.

Stop here and, as a group, look at a picture of oxen and a picture of what the carts might have looked like. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh instructs Moses to accept the offerings and give the carts and oxen to the Levites for them to use in their work at the tent of meeting. You will recall that the Levites were divided into three groups—the Gershonites, the Merarites, and the Kohathites. Moses gives two of the carts to the Gershonites. He also gives the Gershonites four oxen, as they would need these to pull the carts. You will remember that Yahweh had made the Gershonites responsible for everything that needed to be done with the curtains and hangings of the tabernacle. The carts would help the Gershonites move the curtains from place to place whenever the Israelites moved their camp to a new location.

Moses gives the Merarites the four remaining carts and the eight oxen the Merarites would need to pull those carts. The Merarites were responsible for carrying the heavy framework of the tabernacle, which is why they needed more carts than the Gershonites.

One of Aaron's sons, Ithamar the priest, supervised both the Merarites and Gershonites in their work.

Moses did not give the Kohathites any carts or oxen. You will recall that Yahweh asked the Kohathites to look after the most holy things that were inside the tabernacle. Aaron and Aaron's sons, the priests, were responsible for covering the ark of the covenant, the altars, and the other holy furnishings. Then the Kohathites would come and carry the covered objects. The Kohathites did not need any carts or oxen, as Yahweh had instructed them to carry the objects on their shoulders.

Stop here and tell a story about someone who was serving God, and God provided what they needed to do their work.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 7:1–9 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: Moses anoints the tabernacle, furnishings, altar, and utensils.

In the second scene: The leaders of Israel's tribes bring an offering of six large carts and twelve oxen.

In the third scene: Yahweh speaks to Moses and tells Moses to accept the gifts that the leaders have brought. Yahweh tells Moses to distribute the gifts to the Levites for transporting the tabernacle.

In the fourth scene: Moses follows Yahweh's instructions and distributes the gifts to the Levites.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- The leaders of Israel's tribes
- Yahweh
- The three divisions of the Levites: the Gershonites, the Merarites, and the Kohathites
- Ithamar, son of Aaron the priest

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

In the first scene we are told that this story takes place when Moses has finished the task of setting up the tabernacle. Although this passage does not say when this happened, we know from the book of Exodus that Moses set up the tabernacle on the first day of the first month in the second year after the Israelites left Egypt.

Moses, the author, starts this story with a word that signals that this story happened some time in the past, before the passages in Numbers that come immediately before this passage. Translations do not always include this word, but some possible translations could be "Earlier, Moses finished setting up the tabernacle" or "Moses had finished setting up the tabernacle earlier."

Stop here and tell a story about something that happened a long time ago. The rest of the group should pay attention to what words or phrases the storyteller uses to show that this happened in the distant past. Pause this audio here.

Moses then anoints and consecrates the tabernacle, its furnishings, the altar, and all the altar utensils. When people anointed an object with oil, they put on or sprinkled the oil on the object. The altar referred to here is probably the altar of burnt offering, as Yahweh had commanded Moses to consecrate the altar of burnt offering.

Stop here and look at a picture of the altar of burnt offering as a group. Pause this audio here.

In the second scene, the leaders of Israel make offerings. Moses, the writer of this passage, tells us that the leaders were the same tribal leaders who were in charge of the people who had been counted in the census, which makes it sound like Moses counted the people before this passage took place. However, we know that this passage happened when Moses set up the tabernacle, which means it must have happened about one month before Moses counted the people. We do not know why Moses chose to tell us these events in a different order to how they happened. It may be because he wanted us to first understand the importance of the tabernacle, the sacrificial system, and the work Yahweh gave to the priests and Levites. We learn about these things in one large section in the book of Leviticus and the passages in the book of Numbers, which come before this passage. Once we have understood these things, then we can truly appreciate the importance of the leaders of Israel bringing their offerings to worship Yahweh and to help support the work the Levites were doing at the tabernacle.

Stop here and tell a story about a special celebration. You may want to include things like what you did, who you were with, what you ate, or what you were wearing. Pause this audio here.

Now discuss this question as a group. Imagine you were telling your story about that celebration to someone who is from a different country with a very different culture—someone who knows nothing about your community. What would you need to explain first to help them really understand your story? Pause this audio here.

The passage does not tell us whether Yahweh asked the leaders of Israel to make these offerings. However, Yahweh probably did command the leaders to make these offerings, because the wagons and oxen particularly help the Levites with the work Yahweh has asked them to do.

The third scene starts with an introduction like "Then Yahweh said to Moses" or "Now, Yahweh said to Moses." The story now introduces Yahweh's response to the leaders' offerings.

Yahweh tells Moses to "accept these from them." Yahweh is saying that Moses should accept the carts and oxen from the leaders of Israel.

The fourth scene starts with another phrase that emphasizes that Moses is following Yahweh's instructions. We do not know if Moses accepted and distributed the carts and oxen himself or whether other people helped Moses with this task.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story or describe a time when a leader gave a command. How do you emphasize that the person that they commanded followed that command and the instructions? Pause this audio here.

Moses did not give the Kohathites any carts or oxen as they were required to carry the most holy objects on their shoulders. They would have used poles which they placed on their shoulders to help hold the holy objects.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 7:1–9 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:

- Moses
- The leaders of Israel's tribes
- Yahweh
- The three divisions of the Levites: the Gershonites, the Merarites, and the Kohathites
- Ithamar, son of Aaron the 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.

Moses has just finished setting up the tabernacle. Moses anoints the tabernacle with oil. Moses then anoints all the furnishings for the tabernacle, the altar, and all its utensils.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I cannot believe we have finally finished setting up the tabernacle. It has taken a lot of hard work to get here," or, "The tabernacle is truly amazing. It is such an honour to anoint this for Yahweh," or, "I really hope Yahweh is pleased with how the tabernacle looks. We have tried hard to follow Yahweh's instructions."

Then the leaders of Israel's tribes, that is, the leaders who had registered their people for the census, come to Moses. The leaders bring a total of six large wagons and twelve oxen. The leaders present these to Yahweh in front of the tabernacle.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Israelite leaders, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "It is important that we mark this special day with a special offering," or, "Isn't Yahweh truly awesome. We want to bring a special offering for the work of the priests in looking after the tabernacle," or, "The tabernacle is amazing, and it must come with us wherever we go. Together we can bring an offering to help that happen."

Yahweh says to Moses, "Accept the gifts that the leaders have brought, and use these oxen and these wagons for transporting the tabernacle. You must distribute them among the Levites according to the work that they have to do."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I am very pleased with my people. They have followed my instructions for the tabernacle, and have now brought this offering too," or, "I want my tabernacle to go wherever the Israelites go. I will make that possible through this offering," or, "I am providing all that the Levites need to do what I have commanded them, through the leaders' offering."

Moses does as Yahweh has said, and presents the wagons and oxen to the Levites. Moses gives two wagons and four oxen to the Gershonites for their work. Moses also gives four wagons and eight oxen to the Merarites for their work. Ithamar, son of Aaron the priest, supervises the Gershonites and Merarites as they work.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Gershonites and the Merarites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I am so grateful to Yahweh. He has provided just what we need to do our jobs," or, "It is so kind of the people to give these gifts. It will really help our work moving the tabernacle each time we move camp."

Moses does not give any of the wagons or oxen to the Kohathites, because the Kohathites are required to carry the sacred objects of the tabernacle on their shoulders.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Kohathites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I would have liked one of those wagons and oxen, but I guess we don't need it for our job," or, "I am honoured to carry the sacred objects myself. I do not need a wagon."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 7:1-9 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

This story takes place when Moses has finished setting up the **tabernacle**. Use the same word or phrase for tabernacle that you used in previous passages. For more information on the tabernacle, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses then **anoints** and **consecrates**, or makes holy, the tabernacle. Use the same word or phrase for anoint and consecrate that you used in previous passages. For more information on the words anoint an object or consecrate, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses also anoints the **altar** and the **altar utensils**. Use the same word or phrase for altar and altar utensils that you used in previous passages. For more information on the altar, refer to the Master Glossary.

The **leaders of Israel** make **offerings**. Use the same word or phrase for leaders of Israel and for offerings that you used in previous passages. For more information on offerings, refer to the Master Glossary.

The leaders brought **carts** or wagons as part of their offerings. You will remember that the carts may have had two or four wheels, and people would use two oxen to pull each cart. The carts were to be used by the Levites for transporting the tabernacle and its furnishings. There might have been a covering over the carts.

If needed, stop here as a group and look at a picture of what the carts might have looked like. Then discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for the carts. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh then speaks to Moses. The personal name for God, Yahweh, is used in this passage. Use the same word or phrase for Yahweh that you used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh instructs Moses to accept the offerings and give the carts and oxen to the **Levites** to be used in the Levites' work at the tent of meeting, which in this case refers to the tabernacle. Use the same word or phrase for Levites and tent of meeting that you used in previous passages. For more information about the Levites, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses gives the carts and oxen to the Levites as their work, or special service to Yahweh, requires. Use the same descriptions of special service to Yahweh that you have used in previous passages.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 7:1–9

Audio Content

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Numbers 7:10–83

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 7:10–83 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 7:10–83 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 7:10–83 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

When the Israelites had finished setting up the tabernacle, they dedicated the altar of burnt offerings. This passage is a detailed historical record of the offerings that the twelve leaders of the tribes of Israel brought on behalf of their tribes when they dedicated the altar. The leaders brought their offerings one at a time, one each day, starting on the day when Moses dedicated the altar.

The leaders of Israel's tribes in this passage are the same leaders who helped Moses count the people at the start of the book of Numbers. Yahweh instructs Moses to accept the leaders' offerings and tells Moses that the leaders should bring their offerings one at a time, each leader coming on a separate day. Each of the twelve leaders bring the same offering as the other leaders bring.

The leaders each bring a silver dish or plate, a silver bowl, and a golden dish or spoon. We do not know exactly what these items would have looked like, but they are all connected with the grain offering. The dish and bowl contain fine flour mixed with oil as Yahweh has instructed the people to bring for a grain offering. The people bring a grain offering as a gift to Yahweh. The priests set aside and then burn a special portion of the flour and oil for Yahweh, and the rest of the flour and oil is for the priests themselves.

In Moses' language, Hebrew, the word for the silver dish or plate means "deep," and so this was probably a deep dish. The dish weighed 130 shekels. A shekel was the standard weight of measurement used by the Israelites. 130 shekels is about 1.4 kilograms.

Moses records the weight of the silver dish in sanctuary shekels. The people kept a standard shekel weight at the sanctuary which the people would have used to make sure all shekels weighed the same amount. Moses is probably referring to that standard shekel when he records that the silver dish weighed 130 shekels according to the shekel of the sanctuary, although it is possible that sanctuary shekel was a different weight to the standard shekel.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What units of measurement do you use in your culture to describe how heavy something is? Pause this audio here.

The word Moses uses for the bowl means "to toss" or "to throw," and so this was probably some sort of bowl people used for throwing liquids. The dish weighed 70 shekels, which is about 800 grams. The priests would use the dish and bowl for throwing sacrificial blood against the altar.

Stop here as a group and look at a picture of what the silver dish and silver bowl might have looked like. Pause this audio here.

The word Moses uses for the golden dish or spoon means something that is slightly cupped, and it also means the palm of your hand. This item only weighed 10 shekels, which is much lighter than the silver dish and bowl, and so this item is sometimes translated as a spoon rather than a dish.

The spoon contained incense, which the people would put on Yahweh's portion of the flour and oil as Yahweh had instructed them.

Stop here as a group and look at a picture of what the golden spoon might have looked like. Pause this audio here.

Now discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about preparing for an important celebration meal. Is there a table that you set out to be ready? Where will you serve the food? How will you give the food to each person, and what will they eat with? The rest of the group should pay attention to what words and phrases the storyteller uses for items that are slightly cupped, like bowls, plates, dishes, spoons, and so on. Pause this audio here.

The leaders of Israel's tribes also bring sacrifices, following the laws Yahweh had given them. Moses recorded these laws about the sacrifices in the book of Leviticus. For the burnt offering, each leader brings one young bull, one ram, which is a male sheep, and one male lamb.

Stop here as a group and look at pictures of a bull, a ram, and a lamb. Pause this audio here.

The priests would kill these animals and burn the animals completely on an altar. When a person brought Yahweh a burnt offering, they were saying to Yahweh, "Just as I am completely burning this animal, I am completely devoted to you."

Next, for the sin or purification offering, each leader brought one male goat.

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

People would bring a sin or purification offering to make themselves clean after they had become unclean, or unfit for service to Yahweh. People would use this offering to make up for their unintentional sins or to purify themselves after they had become unclean by breaking a covenant law.

For the peace offering, each leader brought two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs which were one year old.

Stop here as a group and look at pictures of oxen, rams, goats, and lambs. Pause this audio here.

People would bring a peace or fellowship offering as a way of fellowshipping with, or enjoying their relationship with, Yahweh. The people would also have been celebrating that the tabernacle was finished. The priests would splash the animal's blood against the altar, and then they would divide the animals into a portion for Yahweh, a portion for the priests, and a portion for the person bringing the sacrifices.

Stop here as a group and discuss this question: We know that Jesus was the final sacrifice, so today we no longer have to bring these sacrifices to worship Yahweh. But we do still have a relationship with Yahweh. How do you enjoy spending time, or fellowshipping, with Yahweh? What do you do to strengthen your relationship with Yahweh?

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 7:10–83 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 13 scenes.

In the first scene: The leaders, or chiefs, of the twelve tribes of Israel make offerings for the dedication of the altar. Yahweh tells Moses that the chiefs should make their offerings one chief at a time, one chief each day.

In the second scene: Nashon the chief of Judah brings his tribe's offering of a silver plate and a silver basin, both filled with fine flour mixed with olive oil for the grain offering. Nashon also brings a golden dish or spoon full of incense, as well as a bull, a ram, and a one-year-old male lamb for the burnt offerings. Nashon also brings a male goat for a sin offering, and two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five one-year-old male lambs for a peace offering.

In the third scene: The next day, Nethanel the chief of Issachar brings the same things as Nashon did for his tribe's offering.

In the next ten scenes: Each day, another leader of a tribe of Israel brings the same offering on behalf of their tribe.

The remaining leaders come in the following order: Eliab chief of Zebulun, Elizur chief of Reuben, Shelumiel chief of Simeon, Eliasaph chief of Gad, Elishama chief of Ephraim, Gamaliel chief of Manasseh, Abidan chief of Benjamin, Ahiezer chief of Dan, Pagiel chief of Asher, and finally Ahira chief of Naphtali.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- The twelve leaders, or chiefs, of Israel's tribes, who were:
- Nashon the chief of Judah
- Nethanel chief of Issachar
- Eliab chief of Zebulun
- Elizur chief of Reuben
- Shelumiel chief of Simeon
- Eliasaph chief of Gad
- Elishama chief of Ephraim
- Gamaliel chief of Manasseh
- Abidan chief of Benjamin
- Ahiezer chief of Dan
- Pagiel chief of Asher
- Ahira chief of Naphtali

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

Moses, the author, starts this passage with a word that shows us that the leaders are now bringing more offerings in addition to the six carts and twelve oxen they brought in the last passage.

In the first scene, Yahweh tells Moses that the twelve leaders should bring their gifts on twelve separate days, one leader after another. It was important for the leaders to bring their offerings on separate days because the priests needed to do the work required for each offering as it was received. In total, the leaders of Israel's tribes would bring 252 animals. The tabernacle did not have enough space to fit all of these animals in at once, and the altar was not big enough to burn all of the offerings at once.

In the other twelve scenes in this passage, the leaders bring their offerings one by one. This passage is a precise and detailed historical record of the twelve leaders of the tribes of Israel bringing offerings for the dedication of the altar. The leaders come in the order that their tribes camped around the tabernacle in the Israelite camp, starting with the tribe of Judah and ending with the tribe of Naphtali. Moses records the name of each tribal leader and the items each leader brought.

Stop here and look at a map of the Israelite camp, showing the layout of the twelve tribes around the tabernacle. Pause this audio here.

Originally, Moses probably recorded this in some form of chart or table rather than saying the list like we see it or hear it here. However, this story explains what happened each day. Moses would probably have inscribed clay tablets with symbols to show each item, how many of each item there were, and the name of the leader who brought each item.

Moses uses a lot of repetition in this passage. This is probably because Moses would have recorded every offering brought by each leader in the original chart, and so this passage includes every offering brought by each leader. The repetition helps us to understand that each of Israel's tribes made the same contribution to support the priests' work done in the tabernacle. All of the contributions from each tribe were necessary to support the priests' work. The priests were not the only people responsible for carrying out Yahweh's instructions at the tabernacle. The people of Israel had to partner together to carry out the work and to worship Yahweh.

In this passage, Moses records the grain or meal offering first, then the burnt offering, followed by the sin or purification offering, and finally the peace or fellowship offering. In other passages in the Old Testament, the writers set out offerings in a different order, with the burnt offering coming first. In this passage, Moses may have chosen to start with the grain offering first because the grain offering was connected with the gold and silver items that contained the offering. Moses does not include items for the guilt offering here. You will recall that the guilt offering is only needed for specific, intentional sins, which is why the leaders of Israel didn't need to bring a guilt offering in this passage.

At the start and end of each of the scenes, Moses repeats the name of the tribal leader who brings that day's offering. It is likely that the original chart just had the name at the end, and in making this into a re-telling of the list, Moses has added the name at the start to make the list easier to follow. It may also be that repeating the name at the start and end is a way of marking the beginning and end of the scene. The repetition helps us to see that each tribal leader is following the same pattern.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it. Remember that each scene is exactly the same, except for the names of the tribal leaders at the beginning and end. Try first to remember the offerings that each leader brought, as these offerings will remain the same for the names of each leader. How will you remember the names of the leaders of each tribe?

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 7:10–83 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 13 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- The twelve leaders, or chiefs, of Israel's tribes, who were:
 - Nashon the chief of Judah
 - Nethanel chief of Issachar
 - Eliab chief of Zebulun
 - Elizur chief of Reuben
 - Shelumiel chief of Simeon
 - Eliasaph chief of Gad
 - Elishama chief of Ephraim
 - Gamaliel chief of Manasseh
 - Abidan chief of Benjamin
 - Ahiezer chief of Dan
 - Pagiel chief of Asher
 - Ahira chief of Naphtali

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.

Beginning on the day that Moses dedicated the altar, the leaders, or chiefs, of the twelve tribes of Israel make offerings for the dedication of the altar. They make their offerings before the altar. Yahweh tells Moses that the chiefs should make their offerings one chief at a time, one chief each day.

On the first day Nashon the chief of Judah, son of Amminadab, brings to the altar his offering of a silver plate and a silver basin, both filled with fine flour mixed with olive oil for the grain offering. Nashon also brings a golden dish full of incense for the grain offering. Nashon also brings a bull, a ram, and a one-year-old male lamb for the burnt offerings. Nashon also brings a male goat for a sin offering, and two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five one-year-old male lambs for a peace offering. Nashon, chief of Judah, brought this offering.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Nashon, chief of Judah, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I am honoured to represent my tribe in bringing this offering," or, "My tribe fully supports the Levites and the hard work they do at the tabernacle. This offering will show Yahweh that we are committed to worshipping Yahweh."

On each of the next 11 days, the other leaders of the tribes of Israel bring the same offering, one leader each day.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I am pleased that the tribes of Israel are being obedient to Yahweh," or, "It is going to take some time to get through all of the tribes, but I am glad they did not bring all of their offerings on the same day. There would have been nowhere to put all the animals!"

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "The Israelites have done well and I am pleased with them. They have followed my instructions carefully," or, "I am proud of my people for building the tabernacle and bringing all of the offerings I asked for."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 7:10–83 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Moses has dedicated and **anointed** the **altar**. Use the same words for anoint and altar that you used in previous passages, and remember that anoint and altar are in the Master Glossary.

The **leaders of Israel** make **offerings**. Use the same word or phrase for leaders of Israel and offerings that you used in previous passages. For more information on offerings, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses that the leaders should bring their offerings one day at a time. The personal name for God, Yahweh, is used in 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.

The first items each leader brings are a **silver dish** or plate, a **silver bowl**, and a golden dish or **spoon**. You will remember that we do not know exactly what these items look like. In Moses' language, Hebrew, the word for the silver dish or plate means "deep," and so this was probably a deep dish. The word Moses uses for the bowl means "to toss" or "to throw," and so this was probably some sort of bowl used for throwing liquids. The word Moses uses for the golden dish or spoon means something that is slightly cupped, and it also means the palm of your hand. This item only weighed 10 shekels, which is much lighter than the silver dish and bowl, and so this item is sometimes translated as a spoon rather than a dish.

Stop here as a group and look at pictures of what the silver dish, silver bowl, and golden spoon might have looked like. Discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for each of these items. Pause this audio here.

The leaders each bring silver bowls and dishes, and golden spoons which are weighed in shekels. A shekel was the standard weight of measurement used by the Israelites. A shekel weighs about 10 grams. This is about the same as two pieces of paper or a new pencil. The people kept a standard shekel weight at the sanctuary or tabernacle, which the people would have used to make sure all shekels weighed the same amount. When a writer refers to a sanctuary shekel, the writer is probably talking about that standard shekel that the people kept at the sanctuary. However, it is possible that the sanctuary shekel was a different weight to the standard shekel.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **shekel**. Look up shekel and sanctuary 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 leaders brought flour mixed with oil in the bowls and dishes for the **grain offering**. Look up grain offering in the Master Glossary for more information. Use the same word or phrase for grain offering as you used in previous passages.

The leaders of Israel bring animals to be used as a **burnt offering**. Look up burnt offering in the Master Glossary for more information. Use the same word or phrase for burnt offering as you used in previous passages.

The leaders also bring a goat as a **sin offering**, or **purification offering**. Look up sin or purification offering in the Master Glossary for more information. Use the same word or phrase for sin offering or purification offering that you used in previous passages.

Finally, the leaders bring animals to **sacrifice** for the peace, or fellowship, offerings. Look up sacrifice and peace or fellowship offering in the Master Glossary for more information. Use the same word or phrase for sacrifice, and peace or fellowship offering as you used in previous passages.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 7:10–83

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Numbers 7:84–89

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 7:84–89 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 7:84–89 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 7:84–89 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This passage takes place after each one of the twelve leaders of the tribes of Israel have brought their tribe's offering for the dedication of the altar. The leaders have brought their offerings one at a time, one each day, for twelve days.

Moses, the writer of this passage, summarises all of the offerings brought by the leaders. They brought twelve silver dishes, twelve silver bowls, and twelve gold spoons. Each silver dish weighed 130 shekels, and each silver bowl weighed 70 shekels. Altogether, the silver dishes and bowls weighed 2,400 shekels, as measured by the sanctuary shekel. The gold spoons weighed a total of 120 shekels.

You will recall that we do not know exactly what each of these items looked like, but in Moses' language, Hebrew, the word for the silver dish or plate means "deep," and so this was probably a deep dish. The word Moses uses for the bowl means "to throw," and so this was probably some sort of bowl used for throwing liquids. The word Moses uses for the golden dish or spoon means something that is slightly cupped, and it also means the palm of your hand. This item only weighed 10 shekels, which is much lighter than the silver dish and bowl, and so this item is sometimes translated as a spoon rather than a dish.

Stop here as a group and look at pictures of what the silver dish, silver bowl, and golden spoon might have looked like. Pause this audio here.

You will also recall that a shekel was what the Israelites used to measure the weight of something. The people kept a standard shekel weight at the sanctuary that the people would have used to make sure all shekels weighed the same amount. Moses is probably referring to that standard shekel when he records the weight of these items in sanctuary shekels, although it is possible that sanctuary shekel was a different weight to the standard shekel.

The leaders of Israel's tribes also brought bulls, rams, male lambs, goats, and oxen for the burnt offerings, sin or purification offerings, and peace or fellowship offerings.

Stop here as a group and look at pictures of bulls, rams, lambs, goats, and oxen. Pause this audio here.

At some point, Moses goes into the tent of meeting, which in this case means the tabernacle, in order to speak with Yahweh. When Moses is inside the tabernacle, Moses hears a voice speaking to him. We don't know whether this was a regular event that happened whenever Moses would go into the tabernacle, or whether this event happened one time as a response to the leaders of Israel bringing the required sacrifices. Either way, Yahweh is fulfilling his promise to speak to Moses from the mercy seat.

Yahweh spoke to Moses from the mercy seat, which was above the ark of the covenant. You will recall that Yahweh instructed the Israelites to make the cover for the ark of the covenant 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 and allies, and not to be distant or hostile. The atonement cover represented the fact that their God, Yahweh, the only true God, had in his eternal kindness and love arranged for the Israelites to enjoy community with him. The Israelites were not strangers or enemies to Yahweh; they were Yahweh's covenant family.

At the ends of the ark of the covenant were 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 beings. Cherubim are guardians of sacred places. They are often symbols of Yahweh's presence. The craftsmen who made the cherubs showed the cherubs with wings. One faced the center of the atonement cover from one end, and the other from the other end. Their wings were raised in order to protect the atonement cover. The cover and the cherubim were all one solid piece of gold.

Yahweh had promised to speak to Moses from the mercy seat, and we can see that Yahweh keeps that promise in this passage.

Stop here as a group and look at a picture of the ark of the covenant and also the atonement cover along with the attached cherubim.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 7:84–89 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: Moses, the writer of this passage, summarises all of the offerings the leaders of Israel brought for the dedication of the altar.

In the second scene: Moses goes into the tent of meeting and hears Yahweh's voice.

The characters in this passage are:

- The leaders of the tribes of Israel
- Moses
- Yahweh

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

In the previous passage, Moses used a lot of repetition as he recorded each leader of the tribes of Israel and the offerings they brought to the tabernacle. You will recall that this repetition was probably because Moses would have recorded every offering brought by each leader in some form of record chart, probably like a clay tablet on which Moses inscribed or carved the information. The repetition also helps us to understand that each of Israel's tribes made the same contribution to support the priests' work done in the tabernacle.

In the first scene of this passage, Moses summarises all of these offerings. The summary helps us to see the full effect of what Israel's leaders have achieved through their partnership. Moses ends his summary by reminding us that these were the offerings the leaders brought for the dedication of the altar. This shows us that the description of the offerings has finished. It also links back to the beginning of the description in the last passage where Moses tells us for the first time that the leaders brought these offerings for the dedication of the altar. Moses often uses this pattern when he is describing offerings, beginning and ending each description with a summary statement of what the leaders are doing.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about going to a market to buy the same item of food from five different places. End your story by giving a summary of how much food you bought and how much it cost. The rest of the group should pay attention to what words you use to show that you are now giving a summary or conclusion instead of telling us a new part of the story. Pause this audio here.

In the second scene, Moses goes into the tent of meeting, which in this case means the tabernacle. When Moses is inside the tent of meeting, Moses hears a voice speaking to him. Moses refers to this as "the voice," but Moses does not tell us who the voice belongs to. From the rest of the passage, we know that it is Yahweh's voice. Moses hears the voice speaking to Moses from the mercy seat, which is above the ark of the covenant. Yahweh is keeping his earlier promise to speak to Moses from the mercy seat. You will remember that we do not know whether this was a regular event that occurred whenever Moses went into the tabernacle, or whether this event happened one time as a response to the leaders of Israel bringing the required sacrifices.

Stop here as a group and look at a picture of the tabernacle layout. Look at where the ark of the covenant was placed in the tabernacle. Pause this audio here.

Now look together as a group at a picture of the ark of the covenant and also the atonement cover along with the attached cherubim. 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

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 7:84–89 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:

- The leaders of the tribes of Israel
- 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 takes place after each one of the twelve leaders of the tribes of Israel have brought their tribe's offering for the dedication of the altar. The leaders had brought their offerings one at a time, one each day, for twelve days.

In total, Israel's leaders brought the following items for the dedication of the altar. They brought twelve silver dishes, twelve silver bowls, and twelve gold spoons. Each silver dish weighed 130 shekels, and each silver bowl weighed 70 shekels. Altogether, the silver dishes and bowls weighed 2,400 shekels, as measured by the sanctuary shekel. The gold spoons weighed a total of 120 shekels.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the leaders of the tribes of Israel, "What are you feeling or thinking?" These people might answer things like: "It was an honour to represent my tribe in contributing to this offering," or, "We have all worked together to bring Yahweh this special offering. It is amazing to see everything we have brought together."

For the burnt offering, the leaders brought a total of twelve young bulls, twelve rams, and twelve male lambs which were one year old. The leaders brought these animals with the grain offering.

The leaders also brought a total of twelve male goats for the sin offering, and the total number of animals they brought for the peace or fellowship offering was 24 oxen, 60 rams, 60 male goats, and 60 male lambs which were one year old.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "My people have done well and I am pleased with them. They have followed my instructions carefully and

worshipped me in the way I asked," or, "It is wonderful to see the tribes of Israel coming together to worship me. Every tribe has brought their contribution, and this makes me happy."

These were all the offerings the leaders brought for the dedication of the altar after Moses had anointed it.

Then Moses entered the tent of meeting to speak with Yahweh. Moses heard the voice speaking to Moses from between the two cherubim that were above the atonement cover on the ark of the covenant law. This was the way that Yahweh spoke to Moses.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "What a relief to have finished the tabernacle and anointed the altar as Yahweh asked," or, "It is such an honour to hear Yahweh's voice. I am very grateful for this tent where I can now meet with Yahweh."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 7:84–89 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Moses summarises all of the **offerings** which the **leaders of Israel** had made for the dedication of the **altar**. Use the same words or phrases for offerings and altar that you used in previous passages. For more information on offerings and altar, refer to the Master Glossary.

You should also use the same word or phrase for the leaders of Israel that you used in previous passages.

The first items Moses summarises are the **silver dishes or plates**, the **silver bowls**, and the **golden dishes or spoons**. You should use the same word or phrase for these items that you used in the previous passage.

Moses tells us the total weight of the dishes and bowls in sanctuary shekels. Use the same word or phrase for **shekels** and **sanctuary** that you used in previous passages. For more information on shekels and sanctuary, refer to the Master Glossary.

You will recall that these items were for the **grain offering**. Use the same word or phrase for grain offering that you used in previous passages. For more information on the grain offering, refer to the Master Glossary.

Next Moses summarises what animals the leaders of Israel brought to be used as a **burnt offering, sin or purification offering, and peace or fellowship offering**. Use the same words or phrases for these offerings that you used in previous passages. For more information on the burnt offering, sin or purification offering, and peace or fellowship offering refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses goes into the tent of meeting, which in this case means the **tabernacle**, to speak with Yahweh. Use the same word or phrase for the tent of meeting that you used in previous passages. For more information about the tent of meeting, refer to tabernacle in the Master Glossary.

The personal name for God, **Yahweh**, is used in this passage. Use the same word or phrase for Yahweh that you used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses hears a voice speaking to him from between the **cherubim**, above the atonement cover, or mercy seat, above the **ark of the covenant**. Cherubs, or cherubim, were some sort of intelligent, powerful angelic being. Cherubim are guardians of sacred places. They are often symbols of Yahweh's presence. The atonement cover was called this because it refers to the concept of atonement or reconciliation—the process of causing people to be true friends and allies, and not to be distant or hostile. The atonement cover represented the fact that their God, Yahweh, the only true God, had in his eternal kindness and love arranged for the Israelites to enjoy community with Yahweh when he forgives them and brings them back into relationship with him. Use the same word or phrase for ark of the covenant that you used in previous passages. For more information on ark of the covenant, refer to the Master Glossary.

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.

Now discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for the **atonement cover** or **mercy seat**. Look up atonement and mercy in the Master Glossary for more information. 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.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 7:84–89

Audio Content

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Numbers 8:1-4

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 8:1-4 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 8:1-4 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 8:1-4 in the easiest-to-understand version.

In the previous passage, the twelve leaders of the tribes of Israel gave their offerings for the dedication of the altar. Then Moses entered the tent of meeting. In this passage, Yahweh is speaking to Moses about how to set up the lampstand. Yahweh commanded them to make. Yahweh gives Moses instructions for Aaron, the high priest. Aaron is to set up the lamps in the lampstand so the lamps light the area in front of the lampstand.

Stop here as a group and look at a picture of the lampstand and the lamps. Pause this audio here.

Aaron obeyed Yahweh and set the lamps in the lampstand so that they were leaning forward to light the place right in front of the lampstand. Moses reminds us that Yahweh had given Moses a pattern for how the artisans should make the lampstand. The artisans made the lampstand of gold. They had beaten the gold into the right shape. They had hammered the gold into the base and into the stand with the gold flowers.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you light your places of worship?

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 8:1–4 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 commanded Moses to tell Aaron how to set up the lampstand.

In the second scene: Aaron set the lampstand in its proper place.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron

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

In the first scene, Moses is most likely in the tent of meeting. Yahweh tells Moses to give a message to Aaron. Yahweh commands Aaron that when Aaron sets the lamps in their proper place in the lampstand, Aaron should set them so that the lamps will give light to the tent of meeting. Remember that there are seven lamps in the lampstand.

In the second scene, Aaron obeys Yahweh. He set the lamps in their places in a certain way facing forward so that they give light to the tent of meeting. Moses now reminds us that the lampstand was made of hammered gold from its base to its gold flower blossoms on the stand. This means that the entire lampstand was made of gold that an artisan had hammered into shape.

The end of this passage reminds us that the Israelites had made the lampstand exactly as Yahweh had instructed them. It is important to remember that the Israelites had followed Yahweh's commands about how to build the tabernacle and the items in it.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 8:1–4 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
- 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 is in the tent of meeting and Yahweh is speaking to Moses. Yahweh sends a new message to Aaron through Moses. Yahweh orders Aaron to set up the lamps in the lampstand so they will give light to the tent of meeting.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I am so happy that Yahweh wants the tabernacle to be well lit."

Aaron follows what Yahweh commands. Aaron sets the lampstand as he is told so it lights the tent of meeting.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Aaron, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "This lampstand will be useful to the priests in the tabernacle, especially at night," or, "I am so happy that Yahweh cares about all these details."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 8:1–4 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Yahweh commands Aaron how to set the **lampstand** and its lamps in place. Yahweh is the personal name for God, and this name is used throughout this passage. The lampstand is made of gold. The priests poured oil into the lamps and lit wicks in the lamps to keep the lights burning. This lampstand made light in the tent of meeting.

If needed, stop here and look at the photo of the lamps and lampstand again. Pause this audio here.

Use the same words for Yahweh, lampstand and lamps that you have used in previous passages. For more information about Yahweh, see the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 8:1-4

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Numbers 8:5-22

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 8:5-22 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 8:5-22 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 8:5–22 in the easiest-to-understand version.

In the previous passage, Yahweh commanded Aaron to set the lamps in the lampstand in a certain way so their light would shine forward. In this passage, Yahweh commands the Levites to separate themselves and become holy, or ceremonially clean, so that they can serve Yahweh in the tabernacle. Yahweh chose the Levites so they could do special tasks for Yahweh. The Levites will sprinkle themselves with the water of purification, or special water that they used for this purpose of washing someone so that they can serve Yahweh. Then they will use a razor to shave their bodies. They must also put on clean clothing.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, what are the rituals that you do to set apart the people who will do special activities for the community? Pause this audio here.

After the Levites have purified themselves, they will offer a bull as a sin or purification offering. The Levites will offer the bull together with its grain offering of fine flour mixed with oil. Then the Levites will assemble in front of the tent of meeting, and before the whole community or congregation of Israel. The people of Israel were to respond by laying their hands on the Levites. When people laid hands on the Levites, it showed support for the service of the Levites.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Where do people in your culture gather to hold important meetings? How do people in your culture show their agreement to other members in the community? Pause this audio here.

After this, Aaron was to present the Levites as a wave offering before Yahweh. A wave offering is usually a portion of a peace or fellowship offering, such as the first crops of a harvest or sheaves of barley, which the priests lifted up to Yahweh to symbolically give them to Yahweh. In this case, Aaron gave the Levites to Yahweh. As Yahweh's servants, the Levites will do whatever Yahweh commands them to do. The Levites will lay their hands on two bulls. The first bull is the sin or purification offering. When the Levites lay their hands on the bulls, they symbolize that the sins are transferred from the Levites to the bull. The second bull will be the burnt offering that they will burn. The offering of the bulls symbolizes that the Levites are ritually cleaned from their sins.

After the offering, the Levites will stand before Aaron and Aaron's sons. This is a place of honor for the Levites. Aaron will raise his hands again as a second wave offering and present the Levites to Yahweh. Then the Levites will go to the tent of meeting and do their work there.

Yahweh chose the Levites who will serve him. Yahweh owns them. Yahweh also said that the firstborn in Israel belong to Yahweh. When the Israelites were still in Egypt, Yahweh struck down or destroyed the firstborn among the Egyptians. The angel of death killed the firstborn among the Egyptians, but Yahweh spared the firstborn among the Israelites. Because Yahweh spared the firstborn of the Israelites in Egypt, the firstborn of the Israelites belong to Yahweh. However, Yahweh takes the Levites in place of the firstborn Israelites.

Yahweh gave the Levites to Aaron and Aaron's sons as a gift. Usually, people give things as a gift to other people. In this passage, Yahweh gives the Levites as gifts for the other tribes. The Levites will assist the priests in their duties. The Levites will atone for the people, which means that they will restore the people's relationship with Yahweh when the people's sin breaks the relationship. As the sacrifice of the bulls cleaned the sins of the Levites, the Levites also cleaned the people of Israel from their sins. When the people of Israel come to the entrance of the tent of meeting, no plague or disaster will come to them, because the Levites have atoned for the people. Yahweh says the atonement of the people will drive away, or send away, the plagues from them.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What have been the rituals in your culture that people have done to make people clean or fit for service to your gods?

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 8:5-22 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 three scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh gives Moses instructions for dedicating the Levites.

In the second scene: Moses, Aaron, and the Israelites obey what Yahweh commands them to do.

In the third scene: The Levites began to serve the priests at the tent of meeting.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- The Levites
- The Israelites

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

In the first scene, Yahweh gives Moses instructions for dedicating the Levites. Yahweh tells Moses that the Levites will be set apart from the Israelites. Yahweh says that the Levites will become ceremonially clean, and then Yahweh gives Moses step-by-step instructions for how this should happen. First, Yahweh says to sprinkle the water of purification on the Levites. The water of purification is a special water for the purpose of washing someone so that they can serve Yahweh. Second, Yahweh says they must shave off all the hair on their bodies with a razor. Third, Yahweh says they must wash their clothes. Yahweh repeats: In this way they will purify themselves, or cause themselves to be able to serve Yahweh.

Yahweh says that once the Levites are purified, they should come in front of the tabernacle, along with the entire Israelite community. The Israelites should lay their hands on the heads of the Levites to show that they are giving them to Yahweh. Then Aaron should lift his hands to Yahweh like Aaron is giving the Levites to Yahweh in a wave offering.

Then the Levites must lay hands on two bulls and sacrifice them. One bull is the sin, or purification, offering. The other bull is the whole burnt offering. These two offerings will atone for the Levites, or make sure that they have a good relationship with Yahweh.

Then the Levites must stand in front of Aaron, probably for a second time, and Aaron must lift up his hands to Yahweh to give the Levites like a wave offering again to Yahweh. Yahweh repeats that this is the way that the Levites will be set apart and given to Yahweh.

Then the Levites should come work in the tabernacle. Now Yahweh stops his instructions to Moses and gives a reason for why Yahweh sets apart the Levites as special people to serve Yahweh. Yahweh talks about the history of the Israelites when they were in Egypt. Yahweh reminds Moses that Yahweh owns the firstborn of the males of the people and of the animals. Yahweh chose the Levites as Yahweh's firstborn instead of the firstborn of all the Israelites. The Levites will serve Aaron and Aaron's sons at the tent of meeting. The Levites are also like a gift to Aaron and Aaron's priests. The Levites will make atonement for the people, or make sure that the people have a good relationship with Yahweh. The Levites make this atonement for the people so that the people will not have a disaster, or plague, when they come to the sanctuary, or holy place of worship.

In the second scene, Moses, the community of Israel, the Levites, and Aaron obey what Yahweh commanded. The Levites purify themselves, and Aaron presents them to Yahweh.

In the third scene, the Levites began to serve the priests at the tent of meeting. Aaron and the priests supervise everything the Levites do. Moses ends this section by summarizing that Aaron and the priests did exactly what Yahweh told them to do.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 8:5–22 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
- The Levites
- 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 gives Moses instructions for dedicating the Levites. Yahweh tells Moses that the Levites will be set apart from the Israelites. Yahweh says that the Levites will become ceremonially clean.

First, Yahweh says to sprinkle the water of purification on the Levites.

Second, Yahweh says they must shave off all the hair on their bodies with a razor.

Third, Yahweh says they must wash their clothes.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "Yahweh has very special commands for Levites only," or, "Yahweh really wants the Levites to be clean before Yahweh."

Ask the actors playing the Levites, "How are you feeling?" You may hear things like, "We are honored. We have an important job to do."

Once the Levites are purified, they should come in front of the tabernacle along with the entire Israelite community. The Israelites should lay their hands on the heads of the Levites to show that they are giving the Levites to Yahweh. Then Aaron should lift his hands to Yahweh like Aaron is giving the Levites to Yahweh in a wave offering.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Aaron, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "As the priest of Israel, I dedicate the Levites to Yahweh," or, "The sacrifice of bulls will cleanse the Levites from their sins."

The Levites will lay hands on two bulls and sacrifice them. Then the Levites will stand in front of Aaron, probably for a second time, and Aaron will lift up his hands to Yahweh to give the Levites like a wave offering again to Yahweh. Then the Levites should come work in the tabernacle. Yahweh owns the firstborn of the males of the people and of the animals. Yahweh chose the Levites as his firstborn instead of the firstborn of all the Israelites. The Levites will serve Aaron and Aaron's sons at the tent of meeting. They are also like a gift to Aaron and the priests. The Levites will make atonement for the people, or make sure that the people have a good relationship with Yahweh. The Levites make this atonement for the people so that the people will not have a disaster, or plague, when they come to the sanctuary, or holy place of worship.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Levites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like: "We are so happy! When we laid our hands on the heads of the bulls and sacrificed the bulls, our sins were forgiven," and, "We feel honored and proud. Now we can serve Yahweh."

In the second scene, the Levites, Israelites, Moses, and Aaron obey what Yahweh commands. The Levites purify themselves, and Aaron presents them to Yahweh.

In the third scene, the Levites begin to serve the priests at the tent of meeting. Aaron and the priests supervise everything the Levites do. Moses ends this section by summarizing that Aaron and the priests did exactly what Yahweh told them to do.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Levites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like: "We feel honored. We Levites belong to Yahweh," and, "We have an important job. We will serve Yahweh so that no plague will come upon the Israelites."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 8:5–22 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Yahweh spoke to Moses. Yahweh is God's proper name. Use the same name for Yahweh that you have used in previous passages. For more information about Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses to separate the **Levites** from the other tribes of Israel and to bring the Levites in front of the **tent of meeting** and in front of the whole congregation, or community, of Israel. In this passage the phrase tent of meeting is used instead of tabernacle, but tent of meeting and tabernacle refer to the same thing. Use the same words for Levites, **Israelites**, congregation, and tent of meeting that you have in previous passages, and remember that Levites, Israelites, and tabernacle are in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses to make the Levites ceremonially **clean**. To be clean means to be fit to serve and worship Yahweh. Use the same word for clean that you have used in previous passages, and remember that clean/unclean is in the Master Glossary.

If needed, stop here and review what word you want to use for **clean**. Pause this audio here.

The Levites take one bull as a **sin or purification offering** and the other bull as a **burnt offering** along with its **grain offering**. Use the same words for sin or purification offering, burnt offering, and grain offering that you used previously. For more information on sin or purification offering refer to the Master Glossary.

Aaron gives the Levites as a **wave offering** to Yahweh. Aaron raises his hands to Yahweh. Aaron dedicates the Levites as a form of wave offering before Yahweh. Use the same word or phrase for wave offering that you used previously. For more information on wave offering, refer to the Master Glossary.

These rituals will **purify** the Levites. To purify something is to make something that is ritually unclean, or unfit to serve Yahweh, clean or pure and fit to serve Yahweh. This usually involves some sort of washing with water.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will translate **purify**. For more information on purify, refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

The Levites will make atonement for the people so no **plague** will come upon the Israelites when they go to the sanctuary. The plague may refer to a contagious sickness or disease from rats or insects. The sanctuary in this case refers to the tabernacle itself. Use the same words for atonement, plague, and sanctuary that you have used in previous passages, and remember that atonement and sanctuary are in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 8:5-22

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (12853242 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Numbers 8:23–26

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 8:23–26 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 8:23–26 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 8:23–26 in the easiest-to-understand version.

In the previous passage, Yahweh commanded Moses to separate the Levites for serving Yahweh. The Levites will assist Aaron and Aaron's sons and will do everything Yahweh commands them. In this passage, Yahweh tells Moses that the Levites will begin their service at the tent of meeting when they reach the age of 25. Earlier, Yahweh said that the Levites who helped move the tabernacle from place to place should be between 30 and 50 years of age. Perhaps this rule changed when there were more or fewer Levites in different times. Or perhaps the younger men from 25 to 30 years old will learn how to work from the older men like students learn a new job.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, what are the age qualifications for people who will perform spiritual or religious duties? Pause this audio here.

A Levite will end his service when he turns 50 years old. A Levite will end his service when he turns 50 years old. This means that the older Levites will no longer do the heavy physical work, but they will assist their brothers, or fellow Levites, with their duties.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What kinds of jobs do people usually do after they stop doing physical labor?

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 8:23–26 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: Yahweh commands the Levites who are 25 years of age and older. They shall serve at the tent of meeting.

In the second scene: Yahweh also commands the Levites who are 50 years of age or older. They shall cease from their duties at the tent of meeting.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- The Levites who are 25 years old up to the age of 50
- The Levites who are 50 years old and older

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

In the first scene, Yahweh instructs Moses about the Levites who will work in the tent of meeting. The Levites who are 25 years of age and older will work in the tent of meeting. This type of work includes assisting the priests as gatekeepers and craftsmen, and putting together or taking down the tent of meeting when the Israelites travel.

In the second scene, Yahweh describes what the Levite men 50 years of age and older are to do. These Levite men are to stop doing their physical work at the tent of meeting, but they are to work as guards and assist their brothers, or fellow Levites, in performing their duties. This was a different type of work that did not include physical labor.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How will you talk about the two different types of work? One type of work includes physical labor, and the other type of work is more like assisting the workers. Remember that you have already discussed the word for physical work when you translated the passages about the Merarites and Gershonites moving the parts of the tabernacle when the Israelites moved from place to place. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh ends his instructions to Moses with a summary statement: This is how you are to assign the duties, or the responsibilities, of the Levites.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 8:23–26 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 Levites who are 25 years old up to the age of 50
- The Levites who are 50 years old and older

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 speaks to Moses about two groups of Levites according to their ages. The Levites who are 25 years old and older will work at the tent of meeting.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Levites of this age, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like: "We are strong and capable of working at the tent of meeting," or, "We will do everything Yahweh tells us to do."

Yahweh also sends a message to the Levites who are 50 years old and older. These Levites will stop their work in the tent of meeting. They will serve as guards and will assist their fellow Levites.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Levites 50 years and older, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like: "We are tired, and we are not strong anymore. It is good that we can be free from the duties at the tent of meeting," or, "We will help our fellow Levites if they need our help."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 8:23–26 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 God's proper name. Use the same name for Yahweh that you have previously used. For more information about Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh gave instructions for the **Levites** who worked in the **tent of meeting**. The Levites came from the tribe of Levi. Yahweh chose the Levites to assist Aaron and the priests at the tent of meeting, which refers to the tabernacle. Use the same words for Levite and tent of meeting that you used previously. For more information on Levites and tabernacle, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Levites over 50 years of age were to stop doing the **hard physical work** and assist their brothers. Brothers was another way to talk about people who were part of the same community, such as fellow Levites. Use the same words for the Levite's hard physical work that you have used in previous passages in the book of Numbers.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will talk about the older Levites assisting their brothers, or fellow Levites, in the tent of meeting. Pause this audio here.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 8:23–26

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (6480054 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 4](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Numbers 9:1-14

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 9:1-14 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 9:1-14 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 9:1-14 in the easiest-to-understand version.

This passage tells us the details of the feast of Passover which the Israelites celebrate every year. Yahweh speaks to Moses at the beginning of the second year that the Israelites are in the wilderness of Sinai. This is the second time since the Israelites left Egypt that they would celebrate the Passover. Yahweh commands the Israelites that they should celebrate the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month. The celebration should be done at twilight, which is the time after the sun sets. The Israelites are to keep the Passover according to its rules and procedures. Moses and the Israelites obey Yahweh. They celebrate the Passover according to what Yahweh tells them to do.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, what is the most important day of the year? What day and time do you celebrate it? Pause this audio here.

This passage says that there were some men who became unclean because they touched the body of a dead person. In the culture of ancient Israel, people became unclean, or unfit for service to God, when they touched a dead body. People who became unclean for any reason were not allowed to participate in their religious rituals. Because these men touched the dead body and became unclean, they worried that they would not be allowed to join the Passover feast.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What are the beliefs and traditions in your culture when people are not allowed to join feasts or religious activities because they are not considered clean or pure enough? Pause this audio here.

The passage says that these men went to Moses and Aaron and told Moses and Aaron about their situation. The men asked Moses if they would be allowed to give their offering to Yahweh on the same day the Passover was to be celebrated. Moses told the men that he would ask Yahweh what they should do. It is possible that Moses went to the tent of meeting to hear what Yahweh would say.

Yahweh said to the people of Israel through Moses that people who have touched the body of a dead person, or people who are on a long journey during the celebration, will be allowed to participate in the Passover Feast. These people will keep the Passover on the fourteenth day of the second month at twilight, or right after the sun sets. Israelites who were not able to celebrate the Passover in the first month can still celebrate it in the second month. They will celebrate the Passover by eating bread without yeast and by eating bitter herbs. The

people celebrating the Passover should not break the bones of the Passover lamb or leave any part of the lamb until morning. The people will celebrate the Passover meal according to all the proper rules and procedures.

Stop here and look at pictures of a lamb, bitter herbs, and bread without yeast. Pause this audio here.

But Yahweh also has a message for the people who are clean, or pure and able to worship Yahweh, and those who are not on a long journey. If those people do not keep the Passover Feast, then they should be cut off or expelled from the community of Israel.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, think of someone who was sent away from the community for doing something against the rules of the community. Why was he or she sent away? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh also says that the Israelites should allow foreigners to participate in the Passover Feast if they want to. These foreigners must follow the same rules of the Passover that the Israelites do.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, what celebrations and feasts do you allow strangers or visitors from other countries to participate in? Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 9:1-14 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 four scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh speaks to Moses about how the Israelites should celebrate the Passover while the Israelites are in the wilderness.

In the second scene: Some men come to Moses and ask Moses if they will be allowed to celebrate Passover even though they became unclean by touching the body of a dead person.

In the third scene: In response to this question, Yahweh gives instructions to Moses for those who want to celebrate the Passover. Yahweh also warns that the Israelites who are ceremonially clean but refuse to celebrate the Passover will be removed from the community.

In the fourth scene: Yahweh also gives instructions for foreigners who want to join the Israelites in the Passover.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- The Israelites
- The men who touched a dead body
- Foreigners who want to participate in the Passover

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

In the first scene, the Israelites are in the wilderness of Sinai at the beginning of their second year after they left Egypt. Yahweh gives instructions to Moses on how the Israelites should celebrate the Passover. Yahweh reminds them of the month, the day, and the time of the day that they should celebrate. You will recall that the Israelites celebrated the Passover the first month of their year, which to us is mid-March to mid-April.

Stop here and discuss with your translation team: In your culture, how do you talk about the time of year, or date, when special events happen every year? Pause this audio here.

In the second scene, certain men have become unclean by touching the body of a dead person. These men come to Moses and Aaron, and ask, "Why should we not give our offering to Yahweh like the other Israelites on the special day?" They are asking Moses what they should do, because even though they have become unclean, they want to celebrate the Passover. Moses tells the men that Moses will ask Yahweh about this matter.

In the third scene, Moses asks Yahweh what to do, possibly at the tent of meeting. Yahweh says that he will allow people who became unclean, or who are traveling on a long journey, to celebrate the Passover on the fourteenth day of the second month. This gives the people enough time to become ritually clean, or able to worship Yahweh, again. Then Yahweh says some of the rules about the Passover again to remind Moses that these people must still follow all the regulations of the Passover, even though they are celebrating one month later. Yahweh mentions that they are to eat the bitter herbs and the unleavened bread. In the original language, Yahweh does not mention the Passover lamb, but we know that Yahweh is talking about the lamb when he says not to break any of its bones. You may need to be clear that Yahweh is saying to eat the lamb, herbs, and bread all at once and not to leave any of it until morning, and to not break the lamb's bones.

Yahweh also has a message for people who are clean but refuse to celebrate the Passover. If these people fail to offer their sacrifice to Yahweh on the Passover, these people will be cut off or excluded from joining the community of Israel. They will no longer be considered part of Yahweh's people. They will bear their sins, meaning they will experience punishment for their sins.

In the fourth scene, Yahweh also gives instructions for foreigners who wish to participate in the Passover Feast. The foreigners living among the Israelites are not required to celebrate the Passover. But if they choose to celebrate the Passover, Yahweh says they will be allowed to join only if they follow the rules for the Passover. The rules for celebrating the Passover also apply in the same way for foreigners.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 9:1-14 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
- Aaron
- The Israelites
- The men who touched a dead body
- Foreigners who want to participate in the Passover

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 instructions to Moses on how the Israelites should celebrate the Passover every year. The Israelites will celebrate Passover on the twilight of the fourteenth day of the first month of the year.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "This is a good time to celebrate the Passover," or, "I am glad that we celebrate this every year!"

Some men come to Moses and Aaron. These men tell Moses and Aaron that they are not able to celebrate Passover because they became unclean by touching the body of a dead person. Moses tells the men that he will ask Yahweh about their question.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the men who are unclean, "What are you feeling or thinking?" These people might answer things like: "We feel sad that we could not join the Passover because we are unclean," or, "We touched the body of a dead person."

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I hope there is something else we can do," or, "Let us ask Yahweh and see what he will tell us."

Moses asks Yahweh what to do in this situation. Yahweh tells Moses that people who became unclean or who are on a long journey will be allowed to celebrate the Passover on the fourteenth day of the second month. But Yahweh also tells Moses that Israelites who are ceremonially clean and who are not on a long journey but refuse to participate in the Passover Feast will be expelled from their community.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I am happy that Yahweh gave them a second chance," or, "I hope everyone gets to participate in the Passover!"

Yahweh also gives instructions to Moses that foreigners who want to celebrate the Passover will be allowed to join the Israelites. Foreigners will also follow the rules and procedures for the celebration.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the foreigners, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "It is an honor for us to be allowed to participate in the Passover," or, "Yes, we will follow the instructions carefully."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 9:1-14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Yahweh is God's proper name. Use the same words for Yahweh as you used previously. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

It is the second year when the **Israelites** were in the **wilderness of Sinai**. The Sinai desert region is located between Egypt and the land of Israel. Use the same words for Israelites and wilderness that you have used previously, and remember that wilderness is in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh spoke to Moses about the **Passover**. The Passover is an important festival that is also called the festival of unleavened bread. This festival reminds the Israelites of the time Yahweh rescued them from slavery in Egypt.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How have you translated **Passover** in previous books of the Bible? Be sure to use the same word here. See the Master Glossary for more information about Passover. Pause this audio here.

The people should follow all the **statutes** and **ordinances** in keeping the Passover. The words for statutes and ordinances have very similar meanings. The Bible often uses them together to talk about rules for special rituals.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How will you talk about **statutes** and **ordinances** in your translation? Do you have special words for rules about religious ceremonies? See the Master Glossary for more information about statutes and ordinances. Pause this audio here.

Only Israelites who are ceremonially **clean** can participate in the Passover. But some of the people became **unclean** because they touched the body of a dead person. Use the same words for clean and unclean that you have previously, and remember that clean/unclean is in the Master Glossary.

The men who touched the dead body could not give their **offering** to Yahweh because they were unclean. Use the same word for offering that you used previously. For more information on offering, see the Master Glossary.

If the people are ceremonially clean but refuse to celebrate the Passover, they have to bear their **sin**, meaning they will suffer the consequences of their sin. Use the same word for sin that you used previously. For more information on sin, refer to the Master Glossary.

There were **foreigners** who wanted to participate in the Passover. Foreigners are temporary residents who came from another country or people. Use the same word for foreigner that you used previously. For more information on foreigner, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 9:1–14

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (10833695 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

[mp3 zip](#) (10956563 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

Numbers 9:15–23

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 9:15–23 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 9:15–23 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.

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

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.

Numbers 9:15–23

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (1816054 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)

[mp3 zip](#) (2411248 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)

Numbers 10:1–10

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

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

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 10:1–10 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

Setting the Stage

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

In the last passage, we were told how Yahweh led the people of Israel throughout their wilderness journey using the cloud. Whenever Yahweh lifted the cloud, the people of Israel set out after it. Wherever Yahweh made the cloud to settle, the people of Israel camped there. Yahweh commanded the people using the cloud, and they obeyed Yahweh.

In this story, Yahweh speaks to Moses and tells him to make two silver trumpets. Yahweh probably spoke to Moses from the cloud in the tabernacle, or tent of meeting. Yahweh tells Moses to use the two silver trumpets to call the assembly of the Israelites and to give them a signal to begin moving camp. The assembly of the Israelites is the official gathering of the community of Israel. It is important not to confuse these two trumpets with the rams horn. These two silver trumpets were made of "hammered silver," which means that craftsmen beat the silver metal with a hammer to make the trumpets.

Stop here as a group and look at a picture of silver trumpets. Discuss what kind of instruments you would use in your culture to make the kind of sound you think these trumpets might make. How do you call the people of your community together to communicate decisions? Who is responsible for calling everyone together? Do you have one leader or several leaders? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses that when they blew both of the silver trumpets, everyone in the assembly of Israel must gather at the entrance of the tent of meeting in front of Moses. But if they blew only one of the silver trumpets, only the chiefs or leaders of the divisions of the people of Israel must gather at the entrance of the tent of meeting. You will remember that Yahweh had instructed Moses to appoint these chiefs to help Moses take a census of the troops, or divisions, of Israelite men who could fight in battle. This is how Yahweh instructed Moses to direct the people of Israel inside the camp and to gather the people to Moses at the entrance of the tent of meeting. Although Yahweh tells all the people these instructions about the trumpets, Yahweh will later tell Moses that only the priests are allowed to blow the trumpets.

Yahweh also tells Moses to use the silver trumpets to tell the people to begin moving camp. Yahweh calls the trumpet sound for moving camp "an alarm." Alarm refers to the type of sound that is made by the trumpets. The sound is probably a loud blast, or a series of blasts or loud noises. Yahweh tells Moses to blow the trumpets in such a way as to make a distinct sound. Yahweh says that the sound they make to gather the people to the tent of meeting must be different from the sound they make to alert the people to begin moving camp.

Stop here as a group and look at a picture of the camp of Israel. Do this activity as a group: Decide on three different signs. One sign must indicate that leaders of the people are to gather before Moses, another sign must mean that the whole community must gather before Moses, and the last sign must mean that the whole community must begin to travel. Choose one person to give the signs, two people to represent the leaders of the people, and one person to represent Moses. Let the person chosen to give the signs give the signs in mixed order several times, and let the rest of the people follow that person's orders according to the sign they give. Pause audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses that the community is to set out in order. When the priests blow the blast, or alarm, the tribes that camp to the east of the tent of meeting are to begin the march out of camp. When the priests blow the alarm a second time, the tribes that camp to the south side of the tent of meeting are to also begin marching out of camp. The sound of the alarm tells the people that it is time to begin marching, and tells the order that each tribe is to march in. Yahweh tells Moses to be careful not to mix up the sounds of the trumpets. When the priests blow the trumpets to gather the people, they are not to blow them with the sound of the alarm to move.

Stop here and do this activity as a group: Remember the activity you just did. Again, choose one person to give the signs, two people to represent the leaders of the people, and one person to represent Moses. Let the person chosen to represent Moses tell the person chosen to give the signs to give specific signs. The person chosen to give the signs must give confusing signs. When Moses asks that person to gather the leaders, let that person give the wrong sign and so on for all the signs. After the people have obeyed the signs, Moses should tell everyone the command he had actually given. Discuss what would have happened in the camp if the sounds of the trumpets were mixed up like this. Pause audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses that only the priests, the sons of Aaron, are allowed to blow the trumpets. Yahweh says that the trumpets are to be "a perpetual statute throughout your generations." These statutes were rules that were to be observed by all Israelites for all time.

Stop here and discuss as a group: In your community, who has the responsibility of blowing these kinds of instruments? What are some examples of rules or customs that you have in your culture that must be kept by all people and passed down to all generations? Pause audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses that when the Israelites go into their own land, and an enemy attacks them, they are to sound the blast with the trumpets. Yahweh says that he will hear the blast and rescue them from their enemies.

Yahweh also instructs them to blow the trumpets on days of celebration, such as the annual festivals, the new moon festivals or beginning of the month, and while presenting the burnt offering and peace or fellowship offering. Yahweh says that the trumpets will remind him of his covenant, or promise, with them. Yahweh gives all these instructions and reminds the people of Israel that he is Yahweh.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 10:1–10 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 one scene.

In the first scene: Yahweh talks to Moses and tells Moses to make two silver trumpets of hammered work for calling the people together and for directing the people to begin marching out of camp. Yahweh also tells Moses how the trumpets are to be used in the future.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- The chiefs or leaders of the people of Israel
- The priests, the sons of Aaron
- The people of Israel
- Enemies of Israel

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

This passage comes just before the people of Israel begin their march away from the wilderness of Sinai. It continues the theme of the previous passage, which is about how Yahweh directed the people of Israel on their march. It is likely that Yahweh spoke to Moses from the cloud in the tent of meeting and gave Moses all of these instructions.

Yahweh speaks to Moses and tells Moses to make two silver trumpets of "hammered work." This means that the trumpets were to be made by beating silver to the desired shape. Although Yahweh addresses Moses, it is likely that Moses did not make the trumpets himself, but gave these instructions to a skilled person. It is likely that the trumpets were long tubes with a mouthpiece on one end and a widened bell shape on the other end. The sound of the trumpet was probably made by blowing into the mouthpiece in such a way as to vibrate the lips so that the vibrations increased as they passed along the widening body of the tube.

Stop here and do this activity. Have one person pretend to make a trumpet by beating metal with a hammer. Pause audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses to use the trumpets to call the community together and also to alert the community to break camp or set out. Breaking camp or setting out means packing everything up and marching to a new location.

Remember that Yahweh will later tell Moses that only the priests are to blow the trumpets. Yahweh tells Moses that when the priests blow both trumpets, the whole community is to gather before Moses at the entrance of the tent of meeting.

Stop here and look at a picture of priests blowing the silver trumpets. Pause this audio here.

But if the priests blow only one trumpet, then only the chiefs of the people of Israel are to gather. The chiefs were the heads of the divisions of the people of Israel. The people of Israel were divided into tribal groups of thousands, and the chiefs were the leaders of each division, or troops of men who could fight.

Yahweh tells Moses to use the trumpets to alert the people when it is time to move and to direct the order of the march. Yahweh does not say how many trumpets must be blown for marching, but Yahweh does say that the sound must be the sound of "an alarm." Yahweh says that the sound made by the trumpets for gathering the people to the tent of meeting, and the sound made for marching, must be different. Yahweh says that when the priests blow an alarm, the tribes camping on the east are to set out. Yahweh tells Moses that when "you blow" an alarm the second time, the tribes on the south side are to set out. We are not told when the rest of the camp began to march. Remember that although Yahweh addresses all the people of Israel when he tells them how to blow the trumpets for setting out, Yahweh also says that only the priests are to blow the trumpets.

Stop here and do this activity as a group: Select one or two people to be priests, and divide the remaining people into four groups. Have them camp around a square middle and name them northside camp, southside camp, westside camp, and eastside camp. Have the priest blow a sound to gather everyone to the entrance of the tabernacle. Then have the priest blow a second sound that is different from the first. Make this second sound loud or a type of sound that tells people to move, like a hunting call. When the priest blows this sound, the eastside camp should collect all their belongings and begin walking. When the priest blows this sound again, the southside camp should rise and follow. Decide how the northside camp and the westside camp should follow in an orderly way. Repeat a few times. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses that only the priests, the sons of Aaron, must blow the trumpets. Remember that the trumpets are tools to signal the instructions of Yahweh to the people of Israel.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How does God give instructions to the people in your community? Are there things that only certain people who represent God can touch or do? Pause the audio here.

Yahweh said that the trumpets were a "perpetual statute." This means that the sons of Aaron, the priests, were to blow the trumpets from generation to generation. This is a law that Yahweh gave them to keep forever.

Yahweh told Aaron and the priests how they should continue using the trumpets in the future when they would be living in their land. Remember that they are still many years away from arriving in their land. Yahweh said that when they arrived in their land, and they went to war against their enemy who oppressed them, they were to blow an alarm with the trumpets so that Yawheh, their God, would remember them and save them from their enemies. Yahweh makes it clear that when the priests blow the trumpets, Yahweh himself will hear and save them, and not another god.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do gods in your community identify themselves and separate themselves from other gods? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh said that the trumpets would remind Yahweh of the covenant that he made with the people of Israel. He told them to blow the trumpets on days of celebration, such as the annual festivals, the beginning of the month, and when they present their burnt offering and peace or fellowship offering.

Yahweh concludes by reminding the Israelites that he is their God, saying, "I am Yahweh your God." Yahweh often makes this statement after he makes ordinances or rules for his people.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Why do you think Yahweh reminds his people of his name and who he is to them? What occasions remind people in your culture of the god whom they worship? 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

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 10:1–10 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:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- The chiefs of the people of Israel
- The priests, the sons of Aaron
- The people of Israel
- Enemies 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.

In the first scene Yahweh speaks to Moses and tells Moses to make two silver trumpets of hammered work.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing Yahweh might answer things like: "I am instructing Moses to make trumpets for directing my people," or "It is very important that my people obey me and follow my instructions," or "I am making sure that my instructions will be heard by everyone," or "I am giving Moses tools that will make it easier for him to communicate my instructions to the people."

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I am doing what Yahweh says," or "Yahweh is giving me these silver trumpets to make it easier to direct the people. Now I will be able to call the people to the tent of meeting easily," or "I will be able to direct the movement of the camp with these trumpets."

Yahweh says that when both trumpets are blown, all the community shall come to the entrance of the tent of meeting and gather before Moses.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I am feeling very happy. This should make my work easier," or "The camp is very big, and there are many people in it. I am very glad that I can call them with these trumpets," or "The two trumpets blown together will make a very clear sound and tell the people to come to the tent of meeting at once."

Yahweh says that when one trumpet is blown, only the chiefs, or leaders, were to come to the entrance of the tent of meeting and gather before Moses.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel relieved. Finding the chiefs one by one in this big community would be very difficult. Now I can signal to them easily," or "The chiefs will recognize this signal easily and come at once to the tent of meeting," or "The chiefs represent the people. They must always be ready for service."

Yahweh tells Moses to make a separate sound with the trumpets for instructing the people to break camp. The sound for breaking camp and setting out should be blown once to instruct the tribes on the east side to set out and then a second time to instruct the tribes on the south side to set out.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I must instruct the priests clearly not to confuse these sounds," or "These trumpets will bring good order to the camp. When we march, we will march calmly and safely. The people will not trample on each other. None will be left behind, and our animals will not be lost," or "How useful these trumpets will be."

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I desire order in my camp, and these trumpets will help Moses maintain that order," or "I will keep my people safe from any danger or loss, and I will guide them in their journey," or "Moses will do as I tell him. He will have the trumpets made just as I have asked, and he will instruct the priests to blow them as I have commanded. My people will be able to obey me."

Yahweh tells Moses that these rules about the trumpets are to be a "perpetual statute throughout the generations of Israel."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "My people are to blow these trumpets forever, so that I may remember them," or "The sons of Aaron, the priests, are to remind me of my covenant with Israel forever, and none but the priests shall blow my trumpets," or "This is my commandment, and my people shall keep it."

Yahweh tells Moses that when the Israelites enter their land and are living in it, if an enemy attacks them, they are to blow the trumpets so that they may be remembered and saved by Yahweh.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "The people must remember me. I am Yahweh who saves them," or "If my people do not remember me when the enemy attacks them, how shall they be saved?" or "When I bring an enemy against my people for their disobedience, I will remember them and have mercy on them when they remember me. They will use these trumpets when they remember me."

Yahweh said that they were to continue blowing the trumpets in their land. He told them to blow the trumpets on days of celebration, such as the annual festivals, the beginning of the month, and while presenting the burnt and peace offerings.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "We are quick to forget. In good times and times of plenty we might forget Yahweh. He has given us these trumpets in order to keep us mindful of him," or "We will rejoice in Yahweh forever. He saved us and will take us to our land and give it to us," or "Yahweh hears his people and the sound of his trumpets."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

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

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

Yahweh speaks to Moses and tells him to make two silver trumpets. Yahweh is the personal name of God. Use the same name for Yahweh that you used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

At the end of this passage, Yahweh identifies himself as the God of the Israelites. In this section, the general word for God is used. Use the same general word for God as you have used in previous passages when you have translated phrases such as "I am Yahweh your God."

Yahweh tells Moses to make the silver trumpets of hammered work.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **trumpets** that people have hammered out of silver. 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 the trumpets to call the assembly, or the official gathering of the Israelites, together at the entrance of the **tent of meeting**. The tent of meeting is another name for the **tabernacle**. It is also called the tent of meeting because this is where Yahweh met with Moses and the people of Israel. Use the same word or phrase for assembly and for tent of meeting that you used in previous passages, and see the Master Glossary for more information about tabernacle.

Yahweh tells Moses to blow only one trumpet when Moses wants the **chiefs**, or leaders, of the people of Israel to gather at the entrance of the tent of meeting. The people of Israel were divided into **troops** of thousands of men who could fight if needed. Each division had its leader or chief. Use the same word for chiefs or leaders, and for troops of fighting men, that you used in previous passages.

Yahweh tells Moses to blow an **alarm** to signal to the people to begin marching. Alarm refers to the type of sound that the trumpets made. It was probably a blast or a series of blasts.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **alarm**. Use the same word or phrase throughout this passage. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses that the trumpets are to be a perpetual ordinance, or **statute**. Perpetual statute means a rule or law that is to be kept forever from generation to generation. Use the same words for statute and **generations** that you have used in previous passages. For more information on statute and generations, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses to blow the trumpets at their festivals, on the first day of their months, and with their **burnt offerings** and **sacrifices** for the **peace or fellowship offering**. Festivals are special feasts that Yahweh told the people of Israel to celebrate throughout the year. Yahweh highlighted two types of offerings: the burnt offering and the peace or fellowship offering.

When a person brings God a burnt offering, he kills an animal and burns this animal completely on an altar. The peace offering is also called a fellowship offering, because it was made to establish or maintain good relations with Yahweh. Use the same phrases for sacrifices, burnt offering, and peace or fellowship offering that you have used in previous passages. For more information on sacrifices, burnt offering, and peace or fellowship offering, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 10:1–10

Audio Content

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Numbers 10:11–36

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 10:11–36 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 10:11–36 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 10:11–36 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this passage, the Israelites are starting to travel from the wilderness at Mount Sinai towards the land that Yahweh promised to the Israelites. In earlier passages, Yahweh gave instructions to Moses and Aaron about how to organise the camp of the Israelites and how to move the camp from one place to another. This is the first time that the Israelites will move their camp with the tabernacle and all of the holy items. It is important that every one of the Israelites follow the orders from Yahweh.

The passage starts with a summary, or overview, of the next part of the book of Numbers. The Israelites start to move from near Mount Sinai on the twentieth day of the second month in the second year after they left Egypt. When the Israelites camp, or stay in one place, Yahweh's spirit stays in the tabernacle. Yahweh reminds the Israelites of Yahweh's presence with a cloud over the tabernacle. Moses calls the tabernacle the "tabernacle of the testimony." This is a reminder that the stone tablets with Yahweh's words or testimony written on them are in the tabernacle.

You may remember that Yahweh guided his people with a pillar of cloud when they escaped from Egypt. In the same way, Yahweh guides the Israelites by making the cloud over the tabernacle rise up when Yahweh wants the camp to move. This is the beginning of the journey of the Israelites to the land that Yahweh promised to the Israelites. The first part of the journey is from the wilderness next to Mount Sinai to the wilderness of Paran. Yahweh makes the cloud descend when he wants the Israelites to make a new camp. The Israelites camp in several places on the way to the wilderness of Paran. This first stage of their journey takes three days. In this way, the Israelites travelled in stages. Moses identifies the camp at Paran as the end of the first part of the journey by telling us that Yahweh made the cloud stop at this place.

Stop here as a group and look at a map of the land from Mount Sinai to the wilderness of Paran. Pause this audio here.

Moses then lists the groups by tribe and tells the order that all of the Israelite tribes traveled in every time they moved their camp. You may remember this from an earlier passage. The Israelites use this order every time they move from one camp to a new one. You will remember from an earlier passage that Yahweh told Moses and Aaron the names of the men who would lead each tribe, and these leaders now command each tribe as they travel. The tribe of Judah leads the first group of tribes to leave. The troop or group of fighting men from the tribe of Judah has a standard or banner. Each of the tribes—Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun—has a company of fighting men. The companies of the three tribes travel together as a group.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your community or people, what different signs or symbols do families use to show which people group or tribe they belong to? How do people show these symbols? Pause this audio here.

The Gershonite and Merarite Levites take apart and pack the tabernacle and courtyard structure as the first group of tribes are leaving. The Gershonites and Merarites, who are responsible for transporting the tabernacle and courtyard structures, leave next. You will remember that they use oxen and wagons to transport the heavy

items. In this way, the Gershonites and Merarites will have time to set up the tabernacle and courtyard before the holy things arrive.

Stop here and look at a picture of two oxen in a harness with a wagon, if needed. Pause this audio here.

A second group of tribes travel together. In this group, fighting men from the tribe of Reuben carry their standard or banner and travel with the tribes of Simeon and Gad. We do not know if the group that the tribe of Reuben leads travel beside or after the Gershonites and Merarites.

The Kohathites are responsible for carrying the holy items from the tabernacle and the bronze altar from the courtyard. You will remember that they carry these items by hand using carrying poles and frames. The priests have wrapped the holy items to keep the Kohathites safe as they carry the items. The passage reminds us that the tabernacle structure will arrive and be put together at the new camp before the holy items arrive. The company of fighting men from the tribe of Ephraim carries their standard or banner and travels in a group with the companies of fighting men from the tribes of Manasseh and Benjamin. We do not know if the group that the tribe of Ephraim leads travels beside or after the Kohathite Levites.

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

The group of fighting men from the tribe of Dan carries their standard or banner and travels in a group with the tribes of Asher and Naphtali. These last three tribes of Israelites form a rear guard that protects the end of the travelling group of Israelites.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: If you travel as a group, maybe as a family or more people, how do you arrange your people to give protection to valuable items or people? Pause this audio here.

We do not know where the women, children, and elderly Israelites travel. However, the women, children, and elderly Israelites probably travelled with their own tribes. This would protect the people.

Now Moses tells us about a conversation that Moses had with Hobab at the time the Israelites were getting ready to leave the wilderness next to Mount Sinai. Hobab is probably the brother of Moses' wife and the son of Reuel from Midian. In some places in the Bible, Reuel is called Jethro. Hobab is therefore most likely Moses' brother-in-law, or brother by marriage. Hobab may have come to stay with the Israelites when his father Reuel came. In any case, Hobab is with the Israelites at Mount Sinai. Moses wants Hobab to come with the Israelites. Moses will share with Hobab the good things Yahweh promises to the Israelites. However, Hobab does not want to go with the Israelites. Hobab wants to go back to the land he came from to be with the rest of his family. We do not know when Hobab came to Moses and the Israelites, and we do not know which members of Hobab's family are with Hobab. Moses again asks Hobab to come with them. This time, Moses shows strong feelings when he asks Hobab to come with them. This shows us that Moses really wants Hobab to travel with them. Moses wants Hobab to share Hobab's special knowledge and understanding of the wilderness with the Israelites. We do not know what Hobab says to Moses' second request. However, we do know from another book in the Bible that Hobab's family did live with the Israelites later on.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Who in your community has really good knowledge of travelling long distances from where your community lives? What special knowledge can they share that makes the journey easier or safer? Pause this audio here.

Stop here as a group and look at the map of the land from Mount Sinai to the wilderness of Paran. Point out Midian, the wilderness of Sinai, the wilderness of Paran, and Canaan. Pause this audio here.

Moses returns to telling about the time when the Israelites left the wilderness near Mount Sinai and travelled for three days. Here we learn that some of the Kohathites carried the ark of the covenant in front of the Israelites each day. Each day, Yahweh used the cloud to show the Israelites when to stop. Yahweh moves the cloud above the Israelites as the Israelites travel. We do not know whether Yahweh makes the cloud cover the whole Israelite group or if it only rests above the ark of the covenant.

Stop here as a group and look at a diagram of the order of the different groups of Israelites as they travel from one camp to another. Pause this audio here.

Moses calls out to Yahweh each time the Israelites start to carry the ark of the covenant and the Israelites start to travel from one camp to another. Moses sees Yahweh lift the cloud and sees it as a symbol of Yahweh moving

up into the sky over and in front of the Israelites. Moses knows that Yahweh is powerful and uses these words to celebrate and declare what Yahweh does for the Israelites as they travel. Moses does not command Yahweh to return to the Israelites; Moses calls on Yahweh to bring Yahweh's presence back to the Israelites and remain with them. Moses talks of ten thousand thousands of Israelites. Moses uses this language as a symbolic celebration of the large number of people that Yahweh protects rather than an actual number.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What special words, phrases, songs, or stories do you say, if any, when you leave a place to go on a journey or arrive in a new home?

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 10:11–36 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 passage gives an overview of the first part of the journey that the Israelites make from the wilderness of Sinai to the wilderness of Paran.

In the second scene: The Israelites start to travel in the order that Yahweh gives to Moses.

In the third scene: Moses asks Hobab, the son of Moses' father-in-law, to travel with the Israelites and to share in the good things that Yahweh will give to Israel.

In the fourth scene: The Israelites leave the wilderness next to Mount Sinai and travel for three days. Some of the Kohathites carry the ark of the covenant at the front of the Israelites, and the cloud of Yahweh's presence is above them each day.

In the fifth scene: We learn the words Moses calls out to Yahweh each time the Kohathites lift the ark of the covenant and start to travel, and each time the Kohathites put the ark of the covenant down at the new place to camp.

The characters in this passage are:

- The cloud of Yahweh's presence
- The fighting men of Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun
- The Gershonite and Merarite Levites
- The fighting men of Reuben, Simeon, and Gad
- The Kohathite Levites
- The fighting men of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin
- The fighting men of Dan, Asher, and Naphtali
- Moses
- Hobab

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

The scenes in this passage are not connected to each other in time, and they do not happen one after the other.

In the original language, the passage starts with a word that the writer uses to indicate a new section in the book. This marks the beginning of the journey of the Israelites to the land Yahweh has promised to the Israelites. The passage uses an overview of the first part of the journey to set the scene for the detail that comes afterwards. This is the first time that the Israelites travel together with the tabernacle at the command of

Yahweh, just as Yahweh told Moses to do. The Israelites will set out or move from where they have camped to a new camp many times. This passage tells us that the Israelites are obedient to Yahweh as they travel in a special order.

The Israelites travel in groups by tribe. Each group has one tribe who displays their standard or banner, which is special to their tribe.

The passage only tells us about the fighting men and their leader from each tribe. The fighting men from the tribes of Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun are the first people to leave each camp. The tribe of Judah displays their standard.

After the first group of fighting men leave the camp, the Gershonite and Merarite Levites take down the tabernacle and pack it for the journey. Then the Gershonites and Merarites leave with the tabernacle structures. The fighting men from the tribes of Reuben, Simeon, and Gad travel with or behind the Gershonites and Merarites. The tribe of Reuben displays their standard.

The Kohathites leave after the second group of fighting men and the Gershonites and Merarites. The Gershonites and Merarites travel with the tabernacle structures in front of the Kohathites with the holy items and put up the tabernacle structure at the new camp. The tabernacle will be ready for the holy items when the Kohathites arrive at the new camp. The fighting men from the tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin travel with or behind the Kohathites. The tribe of Ephraim displays their standard.

The fighting men from the tribes of Dan, Asher, and Naphtali are the last people to leave each camp. The tribe of Dan displays their standard. This group travels at the back of all of the rest of the Israelites.

Stop here and do this activity as a group: Draw on the ground the different groups of Israelites in the order of travel. Be sure to include the groups of Levites next to the other tribes. You might want to use different symbols to show the different tribes or Levite clans. Pause this audio here.

The next part of the passage is a conversation between Moses and Hobab. We do not know when Moses and Hobab talked to each other, but it was probably before the Israelites left Mount Sinai. Moses asks Hobab to travel with them two times. The second time, Moses tries harder to persuade Hobab to come with them. Moses begs or pleads with Hobab to ask him to come.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How will you translate this section so that it is clear that the conversation between Moses and Hobab was before the Israelites left Mount Sinai? Pause this audio here.

After telling how the Israelites travelled in the order that Yahweh gave to the Israelites, and telling about Moses' conversation with Hobab, the passage starts to tell how the Israelites traveled to the wilderness of Paran. The journey lasts three days from Mount Sinai to the wilderness of Paran. Some of the Kohathites carry the ark of the covenant in front of the Israelites every day of the three-day journey. The Kohathites do not carry the ark of the covenant three days of travel in front of the rest of the Israelites and then wait for the Israelites to catch up. The Israelites travel together with the ark of the covenant at the front of the people. In this scene, Yahweh guides the Israelites each day to find a resting place, and Yahweh shows his presence with the Israelites as a cloud over them.

In the last scene, we have Moses' words which he said every time the Kohathites lifted up the ark of the covenant and started to travel at the front of the Israelites. We also have Moses' words which he said every time the Kohathites put the ark down at the new camp. The ark does not guide the Israelites. Yahweh guides the Israelites by lifting and lowering his cloud over the ark of the covenant.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you talk about large numbers of people that are hard to count?

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 10:11–36 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:

- The cloud of Yahweh's presence
- The fighting men of Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun
- The Gershonite and Merarite Levites
- The fighting men of Reuben, Simeon, and Gad
- The Kohathite Levites
- The fighting men of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin
- The fighting men of Dan, Asher, and Naphtali
- Moses
- Hobab

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 second year of camping beside Mount Sinai, Yahweh lifts the cloud off the tabernacle up towards the sky and the Israelites leave the wilderness of Sinai and travel to the wilderness of Paran.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the cloud of Yahweh's presence, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "Look! It is time to go," or, "Follow me to the promised land."

The different tribes of Israel leave in the order that Yahweh gave to Moses. The tribes of Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun leave first.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the fighting men of Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "We are following Yahweh to the promised land," or, "We are excited to leave Mount Sinai," or "We are proud to lead the tribes of Israel as we travel."

The Gershonites and Merarites take down and pack the tabernacle structure. They then follow the first group of tribes.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Gershonite and Merarite Levites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "We must be careful and pack the tabernacle safely on the wagons," or, "We will travel quickly and set up the tabernacle again at our new camp."

The tribes of Reuben, Simeon, and Gad travel with the Gershonites and Merarites.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the fighting men of Reuben, Simeon, and Gad, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "We will protect the Gershonites and Merarites," or "We are excited to be travelling to our new home."

The Kohathites carry the holy items from the tabernacle and start to travel.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Kohathite Levites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "It is hard to walk and carry the heavy items," or, "We hope the tabernacle is ready for the holy items when we arrive at our new camp."

The tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin travel with the Kohathites.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the fighting men of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "We will protect the Kohathites as they carry the holy items," or, "We wonder how far we will travel today."

The tribes of Dan, Asher, and Naphtali are the last to leave the camp at Mount Sinai. They guard the back of the Israelites.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the fighting men of Dan, Asher, and Naphtali, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "We will protect our people as we travel" or, "It is dusty to walk after everybody else."

Moses talks to Hobab before the Israelites leave the wilderness at Mount Sinai. Moses wants Hobab to come with the Israelites, and Moses tells Hobab that Hobab will get good things from Yahweh. Hobab does not want to go with the Israelites, because he wants to go home. Moses asks Hobab a second time to come with the Israelites. Moses says that the Israelites need Hobab to help the Israelites travel through the wilderness.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I want Hobab to share in the good things from Yahweh," or, "I really want Hobab's help, because I do not know the lands that we will travel through," or, "I trust Hobab to guide us and to show us safe campsites."

Ask the person playing Hobab, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I want to go home to my family," or, "How long does Moses want me to travel with Moses' people?" or, "I could share in the good things Yahweh has promised the Israelites."

The Israelites travel for three days from the wilderness of Mount Sinai. The Kohathites carry the ark of the covenant in front of the Israelites, and the cloud of Yahweh's presence is over the Israelites when the Israelites start to travel.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the cloud of Yahweh's presence, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I will guide and shelter my people as they travel."

Moses speaks to Yahweh every time the Kohathites lift the ark to travel. Moses calls out to Yahweh to go in front of the Israelites and make their enemies run away. When the Kohathites put the ark down at the new camp, Moses calls out to Yahweh to come back to the many people of Israel.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I am praising Yahweh because I know Yahweh is powerful and will protect us," or, "No enemy will be safe in front of Yahweh," or, "We need Yahweh to protect us and stay with us."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 10:11–36 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

The cloud lifted or went up from over the **tabernacle** of the **testimony**. Use the same words or phrases for "lifted up" and "tabernacle of the testimony" that you used in previous passages. If needed, look up tabernacle and testimony in the Master Glossary.

The people of Israel **set out**, or packed up and left their campsite carrying everything with them. Use the same word or phrase for "set out" that you used in previous passages.

The Israelites set out for the first time at the command of **Yahweh**. Yahweh is the personal name for God. In this passage, God is called Yahweh. Be sure to translate Yahweh in the same way that you have in previous passages, and remember that Yahweh is in the Master Glossary.

The leading tribes of each group of tribes showed their **standard**, or banner. Use the same word or phrase for standard that you used in previous passages.

The **groups of fighting men** or troops of the camp of Judah set out first. Use the same word or phrase for groups of fighting men or troops that you used in previous passages.

The Kohathites set out carrying the **holy things**, or items from the tabernacle. The holy things are the veil of the screen, table of the bread of the presence, lampstand, and gold altar of incense. The Kohathites also carry the ark of the covenant, but they carry it in front of all the Israelites. Use the same word or phrase for holy that you have used in previous passages. Look up holy in the Master Glossary for more information.

The people of Dan, Asher, and Naphtali are a **rear guard** for the Israelites. A rear guard is a group of fighting people who protect the back part of an army or group of people. The rear guard also gathers in any people who fall behind and keeps everybody together.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **rear guard**. 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.

Hobab was the son of Reuel the Midianite, Moses' **father-in-law**. A father-in-law is the father of someone's husband or wife.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **father-in-law**. 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 set out from the **mountain of Yahweh**, which is Mount Sinai.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **mountain of Yahweh**.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 10:11-36

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (20747554 KB)

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Numbers 11:1-15

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 11:1-15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Yahweh led Moses and the people of Israel from the wilderness of Sinai into the wilderness of Paran. Yahweh is leading the people to the land Yahweh promised to give their ancestors. The people probably traveled north from Mt. Sinai towards the land Yahweh promised to give Abraham's descendants.

Stop here as a group and look at a map of the Sinai peninsula, including the wilderness of Sinai, the wilderness of Paran, and the land Yahweh promised to Abraham's descendants. Pause this audio here.

In this passage, Moses and the Israelite people have been marching behind Yahweh and the ark of the covenant for three days. The people begin to complain about how difficult the journey is. This is not the first time the people have complained about their hard journey. In an earlier passage, when Moses led the people from Egypt to Sinai, the people complained about not having enough water. The people also complained about not having enough food. Each time the people complained, Moses prayed and Yahweh answered. Yahweh provided the food and the water the people needed.

But now, the Israelite people are displeased. The people do not have a specific reason to complain, but they are upset about the difficult journey. All the Israelite people complain bitterly about their hardships. The people complain about the difficulty of traveling through the wilderness. The people complain to one another. The people do not talk directly to Yahweh.

Yahweh overhears the people complaining. Yahweh's anger burns against the people. This means that Yahweh is very angry. Yahweh judges the people and sends fire to burn the outskirts, or edges, of the camp. We do not know how Yahweh sent the fire, but the fire is a symbol of Yahweh's presence and judgment. This fire is not the same fire that led the people at night. This fire consumes the edges of the camp and kills some people. The edge of the camp is the boundary between Yahweh's people and the danger of the desert.

When the people see the fire, they cry out loudly to Moses for help. The people do not pray to Yahweh. Instead, they screamed or yelled loudly for Moses, their leader, to help them. Moses prays and asks Yahweh to put out the fire. Yahweh answers by showing mercy. The fire stops and does not burn the whole camp.

The Israelites name the place Taberah, which means burning, because Yahweh sent fire and burned some of the people. We do not know today exactly where Taberah is, but it was somewhere in the wilderness of Paran. The name Taberah reminds the people of Yahweh's judgment against their rebellious complaining.

Soon after the fire at Taberah, the people complain again as they continue traveling. Some rabble, or troublemakers, began to talk about how they crave, or want very much, different food. This rabble was probably a group of non-Israelites who followed Yahweh's people out of Egypt.

The rabble really want better food. The people of Israel listen to the rabble and begin to weep and complain again. They really want to eat meat again like they had when they lived in Egypt. They also begin to remember the fish, cucumbers, melons, leeks, garlic, and onions they ate for free in Egypt. However, the Israelites probably did not really eat this well in Egypt, because they were slaves in Egypt. They may be remembering different things than the truth.

Stop here as a group and look at a picture of the foods the people remembered eating in Egypt. Pause this audio here.

The Israelite people crave food with more flavor than simple bread, like the manna they eat every day. The people say they only have manna to eat every day, but this is not really true. The people are exaggerating, because the truth is that they have other food to eat in the desert along with the manna Yahweh provided.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story about a time when you or someone you know described a past event as nicer than it actually was. Pause this audio here.

Manna is the food Yahweh provides for the people while they live in the desert. Moses is reminding us that manna is good food that Yahweh is providing for them. In an earlier passage, the people complained about not having enough food. Moses prayed to Yahweh, and Yahweh provided manna for the people. The manna came down from the sky when the dew fell on the camp at night. Manna looked like small thin flakes or whitish yellow coriander seeds.

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

The people picked up manna from the ground and used handmills or mortars to crush the manna and make flour. The people boiled the flour in pots and made it into flat bread. The bread tasted like bread made with olive oil.

Stop here and look at a picture of flat bread as a group. Look at a picture of a hand mill and a mortar. Pause this audio here.

Moses hears the people complaining and weeping in groups in the doorways of their tents.

Yahweh's anger again burns against the people, which means Yahweh becomes very angry. Moses is distressed because the people are rebelling against Yahweh.

Moses is very upset and asks Yahweh a series of questions. Moses does not expect Yahweh to answer these questions. Moses wants Yahweh to intervene and to take care of the people. Moses does not want to hear the people complain anymore. Even though Moses is very angry and frustrated, Moses still refers to himself as "Yahweh's servant." Moses respects Yahweh, but Moses feels fed up with the challenges of leading these complaining people.

Moses calls the people a burden and asks Yahweh why the people are Moses's problem. Moses sees his leadership role as a burden and heavy responsibility. Moses believes Yahweh made Moses a leader of the Israelites as Yahweh's judgment on Moses.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a time when a leader in your community felt overwhelmed with responsibilities. How did that leader act, and what did that leader say? Pause the audio here.

Moses goes on to say that Moses did not create or give birth to Yahweh's people. Moses asks Yahweh if Moses must carry the people, like a mother carries a nursing child, all the way to the land Yahweh promised to give their ancestors. Moses is so frustrated with the people's complaining that he does not want to have anything to do with them. Moses blames Yahweh for giving Moses the job of leading the people of Israel, because the Israelite people make Moses' life difficult with their whining. Moses does not want the responsibility of taking care of and leading the people of Israel.

Finally, Moses tells Yahweh the real problem. Moses asks Yahweh where Moses can get meat for all the people to eat. Moses knows that getting enough meat for all the people is not possible. Moses reminds Yahweh that the people keep complaining to Moses about not having meat to eat. Moses feels alone as a leader. Moses tells Yahweh, "I can't carry all these people by myself! The burden is too heavy to bear!"

Moses gets so upset that he tells Yahweh to kill Moses. Moses would rather die than carry the heavy burden of the people any longer. Moses questions his ability to lead because Moses cannot provide for the people. Moses tells Yahweh to spare Moses the misery of leading the people by himself. In an earlier passage, Yahweh gave Moses elders to help lead the people, but now Moses feels alone.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 11:1–15 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: The people of Israel complain, and Yahweh hears them. Yahweh's anger burns against the people, and Yahweh sends fire to burn the outskirts of the camp. The people beg Moses to help them, and Yahweh stops the fire, so they call the place Taberah, which means burning.

In the second scene: After Taberah, the rabble begin to complain about not having meat. The Israelites overhear the rabble complaining, and they again complain about not having good food. They are no longer satisfied with the manna Yahweh provides. Moses pauses the action of the passage to describe how manna looked and tasted, and how the people prepared it to make bread.

In the third scene: Moses hears the people complaining loudly from their tents, and Moses is frustrated with the complaints of the Israelites. Moses believes that Moses is not a good leader for the people because he cannot provide what they want. Moses asks Yahweh to kill Moses instead of requiring Moses to care for and lead the people.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- The people of Israel
- The rabble
- Yahweh

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

In scene one, the people have been traveling through the desert for at least three days without stopping. The desert is hot and dry, and the people are tired. The people begin to complain about the difficulties they face as they travel. The people are not just whispering to one another; they are probably whining loudly and crying and lamenting. Yahweh hears the people. Yahweh's anger burns against the people. This means that Yahweh is very angry.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story about someone who became extremely angry. Listen for what words they use to talk about that anger. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh sends fire to the outer edges of the camp in judgment against the people. The people are terrified at the fire and they scream, or yell, loudly for Moses to do something to help them. Moses prays to Yahweh, and the fire stops. The people name the place Taberah, which means "place of burning."

In scene two, the rabble, or a group of non-Israelites who probably followed the people of Israel out of Egypt, begin to complain about not having good food. They are causing trouble and talking about how much they want to eat meat. The Israelite people hear the complaints of the foreigners and begin to complain too. They remember the food they ate in Egypt. The people talk about the good variety of food they had in Egypt and how good it tasted. They discuss how plentiful the food was. The people say their strength is dried up, and they feel weak and dehydrated, or without enough water for their bodies to be healthy.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story about a time when you strongly wanted something. Listen to the words you use when you talk about wishing strongly for something. The people also talk about feeling weak and dehydrated, or without enough water. How do people talk about that in your culture? Pause the audio here.

The people remember life in Egypt as being better and easier than it probably was. The people were slaves in Egypt, and most likely they did not have an abundance of food. The people lament and say, "But now our appetite is gone. All we ever see is this manna!" The people are exaggerating. They ate other food in the desert along with the manna, like small animals or plants. The people complain about the food Yahweh has provided for them.

The action in this passage pauses while Moses talks about manna. Moses describes how the manna looks and tastes, and Moses describes how Yahweh gave the manna to the people. Moses is reminding us that in contrast to what the people are saying, manna is good food for the people.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story where the action pauses and a narrator explains something in the story. How does the storyteller make it clear when the action stops and when it begins again? Pause this audio here.

In scene three, the action continues. Moses hears the people lamenting their lack of good food loudly from their tents. Yahweh is very angry again, and Moses is greatly distressed. Moses goes to Yahweh and begins to ask a series of questions. Moses is upset and angry. Moses does not expect Yahweh to answer Moses' questions. Moses asks Yahweh, "Why are you so angry with me? Why did you burden me with these people?" Moses continues to tell Yahweh that Moses did not create these people, and Moses questions why Yahweh would require Moses to carry them "like a nursing mother carries a baby" all the way to the land Yahweh promised their ancestors. Moses does not believe that Moses is a good leader because Moses cannot provide for the people. Moses asks Yahweh where Moses could get meat to feed all the people. By asking so many questions, Moses wants Yahweh to understand how heavy the burden of leading the people has become for Moses. Moses does not feel like a good leader who can provide what the people need. Finally, Moses is very fed up with the people. Moses says to Yahweh, "If this is how you will treat me, then just kill me if I've found any favor with you. Put me out of my misery!"

Stop and discuss: Tell a story where someone is very upset and feels they cannot complete a task that their authority gave them. Tell about how that person complains. Listen to the way they complain. How do they make their point? Discuss how you will translate Moses complaining to Yahweh. 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 Numbers 11:1–15 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
- The people of Israel
- The rabble
- 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 scene one, Moses and the people travel through the desert wilderness. The people begin to complain about the difficulties of traveling. They complain about their hardships.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the people of Israel, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like: "I am tired of walking and feel worn out," or, "I miss the security of living in one place," or, "I am bored with the same sights and the same food every day."

Yahweh hears the people complaining and burns with anger. Yahweh sends fire to burn the outskirts of the camp. The people scream for Moses to help. Moses prays to Yahweh, and Yahweh makes the fire die down. The people name the place Taberah, or burning.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you thinking or feeling?" Moses may answer things like: "I am afraid of Yahweh's judgment," or, "I am angry with the people for complaining when Yahweh has given everything we need," or, "I am frustrated with the people because they are such a burden."

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The person playing Yahweh might answer, "I am angry that I have given the people what they need, but they still complain," or, "I am concerned that the people take my gifts for granted."

In scene two, the rabble craves the food they used to eat in Egypt. The people of Israel join the rabble in craving what they ate in Egypt. The people of Israel groan loudly and say, "We remember the good food we ate in Egypt.

Fish was free and we could eat as much as we wanted! We ate cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions, and garlic—as much as we wanted to eat!" The people sigh and say, "All we ever see is this manna!"

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the rabble of foreigners, "What are you thinking and feeling?" The rabble might say, "We thought leaving Egypt would be better than staying, but we long for the food we used to eat!" or, "We are bored with eating only bread day after day."

Ask the people playing the people of Israel, "How are you thinking and feeling?" The people may respond: "Eating manna was fine for a little while, but now we crave tastier food," or, "We feel like we are missing out on better things by following Yahweh. We do not trust Yahweh to give us the food we want," or, "The rabble made us think life was easier in Egypt."

Moses pauses the action and describes how manna looks and tastes. Moses tells the story of how the people received manna from Yahweh and how the people prepared manna to make bread.

In scene three, Moses hears all the people of Israel standing at the front of their tents and whining about the food they crave. Yahweh hears the people too, and Yahweh is very angry. Moses is also very distressed.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you thinking and feeling?" The person might answer: "I am angry with the people for complaining about how I provide food for them in the desert," or, "I am angry that Moses continues to allow the people to complain."

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you thinking and feeling?" Moses may answer, "I am mad at Yahweh for making me lead these people! They are nothing but trouble," or, "I am angry with the people for bringing complaints to me all the time."

Moses speaks to Yahweh in a series of questions. Moses asks Yahweh, "Why are you so harsh with me, your servant? Be merciful to me! Did I do something to deserve the burden of leading these people? Will I have to carry them like a mother carries a nursing baby, all the way to the land Yahweh promised their ancestors? Is there anywhere to get meat for all these people? They keep complaining to me about not having meat. I can't carry these people all alone! The burden is too heavy." Moses is so upset that he tells Yahweh, "If this is your plan for me, go ahead and kill me. Help me by ending my misery!"

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you thinking and feeling?" Moses may answer: "I am finished with these people! I want to give up on them," or, "I am so sad that my leadership is not enough for these people. Yahweh should find someone else to lead them."

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you thinking and feeling?" Yahweh might answer: "I feel sad that Moses is so upset," or, "I am angry at the people for making Moses feel like a bad leader."

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 11:1–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

The people begin to complain about their **hardships**. A hardship is something that is evil or that is difficult for someone. The Israelite people believe that their lives are full of trouble in the desert.

Yahweh hears the people whining and is very angry with them. Yahweh is God's proper name. The name Yahweh shows God's faithfulness to his people. Use the same word for Yahweh that you used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

The people who complain are sons of Israel, or **Israelites**. These are people who descended from Abraham. These are Yahweh's special people with whom Yahweh made a covenant. For more information on Israelites, refer to the Master Glossary.

The **rabble** crave food from Egypt, especially meat. Rabble means a disruptive group of people. This rabble is made up of non-Israelites who followed Yahweh's people from Egypt. This group is not made of Yahweh's people, but they influence Yahweh's people.

Stop here and discuss as a group: What word will you use for **rabble**? Pause this audio here.

The people of Israel join the rabble in complaining and wishing for different food. The people complain that Yahweh only provides manna for them to eat each day.

The people remember the fish, cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions, and garlic that they ate in Egypt.

Stop here as a group and look at pictures of these fruits and vegetables. If you do not have these foods in your culture, choose vegetables that are the most like these. Pause the audio here.

Manna is the food Yahweh provides for the people of Israel while they travel in the desert. Yahweh first gives manna to the people at Mt. Sinai. Yahweh gives manna to the people every morning except the Sabbath. The people gather enough manna for each day and gather twice as much the day before the Sabbath.

Moses pauses the action in the passage to describe manna's appearance and taste. Manna is whitish yellow and small like coriander seeds. The people used hand mills or mortars to grind manna to make flour and then bake it to make a flat bread.

Stop here and look at a picture of a mortar and a hand mill. Look at a picture of coriander seed. Look at a picture of a flat bread like manna.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **manna**. 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 speaks to Yahweh in a series of questions. Moses does not expect answers to his questions. Moses asks Yahweh, "Why are you treating me, your **servant**, so harshly?" Moses is Yahweh's servant, which means Moses works for Yahweh. A servant usually has a low position in a community. Even though Moses is Yahweh's servant, Moses speaks honestly to Yahweh. For more information on servant, refer to the Master Glossary.

When Moses questions Yahweh, Moses talks about the land that Yahweh had promised to give to the ancestors of the Israelite people in an **oath**. An oath is a serious promise. When Yahweh made a promise to the people, Yahweh often made an oath as well. Yahweh promised an oath to give specific land to the Israelites. For more information on oath, see the Master Glossary.

Moses is so upset, weary, and frustrated that Moses is ready to die instead of seeing the people suffer due to his inadequate leadership.

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.

Numbers 11:1–15

Audio Content

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Numbers 11:16–30

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 11:16–30 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 11:16–30 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 11:16–30 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This passage continues the dialogue between Moses and Yahweh that happened because the Israelites complained about their food. The people complained bitterly because they were not happy to eat manna every day and because they were ungrateful to Yahweh for Yahweh's provision. Moses felt unable to carry the burden of leading and caring for the Israelites alone. Moses was frustrated at Yahweh for giving Moses this great burden to carry, and Moses even told Yahweh that Moses would rather die than continue leading the people of Israel.

This passage starts with Yahweh's response to Moses. First, Yahweh will provide a solution to Moses' problem of needing other people to help Moses lead Israel. Second, Yahweh will address the problem of the people complaining. Yahweh wants to teach Moses and the people of Israel not to doubt Yahweh's ability to do what he said he would do.

This dialogue happens at the tent of meeting, or tabernacle, where Moses and Yahweh would often meet. In this passage, Israel is camped about a three-day journey from the wilderness of Sinai, near to Hazereth and the sea waters of Akaba. We will hear in the next passage that the place is called Kibroth-Hattaavah.

Stop here and have the group look at a map of the wilderness of Sinai with a mark to show the approximate location of Kibroth-Hattaavah. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh told Moses to gather seventy men from among the elders of the Israelites, and to bring these men to the tent of meeting, or tabernacle. Elders are respected men who have shown leadership abilities, wisdom, and integrity in their communities. Yahweh requires the men to present themselves before Yahweh at the tent of meeting with Moses where they will receive an announcement, or instructions, from Yahweh. You will remember that in the book of Exodus, Moses' father-in-law suggested that Moses choose men to help Moses judge problems amongst the people. We do not know if any of those men were among the group of seventy men in this passage or not.

Yahweh said that when the seventy men came to the tent of meeting, Yahweh would come down to the tent and speak to Moses. Yahweh planned to take some of Yahweh's own Spirit, which Yahweh had previously given Moses, and give it to the seventy men. Yahweh referred to Yahweh's own Spirit. You will also remember that when Yahweh gave Moses the gift of Yahweh's own Spirit, it was to help Moses fulfil the special task of leading the people of Israel. Yahweh was the Israelites' highest authority. By giving Yahweh's own Spirit to Moses, Yahweh gave authority to Moses to speak and act on Yahweh's behalf to the people of Israel. This meant that Moses had the responsibility to teach the people how Yahweh wanted the people to live and worship. Now, Yahweh intends to give the same Spirit to the seventy men to give them the authority, and ability, to help Moses lead the people. Yahweh does not give Yahweh's Spirit in ways that we can measure. Moses would not lose anything of Yahweh's Spirit. At this point, we do not know in what practical sense the seventy men will help Moses.

Stop here and discuss these questions as a group: What responsibilities does a leader have towards that leader's people? What kinds of difficulties might a good leader face? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh talks about the complaints of the Israelites. Yahweh has heard the Israelites' grumbling when they said that life was better for them in Egypt before Yahweh had saved them. Yahweh has also heard the Israelites' demands that Moses give them meat to eat. Yahweh tells Moses to tell the people to consecrate themselves, or make themselves holy, that same day. Yahweh says this to show that the people need to prepare themselves for when Yahweh will come the next day.

Yahweh instructs Moses to tell the people of Israel that Yahweh is going to give the people a whole month's supply of meat to eat.

It may seem that Yahweh is going to give the people what they want, but we quickly see that Yahweh intends to punish the people for rejecting and rebelling against Yahweh. Remember that the people of Israel had entered into a covenant agreement with Yahweh after they left Egypt. When the people of Israel ask "why did we leave Egypt?" they are saying that they want to go back to a time when Yahweh was not their God. Yahweh now says that he will give them meat, but Yahweh will give them meat for a whole month, which is 29 or 30 days. Yahweh plans to give them meat "until it comes out of their noses," which means that they will eat so much meat that they will feel sick and not want to eat any more.

Moses thinks about all the flocks of sheep and goats that Israel has, and Moses thinks about all their herds of cattle too. Moses does not think the Israelites have enough flocks and herds to feed the people meat to eat for

a whole month. At this point, Moses does not believe Yahweh, and Moses says, "How can you possibly find enough meat to feed all 600,000 soldiers and their families for a month? Even if we killed all our flocks of sheep and goats, and all our herds of cattle, it wouldn't be enough! Even if we caught all the fish in the sea, it still wouldn't be enough!" Fish, sheep, goats, and cows were all considered good to eat by the people of Israel.

Stop here, if needed, and look at a picture of flocks of sheep and goats, a herd of cattle, and a fish. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh responds to Moses' objection with a question that Yahweh does not expect Moses to answer. When Yahweh says "Is Yahweh's hand shortened?" Yahweh is using special language. The hand is the symbol of a person's ability or power. Yahweh is saying that Yahweh is able to do everything Yahweh has said he will do. Yahweh is telling Moses that Moses should not doubt Yahweh's power to give the Israelites meat for a month. Yahweh ends the discussion and tells Moses that Moses will soon see whether or not Yahweh will provide the Israelites with meat.

Moses obeys Yahweh that same day. Moses goes and tells the people of Israel all that Yahweh has commanded Moses to say. After that, Moses chooses seventy men from among the elders of Israel and has the men stand around the tent of meeting.

Then, as is the custom when Moses enters the tent of meeting, Yahweh comes down in the cloud and speaks to Moses, just as Yahweh said he would. At this moment, Yahweh puts some of the same Spirit of Yahweh that was on Moses onto the seventy men. As soon as the spirit rests on the seventy men, the men prophesy. This means that the men receive power from Yahweh's Spirit to speak and behave in a particular way. We do not know what the seventy men said or did, or for how long they prophesied. But we do know that they behave in a way that shows the people that they are prophets and that confirms that they are the new authorised leaders and associates of Moses.

While the men prophesy, we hear that two of the seventy men, Eldad and Medad, did not go with Moses to the tent. We do not know why they did not go, but only that they stayed in the camp, which is the area where the Israelite people live. Eldad and Medad receive the Spirit of Yahweh at the same time as the other men, and they prophesy in the camp.

This causes a young man to run from the camp to the tent to search for Moses. The young man announces the news to Moses that Eldad and Medad have prophesied in the camp. The news distresses Moses' assistant, Joshua, who is the son of Nun. Joshua believes that the news of men prophesying in an unauthorised place is a challenge to Moses' leadership. Joshua speaks respectfully to Moses and says, "Lord, or master, stop them!"

Moses disagrees with Joshua and rebukes him. Moses asks Joshua a question that Moses does not expect Joshua to answer when he says, "Are you jealous for my sake?" Moses does not want Joshua to worry about protecting Moses' reputation. Instead, Moses wants Yahweh to give Yahweh's Spirit to all the Israelites so that they can also have the ability to prophecy and give others Yahweh's messages.

Yahweh provides a solution to Moses' need for helpers to lead Israel. Moses and the sixty-eight men then leave the tent of meeting where Yahweh met them and go to their places in the camp.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 11:16–30 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 six scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh responds to Moses at the tent of meeting after hearing the complaints of the people of Israel and Moses. Yahweh tells Moses how Yahweh will provide a solution to Moses' need for helpers to lead the people of Israel.

In the second scene: Yahweh explains to Moses how Yahweh will deal with the complaints of the people. Moses does not believe Yahweh is able to produce enough meat for the people. Yahweh rebukes Moses for doubting.

In the third scene: Moses goes from the tent of meeting to report Yahweh's words to the people. Then Moses gathers seventy chosen men from among the elders of the people and takes them to stand around the tent.

In the fourth scene: Yahweh descends in a cloud over the tent and speaks to Moses. Yahweh puts some of Yahweh's Spirit on the seventy men and the seventy men prophesy.

In the fifth scene: Two of the seventy elders, Eldad and Medad, stay in the camp area, but they also receive the Spirit of Yahweh and prophesy at the same time as the other men.

In the sixth scene: A young man runs to the tent of meeting to inform Moses that Eldad and Medad are also prophesying in the camp. The news alarms Joshua, and Joshua asks Moses to stop Eldad and Medad from prophesying.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Seventy leaders, including Eldad and Medad
- The spirit of Yahweh
- The Israelite people
- A young man
- Joshua, the son of Nun

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

In the first scene: In the previous passage, the people had been complaining to Moses, so Moses complained to Yahweh about making Moses the leader of these needy people. This scene begins as Yahweh responds to Moses. Remember that the complaints of the people have bothered Moses greatly. Yahweh tells Moses to choose seventy respected men from amongst the people of Israel to help Moses with the work of leading the Israelites. Yahweh tells Moses to bring the men from the camp to the tent, or tabernacle. Yahweh plans to show Moses and the people that Yahweh is authorising these men to help Moses. Yahweh will do this by taking some of Yahweh's Spirit from Moses and putting it on the chosen men. Remember that Moses will not lose any of Yahweh's Spirit from this action, only that the seventy men will gain Yahweh's Spirit.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you might talk about Yahweh giving some of Yahweh's Spirit to the seventy men. You need to make it clear that Yahweh's Spirit on Moses will not be reduced in any way. Pause the audio here.

In the second scene: The discussion between Yahweh and Moses continues, but the subject changes. Yahweh explains to Moses how Yahweh will deal with the complaints of the people. It is important to remember that Yahweh is not pleased with the people, because their complaints show that the Israelites have rejected Yahweh as their leader. Remember also in the last passage that Yahweh recently punished some of the Israelite people in Taberah because they complained against Yahweh. The punishment was a warning to the other people, but the complainers did not learn from the lesson. Very soon after the warning at Taberah, the people chose not to remember any of the good things that Yahweh had done for them. The people chose to believe that following Yahweh is worse than being slaves.

Yahweh tells Moses that the people should "consecrate themselves for tomorrow," which means that the people needed to make themselves pure and set apart in preparation for Yahweh to confront them about the problem of their complaining.

Yahweh emphasises that Yahweh will give the Israelites meat to eat for a very long time when he says, "You will not eat meat for one or two days, not ten or twenty days, but a whole month." In fact, Yahweh says he will

give the people so much meat, and for such a long time, that eventually they will feel nauseated by it. Yahweh uses the phrase "until it comes out of your noses," which is an exaggeration to say that the people will have to eat a very large amount of meat, more than they can bear.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you might express the word picture "until it comes out of your noses." Some cultures say things like "until it comes out of your ears" or "until you vomit." Talk about a time when someone ate too much of a good thing and it made them feel sick. Pay attention to the words you use when you talk about this. Pause the audio here.

The second scene continues as Moses responds in disbelief. First Moses reminds Yahweh that he has 600,000 fighting men, which probably means men who are of the age that they can fight in a battle. Moses is telling Yahweh that there are a lot of people who need food! Moses then asks Yahweh two questions that Moses does not expect Yahweh to answer. Moses asks Yahweh if they have enough flocks of sheep, herds of cattle, and fish to kill and eat. Moses does not really mean these as questions. Moses is telling Yahweh that Moses does not believe Yahweh could produce enough meat for the people to eat for a whole month. At this moment, Moses does not recall the mighty, impossible deeds that Yahweh did to bring the people out of slavery in Egypt and to sustain the people as they journeyed through the wilderness.

This scene ends with Yahweh making an important statement. Yahweh rebukes Moses for doubting Yahweh's ability to fulfil Yahweh's promise to feed the people meat for a month. Yahweh says, "Is my hand cut short?" This is a question that is not meant to be answered; it is really a statement to say, "My hand is not cut short." This expression uses the image of a hand to say that Yahweh's strength, power, and ability to do great things is not limited.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story about someone who has unlimited power. Listen for how you talk about this person's power. How might you translate "My hand is not cut short" in a natural way in your language? Pause the audio here.

This scene ends when Yahweh says, "Just watch, and you will see if what I say will happen or not!"

In the third scene: Moses goes from the tent of meeting to report Yahweh's words to the people. Moses then gathers seventy men from among the elders of the people and takes them to stand around the tent.

In the fourth scene: Yahweh descends in a cloud over the tent and speaks to Moses. This was a regular occurrence at the tent of meeting. We do not know what Yahweh said to Moses. Then Yahweh takes some of Yahweh's Spirit that he gave to Moses and puts it on the seventy men. As soon as the Spirit rests on the men, they prophesy. We do not know exactly how they behave, but some people say that the men probably felt ecstatic. This means they probably felt extremely joyful and may have even jumped about and shouted with their hands in the air! The men may have praised Yahweh, or they may have spoken about future events. The passage does not tell us how the men spoke and acted. However, the men's behaviour under the influence of the spirit of Yahweh indicates clearly to Moses, and to everyone who saw the men, that Yahweh had appointed the men to be Moses' helpers. The men did not continue prophesying after this moment.

In the fifth scene: In this scene we are told about something else that was happening in the camp at the same time that the men were prophesying. Two of the seventy elders did not go to the tent with Moses. It is not clear why they did not go. The two men are named Eldad and Medad. Eldad and Medad stayed in the camp area, but they also received the Spirit of Yahweh and prophesied like the other men. We do not know if they were together in the camp or in separate locations. This is important information, because it could have been seen as a threat to Moses' authority as Yahweh's chosen leader over the people.

Stop here and discuss as a group the best way to talk about different events in a story that happen at the same time but in different places. Pause the audio here.

In the sixth scene: This scene takes place on the same day at the tent of meeting, but we do not know what time of day it occurred. A young man comes running to Moses and tells Moses about Eldad and Medad prophesying in the camp. It is important to note that the young man came hastily to tell Moses that Eldad and Medad were prophesying in the camp instead of at the tent of meeting. The young man is probably out of breath when he speaks to Moses.

Moses' faithful assistant Joshua hears the young man and is distressed by the situation. Joshua urgently but respectfully asks Moses to stop Eldad and Medad from prophesying in this way. Joshua uses the word lord, or master, when he speaks to Moses.

Stop here and discuss as a group how a young man might speak to a highly respected leader in authority over him. What name or title might the young person use in your language to show honour to a leader? Pause the audio here.

Moses asks Joshua, "Are you jealous for my sake?" This is a type of question that does not need to be answered. With his question, Moses means to say, "Do not concern yourself about whether the people see me as Yahweh's prophet and leader of Israel. I wish that Yahweh would give Yahweh's Spirit to all the people of Israel so that they would also prophesy." It is not clear why Moses wanted all the people to prophesy. Perhaps Moses said this to indicate that Moses wanted the people to rejoice and feel ecstatic under the influence of the Spirit of Yahweh.

This scene ends as Moses and the men leave the tent and return to their places in the camp.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 11:16–30 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:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Seventy leaders, including Eldad and Medad
- The spirit of Yahweh
- The Israelite people
- A young man
- Joshua, the son of Nun

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 responds to the complaints of Moses and the people of Israel.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel angry because the people are complaining again," or, "I feel rejected and unappreciated, because I have been good to these people and yet they do not value me."

Yahweh instructs Moses to choose seventy respected men from amongst the people of Israel to help with the work of leading the people. Yahweh tells Moses to bring the men from the camp to the tent. Yahweh tells Moses that Yahweh will take some of Yahweh's Spirit from Moses and put it on the chosen men. This does not mean that Moses will have less of Yahweh's spirit.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel that Yahweh has heard me and understands my need," or, "I feel valued by Yahweh and relieved because I know that Yahweh will do something to help me."

In the second scene Yahweh explains to Moses how Yahweh will deal with the complaints of the people. Yahweh tells Moses that the people should prepare themselves, because Yahweh intends to confront the people about their complaining. Yahweh says he will give the people so much meat that the people will be repulsed by the sight of it. Moses does not believe that Yahweh could produce enough meat for the people to eat for a whole month. Moses considers all the sheep, goats, and cows that Israel has. Moses then considers how many fish are in the sea, and Moses concludes that there are not enough to feed 600,000 men and their families.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I am bothered because I have performed many great miracles through Moses, yet Moses still doubts my power."

Yahweh rebukes Moses for doubting Yahweh's ability to provide meat for the people to eat for a month. Yahweh says, "My power is not limited. Just watch, and you will see if what I say will happen or not!"

In the third scene Moses goes from the tent of meeting to report Yahweh's words to the people. Moses then gathers seventy men from among the elders of the people and takes them to stand around the tent.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the people of Israel, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like: "We feel happy because Yahweh has given us good things in the past. Perhaps he will also give us the meat that we want," or, "We are worried what Yahweh might do tomorrow because our bad attitude might bring consequences and Yahweh's punishment upon us."

In the fourth scene Yahweh descends in a cloud over the tent and speaks to Moses. Then Yahweh takes some of the Spirit that he gave to Moses and puts it on the seventy men. As soon as the Spirit rests on the men, they prophesy. We are told that the men do not continue prophesying after this moment.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the seventy men, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like: "We feel overwhelmed with a sense of joy and gladness," or, "We feel in awe of the greatness of Yahweh."

In the fifth scene Eldad and Medad are in the camp. Eldad and Medad unexpectedly receive the Spirit of Yahweh and suddenly begin to prophesy like the other men.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing Eldad and Medad, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like: "We feel unexpectedly ecstatic," or, "We are in awe of the greatness of Yahweh."

Ask the people playing the people of Israel, who see and hear Eldad and Medad prophesying, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like: "I feel concerned. This has not happened in the camp before," or, "I feel confused. What does this mean? Has Yahweh appointed a new leader in place of Moses?"

In the sixth scene a young man runs to the tent to tell Moses about Eldad and Medad prophesying in the camp.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the young man, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel distressed because Moses is the only prophet among us. Why are these men prophesying?" or, "I feel a sense of urgency to inform Moses what is happening in the camp."

Joshua hears what the young man speaks to Moses about Eldad and Medad, and Joshua becomes alarmed by the situation. Joshua asks Moses to stop Eldad and Medad from prophesying, but Moses is not concerned about the news. Moses tells Joshua not to worry for the sake of Moses' reputation amongst the people. Moses wants all the people to receive Yahweh's spirit.

This scene ends as Moses and the men leave the tent and return to their places in the camp.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I am panicking because I am afraid everyone will think these men are our new leaders instead of Moses!" or, "I am angry with these two men because they did not follow Yahweh's instructions."

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel grateful that Yahweh has helped me and that I do not have to lead Israel alone anymore," or "I am happy that other people are experiencing Yahweh's Spirit," or, "I anticipate that Yahweh will do great things tomorrow in the sight of the people."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 11:16–30 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Yahweh speaks to Moses at the **tent of meeting**. This is the special place where Yahweh and Moses would meet and talk. Yahweh is God's personal name. Use the same word for Yahweh that you have used previously. The tent of meeting is the same thing as the **tabernacle**. Look up tabernacle in the Master Glossary for more information. Use the same word or phrase that you have used previously.

Yahweh tells Moses to gather seventy men from the **elders** of Israel and take them to the tent of meeting. An elder is a person with authority in the community, usually the head of a family or group of families.

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 in another book in the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh said that he would put some of **Yahweh's Spirit** on the elders. The Spirit of Yahweh gives power that comes from God. This power creates, gives life, performs miracles, and changes people. When the Spirit of Yahweh comes over a person, that person receives a special power or ability. This can mean physical strength, special wisdom, or a clear understanding of what Yahweh wants. The Spirit of Yahweh gave messages from God to the prophets, which the prophets then shared with the people.

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

Yahweh instructs the people to **consecrate** themselves for tomorrow. To consecrate something means to set it apart for a particular purpose, but in the context of this passage, consecrate gives the idea that the people of Israel needed to prepare themselves, to get ready, because Yahweh intended to confront them about the problem of their complaining. Use the same phrase for consecrate as you have used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on consecrate.

Moses says there are not enough flocks of sheep or goats, or herds of cattle to feed all the people for a month. These are all grass-eating animals that Yahweh has allowed the people of Israel to eat. Moses also speaks about the fish of the sea. Moses says there are not enough fish in the sea to satisfy all the people. Fish are animals that

live in big bodies of water and are also considered good for the people of Israel to eat. The sea is a big body of water.

When the Spirit of Yahweh rested on the seventy elders, the elders all **prophesied**. This means that the Spirit of Yahweh influenced them to speak. Their words and behaviour came from Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **prophecy**. Look up prophecy and 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.

Joshua says to Moses, "Lord, stop them!" A **lord** is someone who is a master over other people, who has full authority, and who deserves for people to give him respect. When you address someone as "lord," you are saying that this person has authority over you. In the Bible, we hear people address their king as lord, slaves call their master lord, and sometimes a wife calls her husband lord.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **lord** when lord refers to a master or someone in authority. Refer to lord in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book in the Bible, use the same word that you have used there.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 11:16–30

Audio Content

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Numbers 11:31-35

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 11:31–35 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 11:31–35 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 11:31–35 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This passage concludes the events of the previous passage in which Yahweh told Moses that Yahweh would deal with the problem of the Israelites complaining about eating manna every day. The Israelites craved meat. The Israelites had an uncontrollable desire to eat meat instead of manna.

In this passage we will see how Yahweh fulfills the words Yahweh spoke to Moses about providing meat for the Israelites to eat, and we will see how Yahweh deals with the cravings of the Israelites by punishing some of the people. The purpose of this passage is to show that Yahweh has power to do whatever Yahweh chooses. This passage is also a warning to remind people that there are consequences for disobeying Yahweh.

Just like Yahweh sent Yahweh's Spirit to provide leaders to help Moses, now Yahweh sends wind to provide meat for Yahweh's people. Yahweh sends a wind to drive large numbers of birds called "quail" from the direction of the sea to where the Israelites are camping. Quail are small, edible, migrating birds, which means they travel long distances together at different times of the year to find food. A group of birds flying together is called a flock. These birds came from the direction of the sea, probably the body of water located nearby, to the east of the Israelites' camp, called the Sea of Aqabah.

Stop here as a group and look at a map of the wilderness of Sinai. Find the approximate location of the Israelites' camp and the Sea of Aqabah. Also have the group look at a picture of a quail and a picture of flocks of migrating birds. Pause this audio here.

Now as a group tell a story about a time when someone saw migrating birds flying together. Tell what the birds flying together looked like. Pause this audio here.

In this passage, the wind causes the birds to fall around the Israelites' camp. This is the second time that Yahweh has sent quail to feed the people. Remember that Yahweh previously sent quail when Yahweh gave the Israelites manna to eat. This time the birds cover an area of a day's walk in any direction around the camp, and they pile two cubits high from the ground. A cubit is about the length of a male adult's arm, from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger. This is a very large number of birds inside and all around the camp!

The Israelites gather the birds all the rest of the day. There are so many birds that the people continue collecting the birds all through that night and the whole of the next day too! Each person who gathers has at least ten homers. A homer is a donkey load, or a large basket load, which means that even the person who gathers the least has about ten donkey loads of birds! Remember from the previous passage that Yahweh told Moses that Yahweh would provide the Israelites with enough meat to feed them all for a month.

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

The passage continues as the Israelites lay the birds out across the camp to dry. This is an Egyptian process for preserving meat. According to tradition, people should salt and then dry the meat, but the passage does not say that the Israelites salted the birds at all.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people preserve meat in your culture? Tell a story about a time when someone got very sick from eating food that they did not preserve properly. Pause this audio here.

It seems as if Yahweh has blessed the Israelites again by miraculously providing birds to eat. But suddenly we hear that whilst the Israelites still chewed the meat in their mouths, "Yahweh's anger burned" against the people, which means that Yahweh felt intense anger towards them. In his burning anger, Yahweh strikes the people with a severe plague and many people die. You will remember from previous passages that Yahweh sent different types of plagues, at different times, to judge and punish people. In this passage, the plague refers to a deadly sickness that comes upon the people. It appears that the people got sick because they were greedy and ate a lot of quail that they may not have properly prepared.

Many people die from the plague, so the Israelites bury the dead people and name the place Kibroth-Hattaavah. This name means "graves of craving" or "graves of greed." A grave is a place to bury dead people, so this name is a memorial or reminder of the events that occurred in this place.

Stop here and tell a story about a place your community has named after an important event that happened there. Pause the audio here.

After that the Israelites travelled from Kibroth-Hattaavah to a nearby place called Hazeroth and stayed there for some time.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 11:31–35 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: Yahweh sends out a wind that brings a large number of quail from the direction of the sea to the Israelites' camp. The quail fall to the ground throughout the camp about a day's walk in any direction.

In the second scene: The Israelites spend the rest of that day, that night, and all the next day collecting the quail birds and laying them out to dry.

In the third scene: The Israelites are eating the meat when suddenly Yahweh strikes them with a plague and many people die. The Israelites name that place "Kibroth-Hattaavah."

In the fourth scene: The Israelites leave Kibroth-Hattaavah and travel to Hazeroth, where they stay for some time.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- The quail birds
- The Israelites

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

In the first scene: Remember that Yahweh previously told Moses that Yahweh was going to give the Israelites so much meat to eat that they would become sick of it. In scene one we see how Yahweh makes that happen. Yahweh sends a wind to blow many small quail birds from the direction of the sea towards the Israelite camp.

When the narrator of this scene says that the birds covered an area that was "a day's journey or walk" around the camp in any direction, the narrator is using a visual description to help us understand how big of an area the birds covered. The birds fell to the ground in piles about two cubits deep. Two cubits are two lengths of a man's arm from elbow to fingertip, which equals about three feet or one meter long. Your translation may say the birds were flying, but it is most likely that the birds fell in piles on the ground. These details show that there were many birds! The birds probably surrounded the camp farther than the Israelites' eyes could see.

Stop here and discuss as a group what words you can use in your language to accurately describe the measurements in this scene. Pause the audio here.

In the second scene: The Israelites collect the birds. It is possible that the birds arrived at the Israelites' camp sometime in the morning or early afternoon, because we are told that the Israelites spent the rest of that day collecting the birds. The Israelites also spent that whole night, and all the next day, gathering the birds.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will say "the rest of that day, all through the night, and all the next day." Pause the audio here.

The Israelites gathered vast amounts of birds. Each person who gathered collected ten homers worth of birds. We can imagine this by thinking about how many quail we could fit onto a beast of burden, such as a donkey, or how many quail would fit into a very large basket. Now imagine ten of those loads. The person who gathered the least amount among all of the people gathered that many birds!

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use to describe ten homers in your language. Pause the audio here.

The Israelites laid all the birds out to dry across the whole camp. The passage does not say how long the Israelites left the birds out to dry.

In the third scene: Whilst the Israelites ate the bird meat, Yahweh burned with anger and struck some of them down with a very great plague. Many languages use word pictures involving fire or heat to show Yahweh's intense anger.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you expressed Yahweh's burning anger in the previous story. How will you show Yahweh's intense anger in this story? Pause the audio here.

We hear that the "meat was still between their teeth" when the plague killed the Israelites. This may mean that the Israelites were literally still chewing the meat when the plague struck, or it may mean that the plague struck before the Israelites finished eating all the meat that Yahweh sent. The story does not tell us if this happened on the day the Israelites gathered the meat. The important thing to note is that the Israelites died of a deadly illness before they finished eating all the quail that Yahweh sent.

The Israelites called that place "Kibroth-Hattaavah" which means, "graves of craving" or "graves of greed" because they buried the people there who had been greedy and craved the meat.

Stop here and discuss as a group: What word or phrase in your language can best describe the greed or craving that the Israelites had? Pause the audio here.

In the fourth scene: After this, the Israelites left Kibroth-Hattaavah and travelled to a nearby settlement called Hazereth where they set up camp again.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 11:31–35 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
- The quail birds
- 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 sends a wind that brings a large amount of quail from the direction of the sea to the area of the Israelites' camp.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "We feel amazed to see so many birds are all around us! We recognise that Yahweh can do anything!" or, "We

feel really happy because Yahweh is giving us what we want!" or, "We cannot wait to eat the birds; the last time Yahweh gave us quail to eat, it was delicious!"

In the second scene the people spend all day, all night, and all the next day collecting the birds before laying them out across the camp to dry.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like, "We feel exhausted from collecting so many birds! But we think the work will be worth it once we get to eat meat again finally!"

In the third scene, whilst the Israelites eat the meat, Yahweh's anger burns against the people.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel extremely angry about the complaining and disrespectful attitudes of the Israelites. Their uncontrollable desire to eat meat has caused them to reject me and be ungrateful for the manna that I give them to eat every day. They are so greedy, and they have collected much more meat than they need to eat."

Yahweh inflicts a great plague on the people as they eat, and many people die.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like, "We feel afraid. So many people are dying, and perhaps we will die too," or, "We thought this meat was a blessing, but Yahweh is punishing us," or, "We regret complaining about having to eat manna."

The Israelites bury the people who die from the great plague and call that place "Kibroth-Hattaavah" as a reminder that Yahweh brought judgment upon the people as a punishment for their craving.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like, "We feel great sorrow for the deaths of our people, but we have learned an important lesson from Yahweh."

In the fourth scene the Israelites moved from Kibroth-Hattaavah to camp in Hazeroth for a while.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Number 11:31–35 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Yahweh caused a wind to blow. Yahweh is God's personal name. Use the same word for Yahweh that you used in previous passages. Yahweh is in the Master Glossary.

In the language of the Old Testament, this word for **wind** is the same word that the authors translated as Spirit in the previous passage when Yahweh sent his Spirit to provide a solution to Moses for the leadership problem. In the language that the Bible was written in, the word for Spirit is the same as the word for "wind" and "breath." We can understand why these words are similar: They are all invisible and therefore somewhat mysterious, but very important. Sometimes it is not clear if, in a certain passage, the meaning is "Spirit," "wind," or "breath." The fact that the word can mean all of these things adds beauty and depth to such a passage. For more information, refer to Holy Spirit in the Master Glossary. Use the same word you used for wind in a previous passage when the Israelites left Egypt and Yahweh sent a strong wind to separate the sea for the Israelites to walk through on dry land. In this story, the wind carried the quail to the Israelites.

The wind brought **quail** from the direction of the sea and let the quail fall all around the camp. Quail are small, light-brown birds that migrate across the Sinai Peninsula in spring and autumn. This is the second time Yahweh

sent quail to feed the Israelites. Use the same word here for quail that you used in the previous story when Yahweh sent quail and manna to eat.

The sea in this passage is probably the sea, or gulf, of Aqabah, which was approximately one- or two-days' journey to the east of the Israelites' camp.

The birds piled up two **cubits** high all around the camp. A cubit is the distance between the elbow and the tip of the middle finger of an adult male's forearm. Use the same word for cubit as you have used in previous passages. For more information on cubit, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Israelites each collected at least ten **homers** of quail. Your translation may say bushels or large baskets instead of homer. An homer is a dry measure and is similar to the amount a donkey can carry in an average load.

Stop here and look at a picture of a donkey carrying an average load. Now discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use to describe ten loads like this. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh's **anger burned** against the people whilst they ate the meat. This expression shows that Yahweh felt intense anger towards the Israelites. Use the same word or phrase for "Yahweh's anger burned" that you used in previous passages.

Yahweh struck the people with a very great **plague**. A plague is a form of punishment that Yahweh inflicts when Yahweh judges a person or group of people. In this passage the plague is a deadly sickness that kills many people.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **plague**. 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

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.

Numbers 11:31-35

Audio Content

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Numbers 12:1–16

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 12:1–16 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of 12:1–16 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 12:1–16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage the Israelite people started to complain about the hardships of their journey even though Yahweh had constantly provided for the Israelites. Moses became frustrated with the people's rebellion. After leaving Kibroth-Hattaavah, the Israelites travelled to a village called Hazeroth. Now, it is not the Israelite community, but Moses' own family, who challenge Moses' leadership.

Stop here as a group and look at a map of Kibroth-Hattaavah, Hazeroth, and the surrounding area. Pause this audio here.

In this passage, Moses' sister Miriam, together with Moses' older brother Aaron, criticise Moses and challenge his authority as Yahweh's chosen leader. Yahweh punishes Miriam for her leading role in the rebellion.

At the beginning of the passage, Miriam, and Aaron as well, speak against or criticise Moses because Moses had married a Cushite woman. This "Cushite woman" was not an Israelite; she was a foreigner. We are not sure where this woman came from, but some people believe that the Cushite woman is Moses' wife Zipporah who Moses married before the Israelites escaped from Egypt. Miriam chooses to focus on a problem that the Israelites are probably thinking about—foreigners in their midst. In the previous passage, it was foreigners who began the complaint about food.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about someone from your culture who married a "foreign" person who was not from the community. How did people react? Were people welcoming, uncertain, curious, or something else? Pause this audio here.

Miriam starts the complaint against Moses, and Aaron follows her. Miriam and Aaron then talk about what their real problem with Moses is. Miriam and Aaron are jealous of Moses' high position and standing with Yahweh. Miriam and Aaron ask Moses two questions that they do not expect Moses to answer. First they ask, "Has Yahweh spoken only through Moses?" and then, "Hasn't he spoken through us too?" Miriam and Aaron are doubting Moses' position as the community leader and Moses' special relationship with Yahweh. They are pointing out that Yahweh has also spoken to Miriam and Aaron in the past. Yahweh hears Miriam and Aaron's criticism.

Some later narrator of the story then gives us extra information about Moses' character which helps us fully understand the situation. The narrator says that Moses is the most humble man on earth. The narrator means that Moses recognises Yahweh's greatness and that Moses is totally dependent on Yahweh. Moses does not seek to put himself above other people, and Moses had not asked to be the leader—it was Yahweh alone who chose to make Moses the leader. Miriam and Aaron's complaint against Moses is wrong. Also, since Moses is very humble, Moses would probably not have responded to defend himself. But Yahweh will defend Moses.

Stop here and discuss: Tell the group about someone you know who is very humble. How do they act? How do they speak about themselves? What do others think about them or say about them? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh responds immediately. Yahweh commands Moses, Aaron, and Miriam to come over to the tent of meeting or tabernacle where Yahweh meets with Moses.

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

Moses, Aaron, and Miriam obey, and Yahweh comes down in a pillar of cloud like he usually does when he shows his presence. This cloud stands at the door or entrance to the tabernacle.

Yahweh calls out to Miriam and Aaron from inside the cloud, and Miriam and Aaron come forward. Yahweh says, "Now hear my words." This tells Miriam and Aaron that they need to listen carefully to what Yahweh is about to say. Yahweh contrasts the ways in which Yahweh speaks or communicates to ordinary prophets and to Moses. A prophet is a person who gives messages from Yahweh to the people. To ordinary prophets, like Miriam and Aaron, Yahweh communicates in visions or dreams. Both visions and dreams communicate ideas with symbols and images. Visions occur when someone is awake, and dreams occur when they are asleep. To Moses, on the other hand, Yahweh communicates "face to face," which means that Yahweh speaks to Moses personally and clearly. Yahweh does not speak to Moses in riddles. Riddles, here, means any way of speaking that is difficult to understand. Yahweh compares Moses with the most important servant in a household when Yahweh says that he trusts Moses with all of his house, meaning that Yahweh trusts Moses with all of the Israelites. This is a very honorable position. Yahweh says that Moses sees the form, or likeness, of Yahweh. This does not mean that Moses could see Yahweh directly. We know from an earlier part of the Bible that no man can see Yahweh and survive. Rather, it means that Moses could see something of what Yahweh looks like, much more than people can see in a dream or a vision.

Stop here and discuss: What meaning do dreams or visions have in your culture? Talk about a time you or someone you know had a dream or a vision. How did you or they come to understand the meaning of it? Pause the audio here.

Yahweh asks, "Why then were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?" Yahweh is not expecting or waiting for an answer. Yahweh is making the point that Miriam and Aaron should have been afraid to criticise Moses, because Moses has such a special relationship with Yahweh. Yahweh's anger "burned" against Miriam and Aaron. Yahweh was very angry with them.

Stop here and discuss: Tell a story about a time when someone in your community was very angry. Why were they angry? How could you describe them? What did they do? Pause the audio here.

As Yahweh left, and the cloud lifted, Miriam suddenly had a terrible skin disease and her skin was "as white as snow." Snow is like soft, white frozen water that falls from the sky in small crystals when the air is very cold. When a lot of snow falls, the snow covers the ground and all the land looks white.

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

Many Bible versions use the word "leprous" or "leprosy" to describe Miriam's skin condition, but it is unlikely that Miriam had the skin disease we call leprosy today. The leprosy we have today was not common in the ancient Near East at that time. Instead, Miriam probably had a similar severe and incurable skin infection that people were very afraid of. It was a very bad thing to have a disease like this, and the religious law said that the person who had this disease was "unclean." This means that he or she was not fit to worship Yahweh. This person could not take part in activities within the community. Yahweh had given the Israelites very specific instructions on how to deal with major skin diseases. If the priests examined someone and found that they had a major skin disease, he or she would have to follow certain humiliating actions like wearing rags, and they would have to live alone, apart from the rest of the community. If the disease cleared, priests would have to follow certain procedures or instructions to clean that person. Only then would the community allow that person to come back into the camp.

Stop and discuss this question as a group: How do people treat serious skin infections in your culture? What do people think about those who have serious skin infections? Pause the audio here.

Aaron sees Miriam's terrible skin disease, and Aaron begs Moses not to punish Miriam and Aaron for their "sin which we have foolishly done." Aaron calls Moses "my lord" or "my master." Aaron respectfully calling Moses "my lord" shows that Aaron accepts Moses as the leader. Aaron knows Moses is more important and has more authority than Aaron. Aaron is also proving that Moses indeed has a special connection with Yahweh that Aaron does not have: Aaron needs Moses to ask Yahweh to forgive them.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you speak to someone in your language when you want to show respect to that person, or to show that you see them as having more authority or status than yourself? Pause the audio here.

When Aaron uses the word "sin," this means that Miriam and Aaron have disobeyed Yahweh's laws and have rebelled against Yahweh. Aaron continues to beg Moses not to allow Miriam to become like a stillborn baby—a baby that is already dead when it is born. Aaron is comparing Miriam's rotting skin to the way a stillborn baby's skin looks. Again, we see that Aaron now accepts that Moses has a special relationship with Yahweh, as Aaron needs Moses to speak to Yahweh to ask for Miriam's healing.

Moses then speaks for the first time since his brother and sister began to talk against him. Moses begs Yahweh not to punish Miriam, and this time Moses calls Yahweh the general word for God, rather than using God's personal name, "Yahweh." Yahweh responds to Moses, "If her father had spit in her face, would she not have been shamed for seven days?" Again, Yahweh is not waiting for or expecting an answer. Yahweh is reminding Moses of a cultural practice at that time. If a woman's father spat on her, people would shame the woman for seven days. Spitting on someone is a way of humiliating or degrading them. Yahweh is saying that what Miriam did was much worse than this, so her punishment should be at least as bad as if her father spat on her. The point is that Miriam must respect Yahweh's leader, Moses, and she cannot avoid punishment completely.

Stop here and discuss these questions as a group: How do people punish other people in your community if they have done something wrong? How can a father punish or discipline his children? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh declares that Miriam must go outside the camp, and the community must shut her out for seven days. After this time Miriam may return. A person typically took this amount of time to purify from a skin disease, following instructions Yahweh gave Moses earlier. During those seven days, Miriam was unclean and she could not stay inside the camp. It is not clear whether Yahweh would heal Miriam after the seven days had passed, or whether Yahweh already healed her but she still had to go through the punishment. After coming back to the camp, the priests would need to clean Miriam following instructions that Yahweh gave Moses earlier.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What cleansing or purification rituals exist in your culture? Describe them to the group. Pause this audio here.

The people waited in the camp for Miriam before setting out on their journey again. The people then left Hazerot and camped in the Desert of Paran.

Stop here as a group and look at the map of Hazerot. See where the wilderness of Paran is in relation to Hazerot. Pause this audio here.

This story shows that Moses had a special relationship with Yahweh that no one else did, and Yahweh had given Moses a position of authority above all the others. We see that Yahweh forgives rebellion, but there are consequences of sin.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 12:1–16 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 visualise this passage.

This passage has four scenes.

In the first scene: Miriam and Aaron complain against Moses because of Moses' Cushite wife.

In the second scene: Yahweh responds to Miriam and Aaron's criticism by calling them to the tabernacle. Yahweh expresses his anger against Miriam and Aaron for complaining about Moses, and Yahweh causes Miriam to develop a serious skin disease.

In the third scene: Moses pleads with God to heal Miriam's skin disease. God agrees, but says Miriam must stay outside the camp, away from others, for seven days.

In the fourth scene: After seven days, Miriam is healed, and the Israelites continue their journey.

The characters in this passage are:

- Miriam
- Aaron
- Moses
- Yahweh
- Moses' Cushite wife
- Israelites

This passage takes place at some point after the Israelites have arrived in their second camp after leaving Mount Sinai. They have moved on from Kibroth-Hattaavah and are now at Hazerot.

Stop here and view a map of the Sinai Peninsula with the points on the Israelites' journey so far marked, including Mount Sinai, Kibroth-Hattaavah, Hazerot, and the wilderness of Paran. Pause the audio here.

Scene one takes place inside the Israelite camp at Hazerot. Miriam and Aaron are speaking openly against Moses, apparently because they are not happy about Moses' foreign, Cushite wife. Miriam is the one who is

leading the criticism, and Aaron follows along. We can assume this because Miriam's name is listed first in the passage. This is a way that storytellers in that time showed who the main character was. Visualise the dialogue between Miriam and Aaron. They ask, "Has Yahweh spoken only through Moses?" and "Hasn't he also spoken through us?" Miriam and Aaron do not expect an answer to these questions. Miriam and Aaron use these questions to argue strongly that Moses is not the only one who Yahweh speaks through, but Yahweh also speaks through them. Yahweh hears what Miriam and Aaron say.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about a time when people were complaining about someone and were trying to justify their complaints. Pay attention to how they talk as they complain. Pause the audio here.

A later narrator of the story gives us extra information to help us understand Moses' reaction. The narrator tells us that Moses was the most humble or least proud man on earth. This helps us understand why Moses probably would not have reacted to Miriam and Aaron's words until Yahweh reacted, and it shows us how Miriam and Aaron's complaint against Moses is wrong. Be sure to visualize how a humble man would react to his siblings speaking against him in this way.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Remember the discussion you had during the previous step about a humble person you know. How would you describe someone like that? What words would you use to describe them? Pause the audio here.

In scene two, Yahweh responds "suddenly," calling Miriam, Aaron, and Moses out from among the people in the camp to the tent of meeting, away from the other Israelites. When judgement comes without warning to people, the judgement comes suddenly, in the same way that Yahweh suddenly calls Miriam, Aaron, and Moses out from the people to the tent of meeting. Yahweh wants to talk to them alone.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a time something bad happened suddenly, or without warning. Pay attention to the words you use to describe how it happened without warning. Pause the audio here.

Miriam, Aaron, and Moses come out to the tent of meeting.

Stop here and, if needed, look at a picture of the tabernacle. Pause the audio here.

When Miriam, Aaron, and Moses are at the tent of meeting, Yahweh comes down in a pillar or column of cloud, which now stands in the entrance to the tabernacle. Yahweh calls to Miriam and Aaron and they step forward. Yahweh now speaks to correct Miriam and Aaron for rebelling against Moses' authority. Yahweh says, "Now hear my words." Yahweh uses a word which shows us that Yahweh wants Miriam and Aaron to pay attention to what Yahweh is about to say. Yahweh contrasts the way he speaks to ordinary prophets, using indirect ways like visions and dreams, with the way Yahweh speaks to his most trusted servant Moses. Yahweh says that he speaks to Moses "face to face," or personally and in a way that is very easy to understand. Yahweh says that Moses sees Yahweh's "form." It is important to convey that Moses does not see Yahweh directly. Moses sees only Yahweh's "form" or "likeness." This means Yahweh lets Moses only see something of what Yahweh looks like, but this is still much more than other people see of Yahweh in dreams or visions.

Stop and discuss how you can say that Moses sees Yahweh's form or likeness, while being careful not to say that Moses can see Yahweh directly. Pause the audio here.

Yahweh now asks Miriam and Aaron a question that he doesn't expect them to answer in order to make them understand how wrong they are: "Why then were you not afraid to criticize my servant Moses?" Yahweh means that Miriam and Aaron should have been afraid to criticize Moses. Yahweh is very angry with them. Yahweh's anger "burns" against them; this is special language to show that someone is very angry.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Remember the story you told in the previous step about someone who is very angry. What special words did you use to show just how angry they were? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh leaves and the cloud disappears. Suddenly, Miriam has a terrible skin disease that makes her skin white "like snow." Snow is like soft, white frozen water that falls from the sky in small crystals when the air is very cold. When a lot of snow falls, it covers the ground and all the land looks white.

Stop here and look at a picture of snow. Discuss as a group: In your language, when you want to describe something that is very white and you want to emphasise how white it is, what words do you use? What kind of comparisons can you make? Pause the audio here.

Aaron turns to Miriam and sees the shocking disease on his sister's skin. Aaron then turns to Moses and calls Moses respectfully "my master." Aaron begs Moses not to punish Aaron and Miriam for their foolishness and sin. Aaron pleads with Moses not to let Miriam's flesh rot away like that of a child that is born dead.

In scene three, we hear Moses speak for the first time in this passage. Moses pleads with Yahweh, "Please heal her, God, I beg of you!" Moses calls Yahweh the general word for God here, not his personal name, "Yahweh." Yahweh then responds to Moses, "If her father had spit in her face, would she not have been in shame for seven days?" Again, Yahweh is not waiting for or expecting an answer. Yahweh wants Moses to understand that what Miriam has done is very serious. Yahweh tells Moses that Miriam must be shut outside the camp for seven days, and after that they may bring her in again. Miriam is then shut outside the camp for seven days.

Scene four takes place seven days later. The people bring Miriam back into the camp, and the Israelites then pack their belongings and set out from Hazerot on their way to the Wilderness of Paran.

Pause the audio and show the map of the Sinai Peninsula, with Hazerot and the Wilderness of Paran marked. 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

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 12:1–16 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:

- Miriam
- Moses
- Aaron
- Yahweh
- Moses' Cushite wife
- 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.

Inside the Israelite camp at Hazereth, Miriam and Aaron are talking against their brother Moses, saying that Moses has married a foreigner—a Cushite woman. Miriam and Aaron ask, "Has Yahweh spoken only through Moses? Hasn't he also spoken through us?"

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Miriam, "What are you thinking or feeling? The person might answer things like: "I am jealous because people respect and honor Moses more than me. He is my little brother!" or, "Moses claims to have a special relationship with Yahweh, but Yahweh has also spoken through me and our brother Aaron. I think Moses is becoming too proud of his authority."

Also ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer something like: "It is very upsetting and hurtful that my own brother and sister would speak against me. Already the community of Israelites is complaining to me, rebelling against the authority that Yahweh has given me. Now, it is my own family. This makes me very sorrowful. It is too much!"

Yahweh calls the three of them over to the tabernacle. When they get there, Yahweh comes down in a pillar of cloud and stands at the entrance of the tabernacle. Yahweh calls out to Aaron and Miriam, and they step forward. Yahweh tells them, "Now listen to what I say: If there are prophets among you, I, Yahweh, show myself in visions. I speak to them in dreams. But not with my servant Moses. Of all my house, he is the one I trust. I speak to him in person, clearly, and not in riddles! He sees the form of Yahweh. So why were you not afraid to criticize my servant Moses?"

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I am furious that Miriam and Aaron are doubting my choice of leader," or, "Miriam is the one who has started this rebellion against my chosen leader, Moses. She must be punished for this."

Yahweh leaves the scene, the cloud disappears, and Miriam is standing there with a terrible skin disease that has made her skin white like snow. Aaron looks at her and is horrified. Aaron cries out to Moses, begging him, "Oh, my master, do not punish us because we have been foolish and have sinned."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Aaron, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I am shocked to see my dear sister struck by this terrible disease. I fear that her skin will rot away and she could die," or, "I also was speaking against Moses. Will Yahweh also punish me in this way? I am afraid for myself," or, "I see that Miriam and I were wrong and we have sinned. Yahweh chose Moses as our leader, not Miriam or me. Moses has a closer relationship with Yahweh than we do, and we should never have doubted this or tried to rebel against it."

Yahweh responds to Moses, "If her father had spit in her face, would she not have been in shame for seven days? So keep her outside the camp for seven days, and after that she may come back." People from the community take Miriam outside the camp, and Miriam must stay there for seven days. Seven days pass, and then Miriam is allowed to come back into the camp. Finally, the people gather up their belongings and leave the camp, setting out again on their journey.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Miriam, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The person might answer things like: "I am feeling relieved that my skin is healed," or, "I am so grateful not to have that terrible skin disease any more. I realize that I sinned and doubted the authority that Yahweh has given Moses, and Moses' special relationship with Yahweh. I have learned my lesson."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 12:1–16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Miriam and Aaron ask Moses, "Has **Yahweh** indeed spoken only through Moses?" 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.

Yahweh calls Miriam and Aaron over to the **tent of meeting**. The tent of meeting refers to the same thing as the **tabernacle**. Use the same word for tent of meeting or tabernacle that you have used in previous passages. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on the tabernacle.

Yahweh appears in a **pillar of cloud** and speaks to Aaron and Miriam. The pillar of cloud was probably a cloud in the shape of a tall column or pillar. The cloud represents the presence of Yahweh. Yahweh spoke to Aaron, Miriam, and Moses from the pillar of cloud.

Stop here and discuss how you will describe the **pillar of cloud** in this passage. You have talked about the cloud of Yahweh in previous passages. Here, it is in the shape of a tall pillar. Translate pillar of cloud in the same way you have translated it in the book of Exodus when Yahweh leads his people with a pillar of cloud. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh says that he speaks to ordinary **prophets** in dreams or in visions. Moses is not like these ordinary prophets—he is special. A prophet is a person who gives messages from God to the people. This message can be an instruction from God about something that needs to be done, or it can be a message that tells about something that is going to happen in the future. Use the same word for prophet that you have used in previous passages. For more information on the word prophet, see the Master Glossary.

Yahweh says that he makes himself known to prophets in **visions** and speaks to them in **dreams**. A vision is a supernatural experience in which Yahweh communicates with a person while they are awake. For longer descriptions of dream and vision, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will talk about **dreams** and **visions**. Translate dreams and visions in the same way you have in previous books of the Bible. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh says that he does not speak to Moses in **riddles** as he does with ordinary prophets. A riddle is a question or statement that is deliberately not clear in its meaning. In this passage, the meaning of riddles is any speech that is not easy to understand.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will translate the word **riddles**. Translate this in the same way you have translated it in previous books of the Bible. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh calls Moses his **servant**. A servant is a man or woman who works for another person in their household. Yahweh says his servant Moses is entrusted with all of Yahweh's house, meaning that Moses has the honored role of Yahweh's most important servant. Use the same word or phrase for servant as you used in previous passages. For a longer description of the word servant, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh says that Moses can see **Yahweh's form**, unlike other people. This means that Moses can see Yahweh's likeness, not that Moses can see Yahweh directly.

After Yahweh speaks to Miriam and Aaron, and scolds them for their rebellion, Miriam's skin becomes **leprosy**. Leprous or leprosy refer to a certain infectious skin disease where people get wounds on their skin that become infected. However, when these terms are used in the Bible, they can refer to serious skin diseases in general, and may not mean the condition which is called leprosy today. Whatever this skin disease was, it was a very bad thing to have, because a person with this disease was "unclean." This means that this person was not fit to worship God or participate in activities within the community. They had to live outside the community, away from other people.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **leprosy** or **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.

Aaron begs Yahweh not to punish Aaron and Miriam for the **sin** that they had foolishly committed. Sin means any kind of rebellion against Yahweh. Miriam and Aaron have gone against Yahweh's authority and tried to put themselves in the special position that Yahweh has given only to Moses. Therefore, they have sinned. For more information on sin, refer to the Master Glossary.

Aaron uses the word **master** or **lord** when he is begging Moses not to punish Miriam and Aaron. Lord is a term that is used to respectfully address someone in a higher position or status. For a longer description of lord, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses pleads with **God** to heal Miriam. When Moses calls out to God, he uses the general name for God. Use the same general term for God that you have used in previous passages, and see the Master Glossary for more information about the general title for God.

At the end of the passage, the Israelites continue their journey into the Wilderness of Paran. The **wilderness** is an area of land where no one lives but where shepherds can usually take their sheep. Use the same word for wilderness that you have used in previous passages. For more information on wilderness, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 12:1–16

Audio Content

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Numbers 13:1–16

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 13:1–16 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 13:1–16 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 13:1–16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This passage tells about the preparation of the Israelites before they conquer the land of Canaan. The Israelites traveled to Kadesh-Barnea, in the desert of Paran, northeast of the Sinai Peninsula. At this point, Israel is ready to conquer the promised land. The Israelites have done the necessary preparations. The Israelites already counted the fighting men and set their camp close to Canaan. But before the Israelites conquer and claim the promised land, they need to do one more thing. The Israelites need to explore the land. This final preparation will determine the success of Israel in conquering the land.

Stop here and look at a map of the Sinai Peninsula. Trace the route of the Israelites, starting from Egypt through the desert of Sin towards the desert of Paran. Then, as a group, locate Kadesh-Barnea in the northeast region of the Sinai Peninsula. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh commands Moses to send men to explore the land of Canaan. Canaan was a fertile land. The land was a good place for planting crops and raising cattle and sheep. Yahweh promised to give this land to Abraham and Abraham's family a long time ago. Now Yahweh is about to fulfill that promise. But several people groups already live on this land of Canaan. These people groups are famous for idol worship and immoral behavior. These people groups have built strong walls for their cities and have raised mighty warriors. These things will make it difficult for anyone to conquer Canaan.

Stop here and discuss: In your culture, what do your leaders do first when you are about to conquer a new but difficult territory? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh gives Moses specific qualifications for the men who will explore the land of Canaan. However, Yahweh wants only the Israelites to explore the promised land. Remember that when the Israelites left Egypt, thousands of people who were not members of the Israelites also joined the Israelites. Yahweh may have included this detail of "father's tribe" in his instructions because these men who would explore the land of Canaan must be direct representatives of the entire Israelites. These men must be descendants of Abraham, because Yahweh promised Abraham that Yahweh would give the land of Canaan to Abraham's descendants.

Stop here and discuss: In your culture, how do you identify a person's family line? Pause audio here.

The second qualification that Yahweh gives Moses is that these men must be leaders of their respective ancestral tribes. Yahweh instructs Moses to send men who have leadership qualities. In each tribe there are probably several men who help lead the tribes. These men are some of those leaders in their tribes already. The next scene supports their qualifications as leaders.

Stop here and discuss: In your culture, how do you know if a person has leadership skills? What do they do to show you that they can be leaders? Pause this audio here.

The narrator gives the list of the names of the men who will explore the land. This is the first time the narrator mentions these names in the book of Numbers. The list contains the name of each of the chosen leaders, along with the name of each man's tribe and the name of each man's father.

Just like in the first census of the Israelites, the tribe of Levi is not represented. The Levites' only job was to take care of the tabernacle. Also, Ephraim and Manasseh became part of the tribes even though they were grandsons of Jacob. Jacob recognized Ephraim and Manasseh as sons in honor of their father, Joseph.

Towards the end of this passage, Moses changes the name of Hoshea Son of Nun to Joshua Son of Nun. Earlier, Moses assigned Joshua to fight against the Amalekites. Also, Joshua served as an assistant to Moses.

The name Hoshea meant "he saves," while Joshua meant, "Yahweh saves." Perhaps this is to highlight the promotion of Joshua to lead the men who went to explore the land of Canaan. Also this may remind the men that it was Yahweh himself who saved them.

Stop here and discuss this question in your group: In your culture, what are the reasons you might change a person's name?

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 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 three scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh commands Moses to send men to spy out the land of Canaan. Yahweh also gives Moses qualifications for the men.

In the second scene: Moses names the men who will be sent to explore the promised land.

In the third scene: Moses changes the name of Hoshea son of Nun to Joshua son of Nun.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Shammua son of Zakkur
- Shaphat son of Hori
- Caleb son of Jephunneh
- Igal son of Joseph;
- Hoshea son of Nun
- Palti son of Raphu
- Gaddiel son of Sodi
- Gaddi son of Susi
- Ammiel son of Gemalli
- Sethur son of Michael
- Nahbi son of Vophs
- And Geuel son of Maki.

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

In the first scene, Yahweh commands Moses to send men to explore the land of Canaan. This passage starts with Yahweh calling Moses to speak with Yahweh. What Yahweh is about to say is very important.

Stop and discuss: How do you call the attention of your listener to really focus on what you are about to say? Pause audio here.

Yahweh commands Moses to send men to explore the land of Canaan. Yahweh had promised a long time ago that Yahweh would give the Israelites the land of Canaan. Now Yahweh is about to fulfill that promise. The Israelites are about to conquer the land. But before Moses can send the men to explore the land, Yahweh tells Moses the qualifications these men must have.

Stop and discuss: If you are about to give people an important task, what qualities will you look for in the person who will do the task? Pause audio here.

Moses has to gather a group of men and send them to explore the land of Canaan. Yahweh does not tell Moses to choose the men to explore, but we know that Moses must have chosen them before he sent them. Yahweh instructs Moses to send men, but not just ordinary men. Moses has to choose men who are Israelites and who are leaders of their respective tribe. These are men who have experience leading and protecting their family groups.

Moses obeys Yahweh immediately, but before Moses sends out the men, he mentions additional details in the passage. Moses reminds us that the Israelites camped in the desert of Paran. The location is crucial because the Israelites were just south of Canaan. They are very close to the promised land.

Stop here and look at the map of ancient Israel and point out the proximity of the desert of Paran to the land of Canaan. Pause this audio here.

Note also that the narrator clearly emphasizes that Moses did exactly what Yahweh told Moses to do, "according to the command of Yahweh." This phrase further highlights the significance of the task. This is a very important task before Israel can take possession of the promised land of Canaan. It is Yahweh himself who is sending the explorers. So Moses sends "leading men" from the Israelites just as Yahweh has commanded Moses.

Moses lists the names of the leaders. At first, the arrangement of the tribes follows the order of the birth of the sons of Jacob. But soon, the list does not follow the order anymore. Moses describes each leader in this way:

Moses mentions the man's tribe name first, then the leader's name, and then the name of each leader's father. This pattern shows each man's reputation and strong connection to their tribe.

Stop here and discuss these questions: How do you list important people or families in your culture? How do you remember important names in these lists? Pause this audio here.

Interestingly, the list did not mention the name Joshua. Instead it lists Hoshea son of Nun, which is Joshua's other name.

Moses then clearly ends the list of the leaders.

In the third scene, Moses gives us the extra information that he changed the name of Hoshea son of Nun to Joshua son of Nun.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 13:1–16 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
- Shammua son of Zakkur
- Shaphat son of Hori
- Caleb son of Jephunneh
- Igal son of Joseph
- Hoshea son of Nun
- Palti son of Raphu
- Gaddiel son of Sodi
- Gaddi son of Susi
- Ammiel son of Gemalli
- Sethur son of Michael
- Nahbi son of Vophs
- And Geuel son of Maki

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 spoke to Moses." Then Yahweh says, "Send out men who will explore the land of Canaan, the land I promised to give to the Israelites."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I need to check if the Israelites are prepared to possess the land I promised them," or, "I need to motivate the Israelites to continue moving forward, because the promised land is within their reach," or, "I need to show the Israelites that I, Yahweh, am faithful."

Then ask the person playing Moses, "How do you feel?" The person might answer things like: "I feel very excited," or, "I feel afraid of what is there."

Yahweh gives Moses instructions for choosing the spies. Yahweh says to Moses, "Send men that belong to the ancestral tribes. See that these men are leaders of their tribes."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I promised to give the land to the Israelites. It is important that the descendants of Abraham will enter it first. The task is important and dangerous, so I sent the experienced leaders of each tribe."

Then ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel worried because to spy out the land of Canaan is not an easy task. Who knows what will happen there," or, "I feel afraid and will do exactly what Yahweh instructed me to do."

In scene two Moses obeys exactly what Yahweh has commanded him to do.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I can feel the urgency of the command. The promised land is within our reach."

Also in this scene, Moses mentions the list of the names of the chosen men to be sent to explore the land of Canaan. These are the names of the men:

- from the tribe of Reuben, Shammua son of Zakkur
- from the tribe of Simeon, Shaphat son of Hori
- from the tribe of Judah, Caleb son of Jephunneh
- from the tribe of Issachar, Igal son of Joseph
- from the tribe of Ephraim, Hoshea son of Nun
- from the tribe of Benjamin, Palti son of Raphu
- from the tribe of Zebulun, Gaddiel son of Sodi
- from the tribe of Manasseh, a tribe of Joseph, Gaddi son of Susi
- from the tribe of Dan, Ammiel son of Gemalli
- from the tribe of Asher, Sethur son of Michael
- from the tribe of Naphtali, Nahbi son of Vophsi
- from the tribe of Gad, Geuel son of Maki

Pause the drama.

Choose from these men and ask them, "What are you feeling or thinking?" Some might answer things like, "I am in shock," or, "I am honored for the opportunity to serve God and the community," or, "I am afraid. I do not know what awaits us there," or, "I am ready to take possession of the land just as Yahweh promised."

Then Moses ended the list of the men.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling?" The person might answer things like: "I am worried about the safety of these men," or, "I need to assign a leader who will supervise these men."

In scene three, Moses changes the name of Hoshea son of Nun to Joshua son of Nun.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling?" The person might answer things like: "I wonder what this meant," or, "I will accept the responsibility and lead these men."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 13:1–16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Yahweh speaks to Moses. The personal name of God, Yahweh, is used throughout this passage. Use the same word for Yahweh that you have used previously. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses to send men to **spy out** or **explore** the land of Canaan. Yahweh wants these men to completely check out, search through, and explore the land. The men do not go in secret. They do not do anything illegal or immoral.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **spy** or **explore**. Be careful to choose a word that does not have a negative or bad meaning. 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 land of **Canaan**, or just Canaan, is Yahweh's promised land to the people or sons of Israel, or the Israelites. Tradition recognized Canaan, Noah's grandson, as the origin for the name of the land. Canaan is a fertile land.

Stop here as a group and look at a map of Canaan if needed. Then, discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for Canaan. Look up Canaan 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** or sons of **Israel** are the descendants of Abraham. Use the same word or phrase that you have used previously. For more information on Israelites and Israel, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses to send a **leader** from each ancestral tribe of the 12 sons of Jacob. Use the same word for leader as you have used in previous passages. These leaders would be men that people in their family groups highly respect and follow.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 13:1–16 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.

Numbers 13:1–16

Audio Content

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Numbers 13:17–33

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 13:17–33 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 13:17–33 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 13:17–33 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Yahweh instructed Moses to choose 12 leaders to explore the land of Canaan. Yahweh had promised to give Canaan to the people of Israel. Moses has called these men together so that he can give them instructions. This story begins in the wilderness of Paran when Moses gives the 12 leaders instructions about what to look for when they explore the land of Canaan.

Moses tells the men to leave the wilderness of Paran and go up, or go north, into the Negev. The Negev is a wilderness area in the southern part of Canaan. From the Negev, they will continue north to the hill country in northern Canaan.

Stop and show a map of the area the explorers will travel to. Tell a story about a time that someone in your culture has given directions to a place far away. The rest of the group should pay attention to words or phrases that describe directions. Pause the audio here.

Moses tells the leaders to gather information about the land of Canaan and the people who live there. Moses wants to know how many people are there and if they are strong or weak. Moses wants the leaders to find out where the people live. Moses wants to know if their camps or towns are out in the open, or if the people live in strongholds, which are cities surrounded by walls and towers protecting the city.

Stop here as a group and look at a picture of a stronghold and a picture of an open city. Describe what towns and cities look like in your area. What kinds of things do people or armies in your culture look for when they are exploring an area in order to control it? Pause the audio here.

Moses asks the leaders to find out about the quality of the land. Is the soil fertile and good for growing food? Or is the soil poor and difficult to grow food in? Moses then tells the leaders to see if there is wood, or trees, in the land.

Moses then tells the leaders to use effort to bring back some of the fruit from the land. At the time of this passage, it was the season that people could harvest the first grapes, probably about mid-July. Grapes are a small fruit that grows on vines.

Stop here and look at a picture of a normal cluster of grapes. Pause the audio here.

After Moses tells the explorers what to look for, the leaders then go up, or go north, to explore the land.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story from your culture about someone who has explored a place they had never been before and did not know anything about. How did they describe the time before going into the land? How did they describe the time in the unknown land? Pause this audio here.

The explorers travel north from the wilderness of Zin, at the southern border of Canaan, to Rehob near Lebo-hamath in the northern part of Canaan. During this trip, the explorers went into the Negev and came to Hebron, which is in the south of Canaan and in a mountainous region. You will remember from the book of Genesis that it was near Hebron that Yahweh first promised Abraham that Yahweh would give the land to Abraham's descendants.

Stop here and show a map of the area that the explorers explored. Pause this audio here.

While the explorers were in Hebron, they saw Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, which were likely the names of three tribes in the land. These tribes are the descendants of Anak. People had heard stories about the legendary Anak people, who were very tall. The story mentions that Hebron was built seven years before Zoan. Zoan was a very old Egyptian city, so that means that Hebron is also very old. The explorers then went from Hebron to the Valley of Eschol and cut down a branch with a single cluster, or group, of grapes. Eschol means cluster. There were so many grapes that two men needed to carry the grapes with a pole. The men also brought back some pomegranates and figs. Pomegranates are a red fruit. Figs are a fruit commonly found in Israel.

Show the group a picture of two men carrying a large cluster of grapes on a pole. Get the group to compare the photo of the normal-sized cluster of grapes to this large cluster. Look at pictures of pomegranates and figs, if needed. Pause the audio here.

The explorers returned after 40 days of spying out the land. They returned to Moses, Aaron, and all the congregation, or community, of Israel who were in Kadesh, or Kadesh-Barnea, in the wilderness of Paran. The explorers said to the entire congregation that the land was so fruitful and fertile that it was like there were rivers of milk and honey. But they said the people are very strong and live in large, fortified or well-protected cities. The explorers saw the descendants of Anak there, and they also saw their ancient enemies, the Amalekites, living in the Negev. The Amalekites are enemies of Israel in these passages. You will remember the Amalekites attacked Israel when Israel was leaving Egypt, but Israel defeated the Amalekites. The Canaanites also lived there, near the Jordan River in Canaan and near the sea. The Canaanites were a tribe that only lived in a small part of Canaan, not the whole land. The explorers described where each group lived in the land of Canaan.

Stop and show a map that shows where the tribes lived in Canaan. Pause this audio here.

The congregation was likely talking together about what the explorers had shared with the congregation. Caleb, one of the explorers, then quieted the congregation.

Stop and discuss as a group: Describe a story from your culture when someone quieted a large group of people. How did they do that? How did the person who quieted the group move their body, or use certain words or sounds? Pause this audio here.

Caleb then said to everyone, "Let's go up at once and possess the land. We can certainly overcome it." Caleb trusted that Yahweh would help the Israelites defeat the tall men, because Yahweh had promised the land to the Israelites.

Most of the explorers disagreed with Caleb and said to the whole community that they would not be able to defeat these tribes in battle, because the tribes were stronger than Israel. The explorers called it a "land that devours its inhabitants." This does not mean the ground and land itself would kill the inhabitants. They were saying that it was not safe to live in that land. The explorers explained that all of the people living there were tall and huge. They even saw the Nephilim, the descendants of Anak, living there. The explorers exaggerated or over-emphasized their differences and said that compared to the Nephilim, the Israelite men were small, like grasshoppers. Grasshoppers are small insects that jump from one plant to another.

Stop here and show the group a picture of a grasshopper. Pause this audio here.

Stop and tell a story from your culture about people who are very different from you. How did people in your culture react to these very different people? How did they talk about them? Pause this audio here.

The explorers were trying to convince Israel not to fight to conquer the land.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 13:17–33 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 four scenes.

In the first scene: Moses tells the 12 Israelite explorers to go explore the land of Canaan to find out information about the land and the people.

In the second scene: The 12 explorers are travelling from the south of Canaan to the north of Canaan. They see the giant descendants of Anak there.

In the third scene: The 12 explorers arrive at the Valley of Eschol and cut down a branch with a huge cluster of grapes, and they gather pomegranates and figs.

In the fourth scene: The 12 explorers return after 40 days and tell Moses, Aaron, and the congregation, or all of the Israelite people, that they should not go into the land because of the strong people who live there. Caleb says Israel should go into the land, then the other men try to scare Israel into not fighting.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- The 12 leader explorers, including Caleb
- The descendants of Anak, or the Nephilim, who are giants
- The tribes of Canaan: the Amalekites, Hittites, Jebusites, Amorites, and Canaanites
- The congregation, or community, of Israel

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

In the previous passage, Yahweh told Moses to choose 12 explorers to explore the land of Canaan. The passage listed the names of the men who were chosen.

Scene one starts with Moses sending the 12 explorers to explore the land of Canaan. This scene would have taken place in the wilderness of Paran. It was the season of the first grapes, so it would be about mid-July.

However, the order here is confusing. First, Moses gathers the men to give them instructions, and then he sends them into the land. You may state this order in your translation if it is necessary. Moses gathers the leader explorers and says, "Go up into the Negev and go up into the hill country." In that culture, people talked about "going up" when they travelled north.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How do you talk about directions when you travel? How will you talk about the instruction to go "up," or to "go north," in this passage? Pause this audio here.

Then Moses gives the explorers instructions to find out information about the quality of the land and the people who live in the land. Moses also tells them to bring back some fruit from the land. For each thing Moses wants to know about the land, Moses gives an example of what a good or bad outcome may be. When Moses is asking about the land, Moses asks, "Is the land fertile or poor?" Moses also asks, "Is the land good or bad?"

Stop here and discuss: In your culture, how would you ask someone to find out information about how good or bad something is? Pay attention to the words you use as you ask these questions. Pause this audio here.

Scene two should start with the explorers leaving the wilderness of Paran and entering the land of Canaan. This scene summarizes the trip from the wilderness of Zin to Rehob, near Lebo-hamath. On this trip, they first go north into the Negev. The Negev is in the south of Canaan where the land was dry, but not as dry as the wilderness of Paran. Then the explorers went north to Hebron. Hebron is in the hill country, so there are many hills. In Hebron, they find three tribes that are descendants of Anak. These tribes are Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai. It's important to know the descendants of Anak are very tall people. Now the storyteller pauses the action to give us some history about Hebron. The storyteller wants us to know that Hebron is very old, so he says that Hebron is seven years older than Zoan, a city the people know from Egypt.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Why do you think this information is important about how old Hebron is? How would you include important background information like this into a story? Pause this audio here.

The explorers walked every day to cover the full distance of this trip in 40 days. The men would have been going up and down hills and mountains in the hill country.

Stop here and show the group a picture of the hill country. Pause this audio here.

In scene three, the setting changes from the explorers being in the hill country to the explorers arriving at a wadi or river valley called the Valley of Eschol, near Hebron.

Stop here and show the group a picture of the river Valley of Eschol, near Hebron. Pause this audio here.

In the Valley of Eschol, the explorers cut down a branch with a single cluster of grapes that was so large that the explorers had to carry it on a pole between two men. The explorers also collected other fruits like pomegranates and figs.

In scene four, the explorers return to Kadesh in the wilderness of Paran from Canaan after 40 days of exploring. The explorers are probably very tired after 40 days of travel. The explorers come to Moses, Aaron, and the entire community of the people of Israel. The explorers show Moses, Aaron, and the community of Israel the fruit the explorers gathered and tell them that "the land flows with milk and honey."

Stop here and discuss as a group: How will you talk about a land being so fertile that it is like there are rivers of milk and honey flowing through it? Pause this audio here.

The explorers make it clear, though, that this information is much less important than the information about who lives in the land. They make a sharp contrast. They start talking about why they do not want to go into the land.

Stop here and discuss: Tell about a time when you had to give a report to someone that had good and bad information in it. The others in the group should pay attention to how the storyteller presents the good versus the bad information. Pause the audio here.

Some of the explorers start talking about why they do not want to go into the land. The explorers discuss how the people who live in the land are strong, and the cities are fortified and very large. The leaders also describe seeing the descendants of Anak there, and the Amalekites in the land of Negev. They saw the Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites in the hill country. They saw the Canaanites by the sea and by the Jordan River.

After the explorers talk about what they saw, the Israelites are probably all speaking loudly about what the men had shared about the people who live in the land. The whole community of Israelites would be thousands of people all speaking to each other in a huge crowd of people. Caleb was one of the 12 explorers. Caleb then quickly and effectively quieted the people.

Stop and discuss ways that people in your culture and language get the attention of a crowd. Discuss how you will translate this idea. Pause the audio here.

The congregation stops talking. Caleb then says, "Let us go up at once and occupy it, because we are able to overcome it." Caleb is trying to convince Israel to attack the people who live in Canaan. Caleb trusts Yahweh's promises to give Israel the land of Canaan. The explorers who disagreed with Caleb then tell the people of Israel that the people of the land were stronger than they were, so the Israelites would not be able to attack them.

The explorers say to the people of Israel that the land is a "land that devours its inhabitants." This is special language. It does not mean that the land itself will eat its people. However, it does mean that the land is dangerous. The explorers also say that all the people that they saw are very tall. The explorers talk about the Nephilim, and the storyteller tells us extra information about where the Nephilim came from. The Nephilim were very tall people. The explorers exaggerated when they said that they were like grasshoppers compared to the descendants of Anak. Grasshoppers are small insects.

Stop here and show the group a picture of a grasshopper. Tell a story about a time someone compared something very big to something very small to help clearly describe the size of something. How do you show the comparison? How will you translate this comparison? Pause this audio here.

The explorers also say that the descendants of Anak thought the explorers seemed like grasshoppers too.

Stop here and discuss as a group: The explorers are trying to convince the Israelites to not enter the land. Describe a story from your culture that involves someone exaggerating to convince someone not to do something. How would they try to convince them? What words or phrases would they use? 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

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 13:17–33 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 12 leader explorers, including Caleb
- The descendants of Anak, or the Nephilim, who are giants
- The tribes of Canaan: the Amalekites, Hittites, Jebusites, Amorites, and Canaanites
- The congregation, or community, 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.

In the first scene, Moses tells the 12 Israelite explorers to explore the land of Canaan. This is to find out information about the land and the people who live there. Moses tells them to bring back samples of the fruit that grows there.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the explorers, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel scared because the people who live in the land could be really strong," or, "I am excited to finally see the land Yahweh promised Israel!" or, "I am happy to finally be leaving the desert."

In the second scene, the explorers are traveling from the south of Canaan to the north of Canaan. There the explorers see the descendants of Anak, who were very tall.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the 12 explorers, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I am very scared! I have never seen anyone that big," or, "With Yahweh we can defeat these men of great height in battle!" or, "Why didn't Moses come himself? Why did Moses send us?"

In the third scene, the explorers arrive at the Valley of Eschol and cut down a branch with a cluster of grapes so large that it takes two men to carry it with a pole. The explorers also get pomegranates and figs.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the explorers, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I've never seen this many grapes!" or, "The land is as fertile as Yahweh promised it would be," or, "I feel so thankful that Yahweh is giving us such a great land."

In the fourth scene, the explorers come back to the wilderness of Paran. The explorers then tell Moses, Aaron, and all the community of Israel that the land is filled with strong people and cities. The people start talking together about what they have heard. Caleb quickly and effectively silences the community of Israel. Caleb then encourages Israel to go into the land.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Caleb, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel anxious that Israel may not enter the land Yahweh promised us," or, "I am sad that Israel does not trust Yahweh to protect them from the peoples of Canaan," or, "I hope God has mercy on Israel!"

Most of the explorer leaders do not want to go into the land because of the people who live there.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the explorers who do not want to enter the land, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I am not letting Caleb send my friends and family to be killed by these people!" or, "Even Yahweh cannot help us against these strong men of great height," or, "I am not fighting these men. I am going to convince everyone in Israel not to enter the land of Canaan."

Most of the explorers then spread a bad report to the community of Israel and say that the people who live in the land are very tall people called Nephilim who could defeat Israel.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the community of Israel, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "There is no way we can defeat these strong men!" or, "I am so scared of the men of great height that I am not going into Canaan," or, "I am sad that people in Israel do not believe Yahweh will protect us against the inhabitants like I do."

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I am sad that Israel still does not trust that I can protect them, even after they saw me split the Red Sea!" or, "I am angry that Israel has not trusted that nothing can get in the way of me fulfilling my promises to Israel."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 13:17–33 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Moses starts the story by sending out the 12 explorers to **spy out** or **explore** the land of **Canaan**. To spy out something is to explore and gather information about it. The leaders were exploring the land of Canaan and gathering information about it. Use the same words for spy out or explore and Canaan that you used in previous passages. Canaan is in the Master Glossary.

The explorers explored from the **wilderness** of Zin to Rehob. A wilderness is a lonely, barren place without water. There are almost no trees or bushes growing in this kind of wilderness. The ground is dry and rocky, and there are wild animals roaming around. People do not live in the wilderness. Use the same word or phrase for wilderness that you used in previous passages. Wilderness is in the Master Glossary.

Moses asks the leaders to see whether the cities the people of Canaan live in are **open camps** or **strongholds**. Open camps are towns out in the open with no protection, and strongholds are cities surrounded by walls and towers that protect the cities.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **open camps** or **cities** and **strongholds**. 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.

The leaders go into the Valley of Eschol. This is a **wadi**. A wadi is a river valley that is dry in the season when it is not raining but full of water when it is raining.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for a river valley that is dry at some times of the year and full of water at other times. Pause this audio here.

The leaders see the **descendants** of Anak. A person's descendants are his children, grandchildren, and all future generations from the same family line. Use the same word or phrase for descendants as you used in previous passages. Descendants is in the Master Glossary.

The leaders then come back to Moses, Aaron, and the congregation of the sons of Israel, or the Israelites. In this passage, the congregation of the sons of Israel refers to all the descendants of Abraham together, or the **Israelites**. In this context the congregation is the gathered community of Israelites. Use the same word or phrase for Israelites and congregation or community of Israel that you used in previous passages. Israelites is in the Master Glossary.

The sons of Anak are called the **Nephilim**. The Nephilim were giant beings or powerful warriors. They were believed to be the sons of God and human women breeding together, which made them different from regular people. The Bible doesn't tell us a lot about them, but it suggests they were strong and mighty. People have different interpretations of who or what the Nephilim were, but many people think of them as legendary figures from ancient times.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **Nephilim**. The story of the Nephilim occurs in Genesis. If you have already translated Genesis, use the same word for Nephilim that you used there.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 13:17-33

Audio Content

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Numbers 14:1-10

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 14:1-10 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 14:1–10 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 14:1–10 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, the people of Israel were camped in the wilderness of Paran at Kadesh, also called Kadesh-Barnea. The explorers that Moses had sent to explore the land came back, and ten of them gave a bad report about the land. They told Moses and the people of Israel that the people who lived in the land that they went to explore were very big and strong and impossible to defeat.

This is a passage about what happened on the night that the explorers returned from exploring the land. Yahweh had promised to give that land to the Israelites after he brought them out of slavery. This land is part of Yahweh's covenant with Abraham and Abraham's descendants, the Israelites. This passage uses the personal name of God, Yahweh, throughout the passage.

All that night, all the people of Israel cried loudly in fear and distress. All the people of Israel were afraid of the people of the land that the explorers had gone to see. All the people of Israel, the whole community, loudly cried, screamed, and shouted all that night. This is typical of how the people of this culture express their grief. They felt afraid, angry, and sorrowful.

Stop here. As a group, tell stories of times that people have been angry because they were very afraid and sad. How did they show their feelings? Pause this audio here.

All the people were angry with Moses and Aaron. The people grumbled, or complained, against Moses and Aaron for bringing them here. They rejected the leadership of Moses and Aaron by challenging their decisions. The entire nation of Israel blamed Moses and Aaron because they believed that the people of the land that Moses and Aaron were taking them to would kill them in battle. They all came to Moses and Aaron and said, "We would prefer to have died in the land of Egypt or here in this desert land." They used a question to let Moses and Aaron know how they felt. They asked, "Why is Yahweh bringing us to this land only to let us fall by the sword?" To fall by the sword is a way of saying to die in battle. The community of the people of Israel believed that Yahweh had brought them here to die fighting in battle.

Stop here and look at a picture of a sword. Pause audio here.

It was Yahweh who chose Moses and Aaron to lead the people of Israel. Moses and Aaron led the people of Israel to the land that Yahweh had chosen. When the people complained against Moses and Aaron, they also complained against Yahweh, because Moses and Aaron spoke for Yahweh. The people of Israel believed that Yahweh wanted their enemies to kill them in battle and take their wives and children as prey or plunder. They were afraid that their enemies would take their wives and children as slaves.

Stop here and discuss stories in your culture about battles. What happens to the women and children in battle? Pause audio here.

The people of Israel talked together and decided that they should return to Egypt. The people of Israel rejected Moses and Aaron as leaders and decided to choose a new leader. The people of Israel wanted a new leader who would take them back to Egypt instead of to the land that Yahweh was leading them to. The people rejected Moses, Aaron, and Yahweh.

Stop here and talk about a time when your community disagreed with the leaders. Describe the behaviour of the community and reaction of the leaders. Pause audio here.

Moses and Aaron were standing in front of the people. When they heard how the people of Israel rejected Yahweh, Moses and Aaron immediately laid flat on the ground in alarm. In this culture, this action shows a complete surrender before a great person or Yahweh.

Stop here and look at a picture of this practice of falling on your face as a group. Pause this audio here.

Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh had been with the ten explorers who went to see the land. Joshua and Caleb tore the clothes they were wearing. This action shows deep distress. Joshua and Caleb spoke before the whole congregation, or community of Israel. They told the people that the land was "very, very good land." They told the people that if they obeyed Yahweh, Yahweh would be happy with them and he would bring them safely into the land and give it to them. They reminded the people of Israel how good the land was. They told the people that the land was "a land flowing with milk and honey." Joshua and Caleb were describing the land as rich and fertile. Joshua and Caleb warned the people not to refuse to obey Yahweh by rebelling against his plans for them.

Joshua and Caleb were confident that Yahweh would help the people of Israel defeat the people of that land. They said that people of that land would be "bread for us," which means that the people of Israel would be able to defeat their enemy as easily as they could eat bread.

Joshua and Caleb continued telling the people of Israel not to be afraid, because the people of that land had no one to protect them, but the nation of Israel had Yahweh with them.

Stop here and discuss as a group: In your culture, in what ways can someone reject authority, and how do you treat such people in the community? Pause this audio here.

But the whole community responded, "We should throw rocks at them and stone them to death." A person who broke the covenant of Yahweh was to be killed by stoning him with stones. The passage does not make it clear whether the people of Israel wanted to stone Joshua and Caleb only or to stone Joshua, Caleb, Moses, and Aaron. As the people of Israel spoke these words, immediately the glory of Yahweh appeared as a powerful light to all the Israelite people at the tent of meeting. All Israel saw the brightness of Yahweh.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 14:1–10 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 three scenes.

In the first scene: The whole community of Israel cried loudly the entire night after the explorers gave a bad report. The whole community grumbled against Moses and Aaron. All the people refused to go into the land and decided to choose a new leader to take them back to Egypt.

In the second scene: Moses and Aaron were distressed that the people rejected Yahweh's plan. Moses and Aaron fell on their faces in front of the whole community. Joshua and Caleb tore their clothes in distress and spoke to the people about the goodness of the land and Yahweh's ability to give it to them.

In the third scene: The whole community rejected Joshua and Caleb's words and wanted to stone their leaders to death. As the whole community was shouting about stoning them, the brightness of Yahweh appeared at the tent of meeting.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- Joshua the son of Nun
- Caleb the son of Jephunneh
- The ten explorers
- The whole community of Israel

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

This passage begins with a word that connects what happens in this scene with the previous passage. In the last passage, the whole community of the people of Israel had been listening to the report that the ten explorers gave. The story action begins with the people of Israel responding to the report that the ten explorers gave. That night, the whole community grumbled against Moses and Aaron. Grumbling is rebellious complaining. The people of Israel used their words to oppose Yahweh by complaining against Moses and Aaron, the leaders that Yahweh had given them. The whole community did this all that night to show their anger, sadness, and fearful mourning. Moses wants to make it clear that everyone in the community of Israel was involved in the crying and weeping. He uses different words like "congregation" and "the people or sons of Israel."

Stop here and visualize this scene. One by one, describe this in your own words. Pay attention to the words you use to describe the crying. Pause this audio here.

The whole community's distress kept increasing and they now criticized Moses and Aaron for bringing them there from Egypt. We are not sure if this started with one person complaining, but we are sure that the whole community joined in together. Visualize the whole community speaking like they were one person. The whole community spoke against Moses and Aaron and said, "We would prefer to have died in Egypt or in this desert rather than be killed in that land that you are taking us to."

As they continued crying, the whole community turned their distress against Yahweh. They asked Moses and Aaron, "Why is Yahweh bringing us to this land only to let us fall by the sword?"

Stop here and discuss the stories you told in the previous step about battles. How do you describe people dying in battles? What is the best way for you to describe "fall by the sword" in your language? Pause this audio here.

The Israelites asked this question to make a statement instead of getting an answer. When people ask this kind of question, they are saying what they believe to be true. The people of Israel were blaming Yahweh for putting them in a situation where they thought they would die. The whole community of the people of Israel continued crying and increased their protest. The people of Israel believed that Yahweh had bad plans for them. They said, "Yahweh must want our enemies to capture our women and children. Would it not be better for us to go back to Egypt?" The Israelites did not ask this question to get an answer but to show what they were thinking. The people had decided to return to Egypt. When acting out this scene, make sure to show how the distress of the people of Israel grew from fearing the people of the land, to blaming Moses and Aaron, and then to rejecting the plan of Yahweh.

Stop here and tell a story about an angry crowd. Pay attention to how the people in the crowd react to each other's anger. Discuss how the crowd reaches its decision and how they speak or communicate this decision. How does the entire crowd come to think the same thing? Pause this audio here.

This scene ends with the words, "And they said to each other, we should choose a leader and go back to Egypt." These words show that the crying and complaining of the community led to this decision. The whole community of the people of Israel spoke to one another and decided to choose a new leader who would take them back to Egypt.

In the second scene, Moses and Aaron fell on their faces in front of the whole community, and then Joshua and Caleb tore their clothes in front of the whole community and began to speak to the people of Israel. Joshua and Caleb tore their clothes to show great pain and mourning, because the people of Israel had rejected Yahweh, Moses, and Aaron. Joshua and Caleb spoke to the people of Israel and said, "The land we travelled through and explored is a wonderful land! And if Yahweh is pleased with us, he will bring us safely into that land and give it to us. It is a rich land flowing with milk and honey. Do not rebel against Yahweh, and don't be afraid of the people of the land. They are only helpless prey to us! They have no protection, but Yahweh is with us! Don't be afraid of them!" Joshua and Caleb spoke these words to the people of Israel. We do not know whether one of the two spoke or both spoke. Because Joshua is mentioned first, Joshua likely spoke and Caleb stood by him agreeing with everything he said. Joshua spoke strongly and loudly.

Stop here and tell a story of a time a leader spoke strongly to people in order to give them courage. How did he speak? What kind of voice did he use? How did he use his body as he spoke? Pause this audio here.

Joshua and Caleb said that the people of that land would be "bread for us," which means that the people of Israel would be able to defeat their enemies as easily as they could eat bread.

Stop here and discuss as a group: When you tell stories about battles that you can easily win, how do you talk about how easy it is to win the battles? Pause this audio here.

In the third scene, the whole community angrily rejected the words of Joshua and Caleb. The people of Israel refused to be encouraged and said to each other that they should stone them to death by throwing stones at them until they died. The passage is not clear exactly who the people wanted to stone to death with stones. It could be Joshua and Caleb only, or it could also include Moses and Aaron. Before the people could throw one stone, the glory of Yahweh appeared in a great light at the tent of meeting. All the people of Israel saw Yahweh's brightness.

Stop here and tell stories of people who are found in the middle of doing bad things. How do they react when they are caught? Pause audio here.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 14:1–10 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
- Joshua the son of Nun
- Caleb the son of Jephunneh
- The whole community of Israel
- The ten explorers

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 ten spies have finished giving their report. The whole community of the people of Israel is afraid and begins to cry loudly and weep.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the community, "What are you thinking and feeling?" The people might answer things like: "We shall all be killed if we enter that land," or, "There is no hope for us against giants. We cannot take the land," or, "That land is full of giants and it is well protected," or, "Why did we come here? What were we thinking listening to this Moses?" or, "I am afraid. I do not want to die," or, "Moses and Aaron lied to us! Now we shall all die. I wish we never left Egypt. Being a slave is better than dying in a war with giants," or, "I am very angry with Moses and Aaron. They have brought us and our children great danger."

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you thinking and feeling?" The person playing Moses might answer with things like: "The people are acting as if we are at a funeral. The people have lost all hope," or, "They are rejecting the plan of Yahweh," or, "The people do not trust that Yahweh will give us the land. They would rather die than go into the land as Yahweh has instructed us to do."

The people's anger increases, and they begin to criticize Moses and Aaron. Act out the whole community criticizing Moses and Aaron and saying, "If only we had died in Egypt! Or in this wilderness! Why did Yahweh bring us to this place? He must want us to die in battle. Our wives and our little ones will become slaves! Would it not be better for us to go back to Egypt?"

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing Moses and Aaron, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The people playing Moses and Aaron might answer things like: "The people are getting angrier. They are angry with us. They are even angry with Yahweh. We are afraid that they will kill us," or, "The people have forgotten all that Yahweh has done for us. They think Yahweh has evil plans for us. This makes us incredibly sad," or, "The people have rejected us as leaders. They have rejected Yahweh. They would rather be slaves in Egypt," or, "We are afraid that Yahweh will not forgive the people for this sin."

Ask the people playing the community, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The people playing the community might answer things like: "We are scared for the safety of our children. We are angry that Moses would ask us to take such a big risk with their lives. Why would Yahweh want us to die here?" or, "We cannot trust Yahweh. His plan will get us all killed," or, "We will choose another leader. We will go back to Egypt."

In scene two, Moses and Aaron, who were standing in front of the whole community, laid on the ground in alarm. Then Joshua and Caleb tore their clothes in distress and spoke to the people about the goodness of the land and Yahweh's ability to give it to them.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing Moses and Aaron, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The people playing Moses and Aaron might answer things like: "We feel great pain and sorrow. The people have rejected Yahweh," or, "Our hearts are broken. This is a terrible thing," or, "We are afraid that Yahweh will destroy all these people for rejecting him."

Joshua and Caleb spoke these words to the people of Israel, "The land we travelled through and explored is a wonderful land! And if Yahweh is pleased with us, he will bring us safely into that land and give it to us. It is a rich land flowing with milk and honey. Do not rebel against Yahweh, and do not be afraid of the people of the land. They are only helpless prey to us! They have no protection, but Yahweh is with us! Do not be afraid of them!"

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing Joshua and Caleb, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The people playing Joshua and Caleb might answer things like: "We feel shocked that all the people should be so scared and discouraged," or, "How quickly have the people forgotten how Yahweh has helped us this far. We want to remind them that Yahweh is strong," or, "We are angry with the ten spies for putting fear in the hearts of the people," or, "We are very sad that the people have rejected Moses and Aaron," or, "We want to strengthen the people again. We want them to see that Yahweh will certainly give us this land as he promised," or, "We want the people to stop their rebellion."

In the third scene, all the community stopped listening to Joshua and Caleb. They said they should stone them to death with stones. This was probably shouted by one person, and then repeated by another and then another until it became the shout of the whole community.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the community, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The people playing the community might answer things like, "We feel angry, very angry," or, "We feel very afraid. We are panicking thinking about how we might die in a battle in this wilderness," or, "How can these people tell us to go into that land? They want us dead. They deserve to die."

As the people were shouting, Yahweh appeared at the tent of meeting as a great bright light.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the community, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The people playing the community might answer things like, "We feel very afraid. Yahweh has heard our complaining and has come to destroy us," or, "We want to hide from Yahweh," or, "We feel like the enemy of Yahweh. He has heard us rejecting his chosen leaders and found us ready to stone them."

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The person playing Yahweh might answer things like: "I am angry with these people. How long shall they rebel?" or, "I am tired of these people. I do not want them as my people anymore," or, "These people have rejected me. They have rejected my covenant and would rather go back to Egypt. I am very sad," or, "I am happy with Moses, Aaron, Joshua, and Caleb. They have been faithful to me. They trust me, unlike these faithless people."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 14:1–10 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

The ten explorers gave a bad report, and then all the congregation of the **Israelites** raised a loud cry. This congregation is the entire community of Israelites. Use the same word for congregation and for Israelites that you used in previous passages. Israelites is in the Master Glossary.

All the people **grumbled** against Moses and Aaron. This action word describes rebellious complaining. The people rebelled against Yahweh by complaining against his representatives, Moses and Aaron. The complaints of the people had no good reason. The word shows a negative attitude. Translators should translate this word consistently every time it occurs.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **grumbled**. 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 people express their grumbling in these words, "We wish that we had died in Egypt! Or we wish that we had died in this **wilderness!**" Use the same word or phrase for wilderness that you used in previous passages. For more information on wilderness, refer to the Master Glossary.

The people ask Moses and Aaron, "Why is **Yahweh** bringing us to this land only to let us fall by the sword?" Use the same word for Yahweh that you used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

The people say to Moses and Aaron, "Our wives and our **little ones** will become **prey**." The phrase "our little ones" means our children. Prey refers to people being taken prisoner in war. The people are saying, "Our little children will be carried off as slaves."

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **prey**. 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 people said to one another, "Let us choose a leader and go back to Egypt." Use the same word for leader that you used in previous passages.

Then Moses and Aaron **fell on their faces** in front of the assembly of the community. Use the same phrase for fell on their faces that you used in previous passages. The assembly of the community of Israelites is a more official way of saying that the Israelites gathered together for an important reason.

Joshua and Caleb said, "If Yahweh is pleased with us, he will bring us safely into that land and give it to us. It is a rich land flowing with milk and honey." Use the same description for a land flowing with milk and honey as you used in previous passages.

Then all the congregation said to **stone them with stones**. The phrase stone them with stones means kill them by throwing stones at them until they die.

Stop here and discuss what word or phrase you will use for "stone them with stones." Use the same word or phrase for stoning that you have used in previous books of the Bible. Pause this audio here.

But the glory of Yahweh appeared at the tent of meeting to all the people of Israel. Yahweh's glory is when we see Yahweh's power or majesty.

Stop here and discuss what word or phrase you will use for **glory**. Use the same word or phrase for glory that you used in other books of the Bible that you have translated. For more information on glory, refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

Use the same word or phrase for **tent of meeting** that you used in previous passages. For more information on the tent of meeting, refer to tabernacle in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 14:1–10

Audio Content

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Numbers 14:11–25

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 14:11–25 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 14:11–25 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 14:11–25 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, the people of Israel rejected Israel's leaders and picked up stones to kill the leaders. The people of Israel also rejected Yahweh and his plans for them. Whilst the people of Israel held the stones in their hands, Yahweh's glory appeared as a powerful light at the tent of meeting and all the people of Israel saw the brightness of Yahweh.

This passage is about what happened when Yahweh's brightness appeared. Yahweh spoke to Moses and asked, "How much longer will 'this people' despise me?" To despise means to treat someone disrespectfully or to reject them. Yahweh asked Moses, "How much longer will this people refuse to trust me even though I have done many signs among them?" These two questions show the anger and frustration that Yahweh felt. Yahweh was angry because the people of Israel would not rely on Yahweh's power to defeat Israel's enemies. Yahweh was no longer patient because the people treated Yahweh as if Yahweh was not able to do what he had promised them, even though Yahweh had already proved himself mighty and powerful against Pharaoh, Israel's enemy in Egypt. For this reason, Yahweh said that he would send Israel a horrible disease. The disease would destroy the Israelites so that they would no longer be Yahweh's people. We do not know what the specific pestilence was, but it would have been a widespread and very deadly and destructive outbreak.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In the history of your community, what is the most feared disease that came and spread to many people quickly? How deadly was it? How do your people speak about it? What effect did it have on the size of your community? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh said he would use this pestilence to dispossess, or to take away, the promises that he had given to his people Israel.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell stories of times when people or God took away promises or things from people. What were the reasons that someone took these things away from these people? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses that Yahweh will make Moses into the ancestor of a nation greater than these Israelites after Yahweh has dispossessed Israel with the plague. Yahweh is saying that Yahweh wants to begin his promises again with Moses and the children that Moses and his descendants will have.

Moses answers Yahweh, saying that if Yahweh destroys the people of Israel, the people of Egypt will hear about it. Because truly, it was by Yahweh's power that Yahweh brought the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt. And the people of Egypt will then tell the people of the land of Canaan. Moses reminds Yahweh that the people of Canaan had already heard that Yahweh is close to the people of Israel, as Yahweh appears to the people of Israel face to face. This means that Yahweh appears to Moses and the people of Israel as a visible, powerful light. Yahweh's cloud hovers over Israel, and Yahweh leads Israel in the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. Moses tells Yahweh that if Yahweh kills all the people of Israel suddenly in one stroke, these nations that have already heard of the great miracles that Yahweh did in Egypt will say that Yahweh killed the people of Israel in the wilderness because Yahweh was not able to bring them into the land of Canaan as Yahweh had promised. Moses is telling Yahweh that destroying the people of Israel will ruin Yahweh's great reputation among the nations.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell stories of people in your culture who have a great reputation for being heroes. What does this reputation mean to the heroes, to the community, and to the enemies of the community? How does your community and your enemies treat a hero whose reputation has been damaged? Pause this audio here.

Moses first asks Yahweh to consider Yahweh's own reputation among the nations, and then, because Yahweh cares for Yahweh's reputation, Moses asks Yahweh to show Yahweh's great power. When Moses asks Yahweh to show his great power, Moses calls Yahweh by a name that means Lord or Master, not by his personal name Yahweh. Moses wants Yahweh to show his great power by forgiving the people of Israel, so Moses reminds Yahweh what Yahweh has previously said about himself: "I am Yahweh, I do not quickly become angry. I show loyal love and I forgive people who sin and rebel against me, yet I do not cancel the punishment. I punish the

children and even the third and fourth generations for the sins that their parents did." This means that Yahweh does not quickly become angry. Yahweh's love is sure and reliable. Because of this, Yahweh takes away the guilt of those who are guilty of sin and rebellion, but Yahweh does not leave them unpunished. The punishment that Yahweh gives can affect the children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren of those who sin. Moses is reminding Yahweh that Yahweh himself said these things about who Yahweh is. Moses reminds Yahweh that since the people of Israel left Egypt, Yahweh has forgiven them, because Yahweh is faithful and loyal. Moses is asking Yahweh to forgive the people of Israel based on Yahweh's covenant loyalty. A covenant is a strong promise. Yahweh made a covenant with Abraham and Abraham's descendants, the Israelites. Yahweh promised that Yahweh would bless the Israelites and give them their own land, and the Israelites promised that they would always trust God and obey him. Moses is asking Yahweh to keep Yahweh's covenant relationship with the people of Israel because Yahweh's covenant love is unfailing.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell stories of people who have been affected by things their ancestors did. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh replies to Moses, "Your prayer is answered, and I have forgiven them." However, Yahweh swears by an oath that although he has forgiven the people, nevertheless none of the people who have seen Yahweh's glory and the mighty works that Yahweh did in Egypt and in the wilderness will see the land of Canaan. This means that they will not enter the land of Canaan to possess it. Yahweh says that these people will not enter the land of Canaan because, although they saw the presence of Yahweh, they refused to listen to Yahweh's voice and they doubted and provoked Yahweh ten times. Because they despised Yahweh in this way, Yahweh makes a promise that those who rejected Yahweh shall not see the land. Yahweh makes this promise by an oath, saying, "As surely as I live and as surely as my presence fills the earth...." But to Caleb, Yahweh makes a different promise, because Caleb is different from the others. Caleb has a different heart. Caleb did not reject Yahweh, but remained loyal to Yahweh. Yahweh calls Caleb "my servant." Yahweh promises Caleb that Caleb will see the land and that Caleb's descendants shall possess the land. Yahweh does not mean that only Caleb and Caleb's descendants will receive the promise. Yahweh is showing the difference between Caleb's loyalty to Yahweh and the peoples of Israel's rejection of Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you make oaths in your culture? What are the consequences for breaking an oath? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses that the Amalekites and the Canaanites are living in the valleys, and Yahweh instructs the Israelites to turn around the following day and travel south through the wilderness, back toward the Red Sea. Yahweh gives this command because Yahweh promised that none of those people who doubted Yahweh would enter the land of Canaan. This is how Yahweh punished these people.

Stop here as a group and look at a map of the Israelites' journey.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 14:11–25 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: Yahweh appears as a powerful light at the tent of meeting and tells Moses that Yahweh will destroy the people of Israel because they have rejected Yahweh.

In the second scene: Moses pleads with Yahweh and gives Yahweh two reasons why Yahweh should not destroy the people of Israel.

In the third scene: Yahweh hears Moses's prayer for the people and gives Moses directions for travel.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- The people of Israel and their fathers and descendants
- The people of Egypt
- Caleb and Caleb's descendants
- The Canaanites and Amalekites

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

In the first scene Yahweh speaks to Moses at the tent of meeting. It is important to show the connection between the actions of the people of Israel in the last passage with the sudden appearance of Yahweh and his conversation with Moses in this passage. In the last passage, the people of Israel had picked up stones to stone the leaders that Yahweh had given them. Suddenly, Yahweh had appeared as a powerful light at the tent of meeting, and all the people of Israel had seen the glory of Yahweh.

Stop here and visualise that scene. Discuss how the sudden appearance of Yahweh would have affected the people of Israel. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh speaks to Moses. Yahweh asks Moses how long the people of Israel will go on despising Yahweh. The people had despised Yahweh by rejecting Yahweh and his covenant with Israel. Yahweh refers to all the people of Israel as one person by calling them "this" people. Yahweh also asks Moses how long the people will go on doubting Yahweh. Yahweh says that the people of Israel refused to believe Yahweh in spite of all the signs that Yahweh had done among the people. A sign is a thing that points to someone or something beyond itself. In this case the signs are the miracles that Yahweh has been doing for the people of Israel from the day Yahweh brought the Israelites out of Egypt. In the two questions that Yahweh asks Moses, the phrase "how long" does not mean that Yahweh is asking Moses for a length of time. When Yahweh asks how long, Yahweh is saying that the people of Israel have become completely rebellious. Yahweh does not expect Moses to answer these questions. Yahweh is using the questions to make a statement. Yahweh now tells Moses what Yahweh has decided to do about the people's rejection of Yahweh.

Stop here and tell stories of people who have rejected the wisdom of your community again and again, or tell stories of children who have disobeyed their parents in many ways. How do you speak about the behavior of these people when it has become too much to bear? Pause audio here.

It is important to show the connection between the two questions that Yahweh asks Moses and what Yahweh says Yahweh is going to do to the people of Israel. Yahweh tells Moses that because the people of Israel rebelled completely, Yahweh will strike the Israelites with pestilence. Pestilence is a contagious disease or outbreak that spreads widely and is very deadly.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How will you make a connection between Yahweh's questions, which really show that the Israelites were rebellious, and Yahweh's punishment of that rebellion? Pause this audio here.

Although Yahweh does not say what the pestilence is, Yahweh says it in a way that suggests that Moses would have known what the pestilence was. Yahweh says that Yahweh will use the pestilence to dispossess the people of Israel. Yahweh means that Yahweh intends to destroy the people of Israel and give away the land that Yahweh had promised them. Yahweh tells Moses that after Yahweh has destroyed the people of Israel with the pestilence, Yahweh will make Moses a nation greater and mightier than the people of Israel. Yahweh means that Yahweh will destroy the people of Israel and will take from Israel the promises that Yahweh made to Abraham and instead transfer those promises to Moses and Moses's children.

Stop here and discuss as a group. What do you call it when someone is denied their inheritance? If that person does not get their inheritance, what happens to the possessions instead? Pause audio here.

In the second scene, Moses answers Yahweh and pleads for the life of the people of Israel. Moses tells Yahweh that the Egyptians will hear that Yahweh has killed Yahweh's own people—the same people that Yahweh had himself brought out from the midst of the Egyptians by Yahweh's great power. Moses pleads with Yahweh and

says that if the Egyptians hear that Yahweh has killed Yahweh's own people, the Egyptians will then tell the story to the people of Canaan. Moses tells Yahweh that the Canaanites have already heard that Yahweh is close to Yahweh's people, since Yahweh's people see Yahweh face to face, Yahweh's cloud is over his people, and Yahweh goes before his people in the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night.

Stop here and discuss how you will talk about the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire. How will you show that these pillars represent Yahweh? Pay attention to the words you use to describe the pillars. Pause the audio here.

The people see Yahweh "face to face." This means that Yahweh has close contact with the people of Israel.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Talk about the person who your community considers to have the closest contact with God. How do you talk about this person's relationship with God? Pause the audio here.

Moses is begging Yahweh not to destroy the people of Israel. Moses wants Yahweh to consider what killing the people of Israel will do to Yahweh's great reputation among the Egyptians who saw Yahweh's power and among the Canaanites who have heard of it. Moses tells Yahweh that if Yahweh kills the people of Israel with one stroke suddenly, as if they were a single man, then the nations who have already heard of Yahweh's great power will say that Yahweh killed his people in the wilderness because Yahweh was powerless to bring them into the land of Canaan.

Stop here and as a group tell stories of a time when someone in your community suffered and people thought that the suffering was a sign that God was punishing that person. Pause the audio here.

Stop here and discuss how you would describe it if a large group of people was killed in one event. Pause the audio here.

Moses wants to protect Yahweh's reputation, but Moses also reminds Yahweh of the words that Yahweh had previously spoken about himself. When Moses asks Yahweh to show Yahweh's great power, Moses calls Yahweh by a name that means master. Moses repeats to Yahweh the words that Yahweh previously spoke to Moses. Yahweh spoke these words to Moses at the time when Yahweh came down in the cloud and gave Moses the second pair of stone tablets and proclaimed his name before Moses. The words that Yahweh spoke then are the same words that Moses now repeats to Yahweh: "I am Yahweh, I do not quickly become angry. I show love and I forgive people who sin and rebel against me, yet I do not cancel punishment. I punish the children and even the third and fourth generations for the sins that their parents did." These words show that Yahweh does not break Yahweh's covenant. Moses is telling Yahweh that it would be right to forgive the people of Israel because Yahweh's love is unfailing. Moses says that it is because of Yahweh's great love that Yahweh has kept the covenant with the people of Israel from the day they left Egypt. All this time, Yahweh has forgiven the Israelites and has not canceled the covenant by destroying them.

Stop here and as a group tell stories of people who have done wrong again and again. Tell about the people who have been hurt by these wrong actions. Tell how the people who were hurt by these actions chose to forgive the people who did wrong again and again. Tell also of when the people who have been wronged have refused to forgive. Pause the audio here.

Stop here and discuss how you will show the way Moses begs Yahweh to forgive the people of Israel. Think about how strongly Moses feels about what Moses is saying to Yahweh. Pause the audio here.

In the third scene, Yahweh answers Moses. Yahweh tells Moses that Yahweh has forgiven the people of Israel as Moses has requested. Yahweh makes an oath. Yahweh says that although Yahweh has forgiven the people of Israel, nevertheless, as surely as Yahweh lives, and as surely as Yahweh's presence fills the earth, none of the people of Israel whom Yahweh brought out of Egypt and who saw Yahweh's miracles and powerful light, and yet rejected Yahweh, will see the land of Canaan. Yahweh makes this oath to make Yahweh's words to the people more sure. There is no one higher than Yahweh who can punish Yahweh if Yahweh breaks this oath, so Yahweh makes this oath in Yahweh's own name, meaning that Yahweh will punish himself if Yahweh breaks this promise. Yahweh forgives the people, but Yahweh does not cancel the consequences for their peoples' rejection. Yahweh will still punish the people. That Yahweh forgives the people means that Yahweh did not cancel the covenant that Yahweh had made by oath with the peoples' ancestor Abraham.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your community make strong promises to each other? What would convince you that the person making a promise will not break it? Pause the audio here.

Yahweh said that Yahweh would punish the people because the people had put Yahweh "to the proof" ten times. Putting Yahweh to the proof means to test, challenge, or doubt Yahweh. Ten times may mean ten specific times or it might symbolize the completeness of their attitude. Yahweh said that the people had despised Yahweh by not listening to Yahweh's voice, but Yahweh said that Caleb would see the land of Canaan. Caleb had listened to Yahweh's voice by trusting and relying on Yahweh's ability to give the Israelites victory over the Canaanites. However, the people of Israel had feared going into the land and had not trusted in the power of Yahweh. It is important to show the contrast that Yahweh makes between the people who despised Yahweh and Caleb. Yahweh calls Caleb "my servant" and says that Caleb has a different spirit within Caleb and follows Yahweh fully. Yahweh means that Caleb has a different heart or attitude than the other people and is completely loyal to Yahweh. Because of this, Yahweh says that Yahweh will bring Caleb and Caleb's descendants into the land of Canaan and they shall inherit the land.

Stop here and discuss: How do you speak about people in your community who have a better attitude than others in difficult times? Pause the audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses that because the Amalekites and the Canaanites are living in the valleys, the people of Israel should turn around tomorrow and travel south through the wilderness, back toward the Red Sea.

Stop here and look at a map of the area. Trace with your fingers the journey that the people of Israel have made so far. As a group, discuss what you think about this journey. Pause audio here.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 14:11–25 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 people of Israel and their fathers and descendants
- The people of Egypt
- Caleb and Caleb's descendants
- The Canaanites and Amalekites

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, as the people are ready to stone their leaders, Yahweh suddenly appears as a powerful light.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I am very angry with these people. I have had enough of their disobedience," or, "The people have rejected me," or, "The people cry aloud with fear for their enemies. They do not remember that I am with them. Have they forgotten the great power that I have shown them?"

Yahweh speaks to Moses from the tent of meeting and says, "How much longer shall these people despise Me? How much longer will they refuse to believe Me?"

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel great anger and frustration," or, "I have been rejected by these people who have seen my power. They refuse to do as I command and make their own plans," or, "All the miracles I have performed for these people mean nothing to them. These people think I am powerless against the people of Canaan," or, "What else can I do to make these people trust me and follow me willingly?"

Yahweh says that Yahweh will send a pestilence to destroy these people and make Moses into a nation greater and stronger than the people.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I am thinking of destroying all these rebellious people. I will send a very bad sickness that will kill them all. The sickness that I send will spread through these people quickly, killing all of them and removing them from my sight," or, "Because these people have rejected me, I will also reject them. I will take away my promises from them. These people shall not inherit the things that I promised to Abraham. These people shall all die as one man, and Moses will take their place," or, "Moses will follow me and teach his children to follow me. I will give to Moses and to Moses's children the land of promise."

In the second scene, Moses replies to Yahweh. Moses tells Yahweh that if Yahweh destroys the people of Israel, the people of Egypt will hear of it and the people of Egypt will tell the people of Canaan.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I am very afraid of the anger of Yahweh. Surely Yahweh can destroy all these people in a moment. How terrible it would be if Yahweh turned his great power against his own people," or, "The name of Yahweh will be ruined amongst the nations if Yahweh destroys his own people," or, "Yahweh himself brought these people from the midst of Egypt with great power and mighty acts. What will the Egyptians say about Yahweh if they hear that Yahweh has destroyed his people?" or, "The Egyptians will rejoice about this news. They will spread this news around to other people, mocking the name of Yahweh. They will bring the news to the people of the land of Canaan, and it will be good news to the ears of the Canaanites," or, "My heart is broken at the thought of Yahweh destroying his people. I am very sad. Tears fill my eyes," or, "I will beg Yahweh. I will plead with Yahweh. Maybe Yahweh will hear my cries and change his mind."

Moses tells Yahweh that the Canaanites have already heard that Yahweh is close to Yahweh's people, since Yahweh's people see Yahweh face to face, Yahweh's cloud is over his people, and Yahweh goes before his people in the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Canaanites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "We are very terrified of the people of Israel," or, "We have heard fearful things about what the Israelites' God, Yahweh, did to the Egyptians, and now the Israelites are coming to us."

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel great sorrow; my heart aches. This great story of the people of Israel has come to a great disaster. The

Canaanites, who heard that our Yahweh was amongst us and in our midst protecting us, will now hear that Yahweh has destroyed us," or, "Yahweh has been so close to us. Such a thing has never been heard of. Yahweh went before us, leading us with the pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. Yahweh's cloud shepherded us and hovered over us, and now we have made Yahweh angry," or, "The reputation of Yahweh will change from our protector to our destroyer, and the Canaanites will dance a great dance."

Moses tells Yahweh that if Yahweh destroys all the people of Israel with one strike, the nations who have already heard of Yahweh's power will hear the news and they will say that Yahweh was not able to bring his people into the land of Canaan, therefore Yahweh killed his people in the wilderness.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Egyptians, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel very happy. I want the people of Israel to be destroyed," or, "I hate the people of Israel and Yahweh. I would be glad if something bad happened to them in the wilderness," or, "The Israelites people thought that they could leave Egypt and go to a better land. If they all die in the wilderness, it will show how wrong they were," or, "It was foolish of the Israelites to leave Egypt. It was foolish of them to trust Yahweh. The Israelites should have remained in Egypt and served us."

Ask the person playing the Canaanites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "The desert was too much for the Israelites. They could not get to Canaan," or, "We had heard fearful news about these people, the Israelites. We were terrified of Yahweh. We thought that Yahweh would destroy us and give the Israelites our land, but Yahweh could not do it," or, "This is good news to us. We rejoice."

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I am worried that Yahweh will destroy all these people suddenly. We shall be as if we had never existed," or, "Those nations that feared Yahweh when they heard of the things that Yahweh has done for us will not understand. They will dishonor Yahweh and speak mocking words. All their fear of Yahweh will be taken away, and they will rejoice in their gods of wood and stone," or, "The people of Canaan will think that their gods are stronger than Yahweh. They will imagine that Yahweh could not fight against their gods. They will not understand that Yahweh was angry with us for our disobedience."

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "Moses cares for my name. I am pleased that Moses pleads for the people for the sake of my reputation," or, "My honor is important. I must not allow the nations to dishonor me. My reputation is indeed connected to the welfare of these people since I have been in their midst. All who see the Israelites know that they are my possession and that I lead them," or, "I am greatly moved by the tears of Moses."

Moses begs Yahweh to show Yahweh's great power by revealing once again Yahweh's heart of mercy and forgiveness. Moses reminds Yahweh that Yahweh had earlier said, "I am Yahweh, I do not quickly become angry. I show love and I forgive people who sin and rebel against Me, yet I do not cancel all punishment. I punish the children and even the third and fourth generations for the sins that their parents did."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I know that Yahweh is full of love and that his love never fails. Yahweh does not break covenant or go back on his promises. I am encouraged by Yahweh's character, that it is possible for Yahweh to keep these people alive and to give them the promises," or, "I remember the words that Yahweh said and they give me great hope and reason to beg Yahweh to forgive us," or, "Although Yahweh said that Yahweh does not cancel all punishment, and that Yahweh's punishment can reach to future generations of those who sin, I know that Yahweh will not break his covenant with his people. I will beg Yahweh to remember this and to keep this people alive."

Moses asks Yahweh to forgive the sins of the people because Yahweh's faithfulness is so great and because Yahweh has forgiven them their many sins from the day they left Egypt.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "Our only hope is in Yahweh's faithfulness. His loyalty does not fail. We cannot rely on ourselves, for we have been unfaithful many times," or, "Yahweh does not change. Yahweh has been faithful, and I trust that he will continue

to be faithful," or, "I am encouraged. My heart is warmed when I think of the faithfulness of Yahweh. Hope fills my heart, and I feel courageous to ask Yahweh to forgive us."

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel very pleased. I am happy that my servant Moses understands me. Moses knows that I keep my covenant and will never break it," or, "The words of Moses are good to my ears. My loyalty is guaranteed. I keep my word," or, "Moses is wise to place his hope in me."

In the third scene, Yahweh answers Moses. Yahweh tells Moses that Yahweh has forgiven the people, just as Moses had asked.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I have forgiven. I will not break my covenant with these people by sending the plague," or, "I will keep them alive," or, "My name shall not be brought to ruin by destroying these people, and I will not break my faithfulness to them. As I have been with them, so shall I continue to be."

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel great relief and joy. I praise Yahweh with all my heart, for Yahweh has heard my cries."

Yahweh makes an oath that although Yahweh has forgiven the people, nevertheless none of those people who saw Yahweh's glory and miracles in Egypt and in the wilderness, and yet still doubted Yahweh and tested him many times, will see the land of Canaan. Because they treated Yahweh as if Yahweh had no power, Yahweh will not let these people see the land that Yahweh had promised to their ancestors.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "Yahweh is true to his word. Yahweh has kept his covenant with the people, but Yahweh also punished the people for their sin," or, "The people deserve far worse. If it was not for the loyalty that Yahweh has shown, the people would all be lying dead in the wilderness," or, "What a sad thing it is that these people came so close to the land of promise but refused to enter it. Now they shall never see it, as Yahweh has said. Yahweh has guaranteed it by oath that they shall never see the land of promise."

Yahweh separates Caleb from the rest of the people. Yahweh says that Yahweh will bring Caleb and Caleb's descendants to the land and give them an inheritance, because Caleb has had a different attitude to the rest of the people and has followed Yahweh loyally.

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 Caleb. Caleb has been loyal to me, and I will be loyal to him," or, "I am showing the people that I make a distinction between the guilty and the innocent," or, "Caleb and Caleb's descendants shall eat the fruit of Caleb's obedience just as the disobedient and their descendants shall eat the fruit of their disobedience."

Yahweh tells Moses that because the Amalekites and the Canaanites are living in the valleys, the people of Israel should turn around the next day and travel south through the wilderness, back toward the Red Sea.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "We are going back in the direction we came from," or, "We are going backwards instead of forward," or, "The Amalekites and the Canaanites will remain in possession of the valleys that we would be taking if only the people had listened to the voice of Yahweh."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 14:11-25 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 used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh says to Moses, "How long will this people **despise** me?" To despise means to reject or disbelieve.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **despise**. Use the same word or phrase for despise that you used in previous passages. Pause the audio here.

Yahweh asks how long the people will refuse to **believe** in him in spite of all the signs Yahweh has performed among the people. When Yahweh says that the people refused to believe him, Yahweh means that the people refused to place their trust in Yahweh and rely on him. If you believe in someone or have faith, you believe that what that person says about themself is true. You then trust that person and are committed to do what that person tells you to do.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **believe**. Look up belief 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 **sign** is something unusual that happens for a special reason. Yahweh showed his power many times in Egypt and in the wilderness to show the people of Israel that they can trust him.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **sign**. Look up sign 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 says that he will **strike** the people of Israel with pestilence and dispossess them. When Yahweh says that he will strike the people, Yahweh means that he will kill the people all together at the same time.

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

Pestilence is another word for plague, which is a contagious disease that is very deadly and destructive. Use the same word or phrase for pestilence or plague that you used in previous passages.

Moses begs Yahweh and says, "Let the power of the Lord/Adonai be great just as You have promised." **Adonai** is the Hebrew word for Lord, master or sir. For more information on Adonai and Lord, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses asks Yahweh to forgive the people by reminding Yahweh that Yahweh had previously spoken about himself and his character when he said, "I am Yahweh, I do not quickly become angry. I show steadfast love and I forgive iniquity and transgression, but I do not cancel all punishment. I punish the children and even the third and fourth generations for the sins that their parents did." Steadfast love refers to the loyal love of Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **steadfast love**. Look up steadfast love 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.

Iniquity means sin and the guilt that comes with wicked behavior. The word iniquity can be translated the same way as sin.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **iniquity**. Use the same word or phrase for iniquity that you used in previous passages. For more information on sin, refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

Transgression refers to an act of disobedience. Sin is transgression. The word transgression can be translated the same way as sin.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **transgression**. Use the same word or phrase for transgression that you used in previous passages. For more information on sin, refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh says that he will **forgive**, or stop being angry, with the Israelites.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **forgive**. Use the same word or phrase for forgive that you used in previous passages. For more information on forgiveness, refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh hears Moses's prayer and forgives the people of Israel. Yahweh also says that all the earth shall be filled with the glory of Yahweh.

The **glory** of Yahweh refers to the presence of Yahweh. Use the same word or phrase for glory that you used in previous passages. For more information on glory, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh says that none of the people who have seen Yahweh's glory and the mighty works that Yahweh did in Egypt and in the **wilderness** will see the land of Canaan, because although they saw the presence of Yahweh, they refused to listen to his voice and tested Yahweh ten times. Wilderness refers to a lonely, dry place without water. People do not live in the wilderness. Use the same word that you have been using for wilderness, and for more information about this word, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh says that the people will not see the land that Yahweh swore to their ancestors by **oath** because they had despised Yahweh. An oath is made to make a promise more sure. Yahweh sometimes makes an oath by himself because there is no one higher than Yahweh. Use the same word that you have been using for oath, and for more information about this word, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh says that Yahweh will bring Caleb and Caleb's descendants into the land of promise because Caleb has a different spirit and has remained loyal to Yahweh. Yahweh tells Moses that the Amalekites and the Canaanites are living in the valleys, and Yahweh instructs Moses to turn around the following day and travel south through the wilderness, back toward the Red Sea.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 14:11-25

Audio Content

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Numbers 14:26–38

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 14:26–38 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This story is a continuation of the conversation between Yahweh and Moses, in Kadesh Barnea, regarding the people's rejection of Yahweh. Yahweh wanted to punish Israel by killing them all except Moses, but Moses pleaded with Yahweh to be merciful to Israel. Yahweh chose not to kill everyone immediately, and he forgave Israel. However, Yahweh swore an oath that the people over 20 years old who had not obeyed him would not enter the promised land.

Stop here and look at a map of Kadesh Barnea in the wilderness of Paran as a group. Pause this audio here.

After Yahweh swears this oath, he asks Moses and Aaron a question without wanting an answer: "How long must I forgive this wicked congregation that is grumbling against me?" This question shows Yahweh's frustration and loss of patience with Israel's disobedience and how the Israelites were treating him. Since leaving Egypt, the Israelites continually complained about the hardships of living in the wilderness, and they disobeyed Yahweh's commands by not moving forward into the promised land.

Yahweh reminds Moses and Aaron that he had heard the Israelites say that it would be better for them to die in the wilderness rather than die in battle conquering the land. The Israelites were grumbling, or complaining because the spies brought back a bad report about the land.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Talk about a time when you complained against God or others complained against your culture's gods. Pause this audio here.

Now, Yahweh instructs Moses and Aaron to deliver a message to Israel. Yahweh begins by saying, "As surely as I live," which was a common way for people to make an oath in ancient times. When someone made an oath they would raise their right hand and take the oath on the life of Yahweh or someone in authority. Yahweh, or the person in authority, could then punish the person if the person did not do what he said he would do. Here, Yahweh makes an oath and he guarantees that he will do what he says.

Stop here and discuss these questions as a group: What are some traditions your cultures have when people swear an oath? What sort of things do people make an oath about? What words do people say to show how strongly they are promising something? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Israel through Moses and Aaron that he has heard them complain and want to die in the wilderness rather than die in battle against the people of Canaan. Yahweh says that as Israel wants to die in the wilderness instead of in battle, he is giving them their desire and they will die in the wilderness in the next forty years.

Yahweh had told Moses and Aaron to take a census of all the Israelite men, except the men of the tribe of Levi, who were twenty years old and upward. The census was to count and register all the able-bodied soldiers for military service. Now, Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron that all the people on the census will die within the next forty years. This means the census is now a list of all the people who are condemned to die in the wilderness and will never live in the promised land. However, Yahweh declares that Caleb and Joshua will not die because they obeyed Yahweh.

Caleb and Joshua were the only explorers who believed that Yahweh would help them conquer the nations who lived in the promised land, Canaan. Joshua and Caleb's trust pleased Yahweh.

Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron that everyone twenty years old and upward will die. The Israelites were afraid their children would be captured and taken as prisoners. Yahweh now tells Moses and Aaron that those children would have to suffer the consequences of their parent's disobedience, by living as shepherds in the wilderness for forty years. Yahweh says that those children will come back to the land in forty years and that Yahweh will then give them the land. Yahweh also says that the land that Israel has just rejected will eventually be their children's home and that they will "know it," meaning that they will enjoy it, experience it, and live in it.

Yahweh declares that the people of Israel will bear their iniquity, or suffer the consequences of their sins. Israel will wander in the wilderness for forty years, one year for every day the twelve leaders went to explore the promised land.

By rejecting Yahweh, the people are also rejecting Yahweh's land, which he swore to give to them. When people enter the promised land, they will be obeying Yahweh, and the children will obey Yahweh when they arrive at the promised land. Yahweh repeats to Israel that they will not enter the land but their children will inherit Canaan.

Then, ten of the explorers died from a plague, and only Joshua and Caleb remained alive. The narrator repeats the phrase, "the ten men who brought back a false and evil report." This emphasis is important as it highlights the two sins of the ten men. The first sin was that they brought back a false report of the promised land, and the second sin was that their report caused Israel to complain against and disobey Yahweh. This explains why Yahweh judged them immediately and killed them by plague. The story does not say what the plague is, but we do know that plagues in the Bible are always a sign of Yahweh's judgment. Joshua and Caleb are the only explorers who did not die from the plague because they gave a good report of the land and encouraged Israel to obey Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss these questions as a group: Tell a story of how someone did something evil and someone in authority judged him. Why is it important for people in authority to judge evil people? What are some forms of judgment in your culture? In your culture, who decides what the final judgment will be? Why is this person or group of people allowed to judge others when they do wrong? Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 14:26–38 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 tells Moses and Aaron of the punishment that all of Israel will suffer because of their rebellion and grumbling towards Yahweh. The punishment is that Israel will wander in the desert for forty years and that everyone over the age of 20 will die, except Joshua and Caleb.

In the second scene: Yahweh brings a plague to the ten explorers who brought a bad report of the land, and the ten men die. Out of the twelve explorers, only Joshua and Caleb stay alive.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- Congregation, or people, of Israel
- Children or descendants of the congregation of Israel
- 10 explorers
- Joshua son of Nun
- And Caleb son of Jephunneh

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

It is important to remember that Yahweh is speaking directly to Moses and Aaron. Yahweh is not speaking to all of Israel.

In the first scene, Yahweh asks Moses and Aaron a question he does not want them to answer: "How long shall this evil congregation complain against me?" Yahweh asks this question to show his frustration with the Israelites. Moses and Aaron did not ask Israel the first question Yahweh asked them, because Yahweh did not tell them to ask Israel that question.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How does your language ask questions that do not require an answer? If you want to show your frustration about a group of people, how would you do that? Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: The Israelites were grumbling, or complaining together, about Yahweh. Tell a story about when a group of people was complaining together about someone. Pay attention to how you describe their complaining. How will you describe the Israelites' complaining? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh then tells Moses and Aaron, "Say to them, declares Yahweh, what you have said in my hearing I will do to you." This is the start of the message that Moses and Aaron should then tell Israel. Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron that he is declaring an important message. At the end of his message, Yahweh emphasizes that he is the one giving the message. Yahweh does this by saying again, "I Yahweh, have spoken." This message is not from Moses or Aaron. Moses and Aaron are just passing Yahweh's message to Israel. Yahweh wants his people to know that this is an important message, and that is why Yahweh emphasizes that he is the one speaking the message. And lastly, in this story, Yahweh repeats what He says several times, to make sure Israel knows that the punishment will certainly happen.

Yahweh uses the phrase, "Their bodies will fall in the wilderness," to describe a picture of how the Israelites are going to be dying in the wilderness. The bodies falling means that the people are dying.

Yahweh tells Israel that their children will suffer and pay the penalty of Israel's unfaithfulness to not take the land of Canaan. They will wander in the wilderness like shepherds. Yahweh is comparing the children wandering to that of a shepherd and his sheep wandering in the wilderness. Yahweh uses a word for unfaithfulness that compares Israel's unfaithfulness to sexual prostitution or sexual immorality. They were unfaithful to Yahweh in the same way that an adulterous spouse is unfaithful to their husband or wife. In this context, unfaithfulness does not mean that the people did not believe in Yahweh. Rather, it means that the

people were rebellious or betrayed Yahweh by caring about their own comfort more than Yahweh's instructions. You may say that the Israelites betrayed Yahweh when they did not take the land of Canaan.

The passage contrasts how the children will know and experience the land after wandering in the wilderness. Here "know" means to experience something to the fullest, so whilst the children will experience the good land, the rebellious and disobedient adults will experience Yahweh's displeasure and frustration as they walk in circles in the wilderness for forty years for their punishment.

Yahweh says, "I, Yahweh, have spoken. Surely this will I do," and repeats the oath that the congregation of Israel will die. This is Yahweh emphasizing that the message is from Him and that all of it will happen. Yahweh makes it clear that what he is saying will happen, it is not changeable.

Remember that at the start of the first scene, Yahweh asks Moses and Aaron a question, but He does not tell this to the Israelites. Yahweh asks, "How long shall this evil congregation complain against me? I have heard the complaining of the Israelites against me." Now at the end of the first scene, Yahweh says the same thing, but to all of Israel. Yahweh says, "Surely, this I will do to all this wicked congregation who are gathered together against me." Now, the Israelites know exactly what Yahweh thinks of them since they disobeyed because Yahweh calls them "an evil congregation or community," not a holy congregation.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story of a time when someone made it clear that they will definitely do what they say they will do. How do you know that the person will definitely do the action that they say they will do? What words do they use or what tone of voice do they use to show you? Pause this audio here.

In the second scene, Moses explains who the ten evil explorers were twice, to ensure everyone knows who the ten men were, and then the narrator says that the ten men died by plague before Yahweh. When something happens "before Yahweh," it means that the thing happens because Yahweh wants it to happen.

Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun are mentioned twice in this story. Yahweh tells the Israelites that Caleb and Joshua will not die but that they will live in the promised land after the forty years that they wander in the wilderness. Then the narrator finishes the story by saying, "Of those men who went to spy out the land, only Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh remained alive." So then everyone remembers Yahweh's promise to keep Caleb and Joshua alive.

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 Numbers 14:26-38 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
- Aaron
- Congregation, or people of Israel
- Children or descendants of the congregation of Israel
- 10 explorers
- Joshua son of Nun
- And Caleb son of Jephunneh

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 asks Moses and Aaron a question about how long Yahweh should have patience with Israel complaining against Yahweh.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I am sad that Israel does not trust me," or "Why does Israel not trust me to settle them in the promised land? I want to give them something good, and I am powerful enough to settle them in the promised land," or "I am angry that Israel just complains to me. They are ungrateful."

Yahweh says that He has heard the complaints of Israel and what they wish for, so He will do to them as they wish.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I feel righteously angry, and I need to discipline Israel for their complaining," or "Does Israel not think I can hear everything they are saying and that I know what they are thinking against me?" or "I am giving them exactly what they wanted in suffering in the wilderness because they did not want the promised land I wanted for them."

Yahweh pronounces the judgment against Israel that everyone in the census over the age of twenty will die as they wander in the wilderness for forty years, but their children will inherit the promised land.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I am sad that the census meant for battles is now a census of all the people who are going to die," or "I am sad that this generation will not get to experience the promised land," or "I know that after forty years their children will want the promised land, and they will enter it, conquer it and live in it," or "Their children will have an opportunity to enter the promised land; I have not given up on Israel," or "It is a just punishment, they are suffering one year for every day they spied out the land. The punishment will not last forever, then the younger generation will be given another opportunity."

Ask the people playing the congregation of Israel, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like, "I regret complaining against Yahweh," or "I feel despair because now I know I am never going to go into the promised land, I am going to live in the wilderness for the rest of my life, and me, my older family and friends are all going to die in the next forty years," or "I feel the urgent need to teach my children to trust Yahweh and not complain against Him so they do not make the same terrible mistake as I have done when they reach the promised land in forty years."

Yahweh sent a plague to ten of the spies who had brought an evil report of the land. These ten explorers die. But the two explorers, Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who brought a good report, do not die.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I am angry with these ten explorers because they lied about the promised land and me, and they have made all of

Israel sin," or "I do not want these explorers to continue to influence the Israelites badly," or "I am pleased with Joshua and Caleb because they did their job properly and have reported the truth about the land, and they confronted Israel in their wrong thinking."

Ask the two people playing Joshua and Caleb, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The two people might answer things like, "I am angry and frustrated with Israel that I now have to suffer for forty years in the wilderness even though I wanted to enter the land," or "I am so grateful to Yahweh that he has been just in his punishment and I am still alive," or "I am so grateful to Yahweh that he promises to bring me back in forty years, and in forty years I will enter the promised land," or "The promised land was so beautiful and good, I am excited and looking forward to coming back here with my children and grandchildren in forty years to show it to them and to live here with them."

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I am weary of all the pain that Israel has caused in my life," or "I am angry with Israel that we now all are going to suffer because they did not obey Yahweh," or "Why have they forgotten all of what He has done for us?" or "I regret sending those ten explorers out to explore the land," or "I never imagined that the ten explorers would cause Israel to sin, that Israel would sin like this or that the ten explorers would die."

This is the end of the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 14:26–38 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Yahweh speaks directly to Moses and Aaron for most of this story. Yahweh asks Moses a question he does not expect him to answer: "How long shall this **evil** congregation grumble against me?"

Yahweh is God. Yahweh is the name of God. Use the same word or phrase for Yahweh as you used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

Evil refers to acts, intentions, or forces that are morally or spiritually corrupt, wicked, or harmful and that are in opposition to principles of goodness and righteousness.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **evil**. Look up evil 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 "congregation of Israel" was the entire community of **Israelites**. The Israelites were one people group who were gathered around the idea of worshiping Yahweh together. Use the same word or phrase for congregation or community and Israelites as you used in previous passages. See the Master Glossary for more information about Israelites if needed.

Yahweh promises Israel that all their **corpses** will fall in the **wilderness**, meaning that everyone listed in the census who grumbled against Yahweh will not enter the land that Yahweh swore Israel would dwell in. A corpse is a dead body.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **corpses**. 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 **wilderness** is a barren desert where nothing grows and no one lives. Use the same word or phrase for wilderness as you used in previous passages. For more information on wilderness, refer to the Master Glossary.

If needed, stop here and look at a picture of wilderness as a group. Pause this audio here.

A **census** is a written official record of numbers of people and groups of people in one area or people group. Use the same word or phrase for census as you used in previous passages.

Swore means to have promised or made an **oath**. Use the same word or phrase for swore as you used in previous passages. Look up oath in the Master Glossary for more information.

Israel had complained to Yahweh that their **little ones** would be the **prey or plunder** for the other nations in the promised land, but here, Yahweh says that their little ones would not be the slaves or war plunder for the other nations in the promised land. Instead, their little ones would enjoy the land that Israel rejected.

"Little ones" means children. Use the same word or phrase for little ones or for children as you used in previous passages.

Prey or plunder means valuables such as things, places, or people taken from an enemy in war.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **prey or plunder**. 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, "Your children shall be **shepherds** in the wilderness forty years and shall suffer for your **unfaithfulness** until the last of your corpses is **consumed** in the wilderness."

Shepherds are persons who care for sheep.

Stop here and look at a picture of shepherds as a group. Discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **shepherds**. Look up shepherds 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 children will suffer for the Israelites' **unfaithfulness**. In this passage, unfaithfulness is the word in the original language for having sexual relations with someone other than your husband or wife. Yahweh was showing the Israelites that they were unfaithful to him like someone who has sexual relations outside marriage is unfaithful to their husband or wife. Therefore, it refers to being rebellious or betraying Yahweh. You may use a word that means rebellion or betrayal, or you may keep the idea of sexual immorality.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **unfaithfulness** in this passage. 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 this story **consumed** means to die, but it also means to waste away, to perish, and to be destroyed.

Israel will wander in the wilderness for forty years—one year for every day of the forty days that the twelve **explorers** spied or explored on the land. Use the same word or phrase for explorers, and spied or explored as you used in previous passages.

Israel will have to **bear** their **iniquity** for forty years. Bear in this context means to endure and to suffer the consequences. Iniquity means sin or guilt, the evil actions that go against Yahweh's law and moral standards. You may say that the Israelites will have to suffer for their **sins** or for the guilt or punishment that comes from their sins. If you use the word for sins, use the same word for sins that you have used in previous passages, and remember that sin is in the Master Glossary.

A **plague** is an epidemic disease which causes a lot of death. Use the same word or phrase for plague as you used in previous passages.

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 14:26–38 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.

Numbers 14:26-38

Audio Content

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Numbers 14:39-45

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 14:39–45 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 14:39–45 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 14:39–45 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Yahweh spoke to Moses and Aaron to judge the people of Israel for not trusting that he would help them conquer the tribes that lived in the land that he had promised to them. Yahweh had said that the adult Israelites will die in the wilderness, without entering the promised land, while their children will inherit the land following forty years of wandering. This passage turns now to the reaction of the Israelites when they hear this news. The Israelites will now experience Yahweh's judgement and the consequences of their rebellion. They are still camped in Kadesh-Barnea in the wilderness of Paran.

Stop here and look at a map of the Sinai Peninsula. Remind yourselves of the journey that the people of Israel took from Mount Sinai to Kadesh-Barnea. Pause this audio here.

As Yahweh instructed him, Moses tells the Israelites Yahweh's words about how they will be punished for their disobedience and lack of faith. The Israelites "mourned greatly" when they heard this news. This means here that they are very sad about this bad news and they show this sadness openly. The way they show this sadness would be similar to how they would show great sadness when someone died. People around them would be able to see and hear that they were very sad. In this culture when people "mourned" in this way in response to some bad news, they believed that in doing so they might be able to stop the bad thing from happening. They may have thought that by showing their sorrow and regret in this way, they could change Yahweh's mind about his judgement.

Stop here. As a group, tell stories about times that people have shown great sadness or sorrow when something terrible has happened. In your culture, how do people show such sorrow? Describe their behaviour and actions. Pause this audio here.

The Israelites got up early in the morning in order to go to the highest point in the hill country in Canaan, or the promised land, where the enemy tribes were living, and to capture the land.

Stop here and look at a map including Kadesh-Barnea, the surrounding area, and the hill country in Canaan. Pause this audio here.

The Israelites who decided to go into Canaan come to Moses and say, "Here we are," showing that they are prepared and ready to invade the land. These Israelites admit that they have sinned by not trusting Yahweh to help them conquer the land. They say that they are now ready to go and capture the land Yahweh has promised them. This is the same day in the morning, after Yahweh had commanded them to go back into the wilderness in the opposite direction to the promised land. The Israelites are again disobeying Yahweh. They do not realise how serious Yahweh's punishment is, or how badly they have sinned. First, Yahweh promised them the land, but they did not trust in his power to conquer it. Now, they also ignore his oath or promise that they would not enter the land. They think that they can fix their sin of not trusting and obeying Yahweh by disobeying Yahweh again.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group. Tell stories about a time you or someone you know did something wrong, then tried to go back and undo or fix what you or they had done. What were the consequences? Were you or they able to completely fix the wrong that had been done? Pause the audio here.

Moses asks the Israelites a question that he is not expecting them to answer: "Why are you disobeying Yahweh's orders to return to the wilderness?" In asking this question, Moses is reminding them that they would be disobeying Yahweh if they now go and try to capture the land. Moses warns the Israelites that their plan will not work. He tells them not to "go up" into the land now because Yahweh will not "be with" them and they will be "struck down before their enemies." To "go up" into the land means to go north. When Moses says that Yahweh will not be with them, he means that Yahweh will not come with the people to protect them. To be "struck down" before their enemies means that their enemies will defeat them in battle.

Moses tells the Israelites in more detail that when the Israelites face the enemy tribes, the Amalekites and the Canaanites, the Israelites will "fall by the sword." To fall by the sword is a way of saying to die in battle. Moses tells them that because they "turned back from following Yahweh, Yahweh will not be with" them. Here, "turned

back from following" means that they stopped following and refused to obey Yahweh. Since the Israelites abandoned Yahweh, Moses is saying that Yahweh will abandon them.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell stories about a time a leader warned someone or a group of people not to do something, but they did it anyway. What happened to them? Pause this audio here.

The Israelites do not listen to or obey Moses' strong warning, and they go north into the hill country to attack the enemy tribes. You may remember that in previous passages, we heard that the Amalekites and Canaanites were living in the valleys, or in the Negev and by the sea. They did not seem to live in the hill country. Perhaps these tribes were roaming and living in different places, or perhaps Moses said "hill country" generally to mean the land to the north of them.

Stop here and look at a map of ancient Canaan, with Kadesh-Barnea, the hill country, and the Negev land clearly marked. Notice that the Negev is by the sea, and how the Negev leads into the hill country. Pause this audio here.

It was probably not all of the Israelites who left the camp. Some of the Israelites probably remained in the camp at Kadesh-Barnea. Moses did not go with them, and neither did the ark of the covenant. You will remember that the ark of the covenant is a wooden box containing the ten commandments. The Israelites believed that Yahweh was in the area above the ark, so the ark came to symbolise Yahweh's presence. Every time the Israelites would move on from their camp, members of the Levite tribe would carry the ark of the covenant before them. This time the ark of the covenant stayed in the camp. The fact that Moses and the ark of the covenant did not move from the camp shows that Yahweh was not with them.

Stop here and look at a picture of the ark of the covenant. Pause the audio here.

Also, stop here and tell stories about a tribe that defeated another tribe in battle. How did the attacking tribe defeat the other tribe? How did both sides act? Pause the audio here.

As Moses had warned, when the Israelites tried to capture the land, the enemy tribes who were living there, the Amalekites and the Canaanites, attacked and totally defeated the group of Israelites. The tribes chased them back to a town called Hormah. We do not know exactly where Hormah was located, but it was likely somewhere towards the north of the Negev, and in the south of Canaan.

Stop here and look at a map of the likely route taken by the group of Israelites from the camp at Kadesh-Barnea through the wilderness of Zin and the Negev land to the hill country in Canaan, and back to the likely location of Hormah.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 14:39–45 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 Israelites hear the news of their punishment and they mourn.

In the second scene: The Israelites get up early in the morning and decide to go to the hill country in Canaan to try to capture the land. Moses warns them not to go.

In the third scene: The Israelites ignore Moses and head north towards the hill country.

In the fourth scene: The Amalekites and the Canaanites defeat and chase the Israelites away.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- The Israelites
- The Israelites who try to capture the land
- The Amalekites
- The Canaanites
- Yahweh, represented by the ark of the covenant

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

This passage starts just after Yahweh has told Moses how Yahweh is going to punish the Israelites for not trusting that Yahweh could help them capture the promised land of Canaan. The Israelites did not hear Yahweh's conversation with Moses.

In the first scene, the action moves from Yahweh speaking to Moses, to Moses speaking to the Israelites. Moses now goes and speaks to the Israelites, and tells them about the oath or solemn promise Yahweh has made. Due to their disobedience, the Israelites will wander in the desert for forty years, and only their children will inherit the promised land. When the Israelites hear this, they "mourn greatly," meaning that they are deeply distressed about the bad news, and they express or show this openly in a way similar to when someone dies.

Stop here and discuss as a group: In the previous step, remember when you told stories about how people show great sadness in response to a terrible event? What words or phrases did you use to describe how people felt and how they showed this or responded to the bad news? Pause this audio here.

The order of events in the second scene may be difficult to explain. In this scene, the narrator first tells us that the Israelites woke up early in the morning and "went to the highest point in the hill country." The narrator then tells us about how the people admit their sin and declare that they will go to conquer the land. Finally the narrator tells us how Moses speaks to the Israelites and warns them not to go. We must be clear that Moses did not go up to the hill country to speak to the people there. The action takes place as follows: It is early in the morning after the night when Yahweh gives them his message. Some of the Israelites come to Moses and say, "here we are," showing how ready they now are to invade the land. In the original language, the phrase "here we are" would have shown how ready they were, both practically and emotionally, to go. They would have been physically prepared and dressed in the appropriate or correct way to try to defeat the enemy tribes, but also they are now emotionally very eager to go to battle. We could say something like "Look! Now we are ready!"

Stop here and discuss: Tell stories about when someone or a group of people was ready and excited to go on some long journey or even to go into battle. Pay attention to the language you use to describe the person or people's speech and behavior. Pause this audio here.

After this, the Israelites admit their sin of disobeying Yahweh and not trusting that he would help them in the first place, and they declare that they are now ready to "go up," or go north to the land Yahweh has promised them. Here Moses speaks for the first time in this story. Moses asks the question, "Why are you now disobeying Yahweh's word, or Yahweh's orders, when that will not work?" Moses is not expecting the Israelites to answer this question. Moses asks this question as a way to make it clear to the Israelites that if they do this, they will be disobeying Yahweh's order to return to the wilderness in the opposite direction. Moses also wants to tell them that they will fail if they try.

Stop here and discuss: How does your language ask questions that do not require an answer in order to make a strong point? In your language, how could you make a strong warning to somebody not to do something? Pause the audio here.

Moses now repeats his warning in the form of a command. Moses tells them directly not to go up, or go north, because Yahweh is not protecting them and they will be "struck down before their enemies." In other words, their enemies will defeat them in battle. Moses then repeats his warning a third time, this time going into more detail. Moses tells them that the Amalekite and Canaanite tribes will meet them in battle there and that the Israelites will "fall by the sword," or die in battle. Moses tells them that because they refused to obey Yahweh, Yahweh will not protect them.

Stop here and tell a story about a time when a leader was strongly warning people not to do something. How did he speak? What kind of voice did he use? Pause the audio here.

In the third scene, the group of Israelites ignore Moses' strong warning and command. The Israelites disobey Moses by starting their journey to Canaan. They leave the camp at Kadesh-Barnea and head north to the hill country. Moses does not leave the camp. The ark of the covenant, which represents Yahweh's presence, also does not leave the camp. The Israelites walk north through the wilderness of Zin and the Negev land, to the hill country in southern Canaan. We do not know exactly how long they travelled, or how far the Israelites reached, but it was likely at least a two-day walk from Kadesh-Barnea, where they were camped, to the southernmost part of the hill country in Canaan. The Israelites try to enter the land, and as Moses has warned, the Amalekites and the Canaanites attack and defeat the Israelites, and chase them back to a town called Hormah.

Stop here and look at a map of the area around ancient Canaan, including Kadesh-Barnea and the hill country, and remind yourselves of the route that the Israelites likely took. Pause this audio here.

Discuss also: Remember in the previous passage when you told stories about people who lost a battle? Pay attention to the words and phrases you used to talk about how the attacking tribe defeated the other tribe, and how both sides acted.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 14:39–45 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
- The Israelites who try to capture the land
- The Amalekites
- The Canaanites
- Yahweh, represented by the ark of the covenant

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 all the people of Israel everything Yahweh has just told him about how Yahweh is going to punish the Israelites for their disobedience and lack of faith. The people learn that they are now going to wander and die in the desert, and only their children are going to enter the land after forty years. The people start to cry and wail loudly and expressively.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the people of Israel, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like: "I realise now that we were wrong not to trust and believe in Yahweh. After all, Yahweh has never failed us before, and Yahweh even divided the Red Sea before us! I feel so sorry and remorseful," or, "What have we done! Because of our lack of faith and disobedience, now we are going to die wandering in the wilderness. We should have trusted Yahweh," or, "I so wish that we had listened to Joshua and Caleb and not the other spies!" or, "Maybe Yahweh will have mercy on us if we show him how sorry we are. Maybe if we cry and show our sorrow loud enough, Yahweh will take pity on us and give us another chance to enter the land he promised us."

In scene two, the people wake up early the next morning, ready and prepared to try to conquer the promised land. They approach Moses and show him how ready they are. They tell Moses that they understand they have done wrong, but that they are now ready and determined to go north into the land Yahweh has promised them. Moses asks a question about why they are now disobeying Yahweh's orders to return to the wilderness in the opposite direction, and warns them that disobeying Yahweh will not work.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person may answer things like: "I am so disappointed that my people, who I love dearly and have faithfully and tirelessly led so far, are still disobeying Yahweh. What will it take for them to learn!" or, "It is too late now to try to enter the promised land! I wish they had listened to me in the first place. We could have conquered that land. Yahweh would have been protecting us, and we would have succeeded. If they try to conquer the land now, they will fail and they will be killed!" or, "I am dismayed and frustrated that they do not seem to understand that if they do this, and try to enter Canaan now, they will again be sinning and disobeying Yahweh. Yahweh made a solemn oath that he would not protect them now, and we must now wander in the wilderness for forty years," or, "I will try to warn them as strongly as I can and explain why they should not go. I hope they will listen to me."

Moses tells the Israelites directly not to try to go into the land. Moses warns them that their enemies will defeat them, because Yahweh will not be with them. Moses tells the Israelites that the Amalekite and the Canaanite peoples who are dwelling in that land will fight the Israelites in battle and will kill them. Moses reminds the Israelites that they decided not to trust and follow Yahweh, and therefore Yahweh will not be helping and protecting the Israelites.

In scene three, the people completely ignore Moses' words and start their journey north to try to capture the land. Moses does not go with them, and neither does the ark of the covenant. They both stay in the camp.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person may answer things like: "I am so sad to see my beloved, chosen people disobeying me and my servant Moses yet again. I am sad that many of them are now going to be killed, and that they must go through this in order to understand their sin," or, "I am angry that they are disobeying my command to return to the wilderness. I will not protect them. They must go through this discipline and will experience the consequences of their disobedience."

Ask the people playing the Israelites who try to enter Canaan, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people may answer things like: "We are so afraid of what Moses has told us about our punishment for not trusting that Yahweh would help us to conquer the land. Maybe now if we show that we do trust Yahweh, and confidently try to conquer the land, Yahweh will change his mind," or, "Yahweh promised us that land, and it is rightfully ours. We have changed our minds about not trusting Yahweh, and about disbelieving he would help us. Let's go!" or, "At least let's try to conquer that land! We have nothing to lose now as Yahweh has said that we are going to die in the wilderness anyway!"

In scene four, the Israelites approach the hill country where the Amalekites and Canaanites are living. The Amalekites and Canaanites come and attack the Israelites and chase them back a long way to the town called Hormah.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Israelites who entered Canaan what they are thinking or feeling. The people may say things like: "We feel sorry and regretful that we ever tried to capture the land. Moses tried to warn us, and

we should have listened to him. We have learned our lesson now," or, "Many of us have died or are injured. We feel exhausted and defeated. It was not worth going against Yahweh's command and trying to capture the land when Moses told us that Yahweh would not be with us. We understand now that Yahweh's promises are final, and we accept our fate."

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I am sad that the people disobeyed me yet again and had to be punished in this way, but I am satisfied that they have been disciplined for their sin," or, "I am still committed to my people, and I will continue to guide and protect them as long as they choose to follow my way and obey me."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 14:39–45 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

When Moses told the people of Israel about Yahweh's promise that Yahweh was going to punish them, the people **mourned greatly**. This means that they were extremely sad about the news and expressed their sadness openly. The original word for mourned could mean both a sadness about someone's death and a sadness about something terrible that had happened or that they wanted to prevent.

Stop here and discuss what word or phrase you are going to use for **mourned greatly**. Pause this audio here.

In this passage, the phrase **sons of Israel** refers to all the descendants of Abraham together, or the **Israelites**. Use the same word or phrase for Israelites that you used in previous passages. Israelites is in the Master Glossary.

The Israelites admit that they have **sinned**, but they say that now they are ready to go to the land that Yahweh has promised them. Sin is an act of rebellion against Yahweh. Any time a person disobeys Yahweh's laws, they sin. Look up sin in the Master Glossary for more information. Use the same word for sin that you have used in previous passages.

Yahweh is the name of God. Use the same word or phrase for Yahweh that you used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Israelites ignore Moses' warning and set out to the hill country. Moses and the **ark of the covenant** did not leave the camp. Use the same word for ark of the covenant that you have used in previous passages. For more information on the ark of the covenant, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Amalekite and the Canaanite tribes attacked the Israelites as the Israelites approached, and they chased the Israelites back to the town of Hormah.

Stop here and look at a map of the likely route taken by the Israelites when attempting to capture Canaan.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 14:39-45

Audio Content

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Numbers 15:1-16

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 15:1-16 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 15:1-16 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 15:1–16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage Yahweh has just pronounced judgment on the Israelites for not trusting that he would deliver them from the tribes in the promised land. Yahweh has said that the adult Israelites will not enter the promised land, but their children, the next generation, will enter the promised land after forty years.

This passage is a sudden change in the narrative. The passage shifts to a discussion between Yahweh and Moses about the sacrificial system. The Israelites are to set up the sacrificial system once they arrive in the promised land, showing that in this passage they are still in the wilderness. Yahweh has every intention of keeping his promise to bring the Israelites into the land at some point, which he shows by giving them instructions for when they enter the land.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about how you have enjoyed things that your parents or grandparents never had access to. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Recall stories that your family has passed down from generation to generation. Pause this audio here.

This passage sets up a scale for the grain offering that the people mixed with oil, and for the drink offering associated with a burnt offering or sacrifice. The burnt offerings or sacrifices were animals that the Israelites killed and then burnt completely on the altar in worship of Yahweh. The Israelites were to offer grain and drink offerings with the burnt offering. This scale or measurement of grain, oil, and wine is based on the size of the animal that they sacrificed from the herd or flock. The herd refers specifically to cows or bulls, and the flock specifically to sheep and goats. Yahweh will be pleased by the aroma of these offerings, whether they are sacrifices the people give for a vow to Yahweh, or an offering the worshiper gives out of their free will, or offerings they give during festivals. Yahweh does not explain the times or purposes for these sacrifices here, but instead gives a standard measurement of the amount of grain and drink offerings whenever the Israelites offer sacrifices to Yahweh. These offerings came from the three main crops found in Canaan: grain, olives, and grapes.

Stop here as a group and together look at pictures of grain, olives, and grapes. Pause this audio here.

For the grain offering, the people are to use fine flour or the finest flour. Fine flour means luxurious food rather than ordinary flour. People use this type of flour in fine cooking at the table of the king, for honored guests, and in the worship of God. The attitude toward the flour was the same as toward the animals one might bring to the worship of Yahweh: only the best was good enough, because the gift was to Yahweh. More than likely the oil and wine the people used in these offerings were similarly selected from the best of what they had.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What special occasions do you use your best products for in your culture? Pause this audio here.

The one who brings the burnt offering of a young male sheep, or lamb, is also to bring a grain offering of a tenth of an ephah, or about 1 to 3 kilograms of the finest flour or grain. The people used an ephah as a way to measure dry goods. However, we don't know the exact measurement by today's standards. The offering would have been about a basket full. The Israelites were to mix this flour with a quarter of a hin, or about one litre, of olive oil. The drink offering was a quarter of a hin of wine, or strong alcoholic drink made from grapes.

The grain and drink offering amounts increase with the size of the animal. When an Israelite sacrifices a ram, or male sheep, he must also offer two tenths, or 2 to 6 kilograms, of the finest flour mixed with a third of a hin, or 1.5 litres of olive oil. The drink offering also increases to 1.5 litres.

When sacrificing a bull, the amounts increased again to three tenths of an ephah, or 3 to 9 kilograms, of finest flour the people mix with a half a hin, or 2 litres, of olive oil. The drink offering became 2 litres of wine, or strong alcoholic drink.

Yahweh then restates that what he has instructed is how the people will offer sacrifices, whether it is a bull or ram, young sheep, or goat. When the Israelites sacrifice any of these animals, for every animal that is sacrificed, the accompanying grain and drink offerings must go along with it.

Stop here and look at a picture of a bull, a ram, a sheep, and a goat if needed. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture or community thoroughly follow instructions so that deities or supernatural powers will accept a sacrifice? Pause this audio here.

The Israelites must do as Yahweh commanded, and the foreigners living among them also must do the same. These foreigners who also wanted to follow Yahweh, and decided to live with the Israelites, were to become like the Israelites in all that they did, including worshipping Yahweh in the same way as the Israelites did. The non-Israelites are welcomed into the very center of the camp to offer sacrifices and offerings. Yahweh gives the foreigners the same rules and laws as the Israelites, and Yahweh considers them the same as the Israelites.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people treat foreigners in your culture? What kinds of rituals or religious practices do people expect foreigners to take part in, in your culture?

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 15:1–16 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 four scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh tells Moses to tell the Israelites that when they enter the land that Yahweh is giving them, whenever they make offerings by fire or sacrifices to Yahweh, they must also include grain and drink offerings. This is true whether the Israelites offer burnt offerings, sacrifices to fulfill a vow, freewill offerings, or festival offerings. These are all pleasing aromas to Yahweh.

In the second scene: Yahweh tells Moses the specific amounts that the Israelites are to offer as grain and drink offerings for each animal that is sacrificed. For each lamb, the grain offering is a tenth of an ephah of fine flour mixed with a quarter of a hin of oil. The drink offering is a quarter of a hin of strong alcoholic drink. With each ram, the offering is two tenths of an ephah of fine flour with a third of a hin of oil and a third of a hin of strong alcoholic drink. For each bull, whether for a burnt offering, a sacrifice for a vow, or a freewill or fellowship offering, the grain offering is three tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with half of a hin of oil. And the drink offering is a half of a hin of strong alcoholic drink.

In the third scene: Yahweh says that everyone who is born an Israelite must do these things when they present a food offering to Yahweh that is a pleasing aroma.

In the fourth scene: Yahweh tells Moses that the foreigners, and those living among the Israelites who present an offering, must offer sacrifices in the same way as the Israelites. The foreigners are to have the same statutes or rules. This is for all generations to come. The Israelites and the foreigners are the same before Yahweh. The same laws and regulations apply to both.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- The Israelites
- Foreigners

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

Yahweh is giving Moses the commands for sacrifices once the Israelites enter the promised land. In the previous passage, Yahweh has told the Israelites that it will be forty years before they enter into the promised land, and that it will be the next generation who enters. So the people will need to remember these commands and pass them on to the next generation. Yahweh's commands also assure the Israelites that Yahweh intends to keep his promise and give the Israelites the land sometime in the future.

Stop here and have one person whisper a piece of information to the person next to them. Then have that person whisper the same information to the next person. Keep going around the group until you get to the last person. Have the last person share the information with the group, and see if it matches the original information. Talk about how you make sure that everyone hears and remembers important information in your community. Pause this audio here.

The phrase "Yahweh said to Moses" is an important way to show that Yahweh gives Moses instructions for the Israelites. Moses is acting as a mediator, or person that goes between Yahweh and the people. Sometimes it sounds as if Yahweh is talking to only one person; however, Yahweh tells Moses the instructions, and Moses then goes and tells the Israelites what Yahweh said.

Yahweh gives Moses the specific amounts of grain and drink offerings the people are to give when the Israelites sacrifice burnt offerings in the promised land. These amounts change according to the size of the animal, and the amounts increase when the size of the animal increases. The Israelites are to take the burnt offerings from their herds and flocks, meaning the cows, rams, sheep, and goats. They are to take the grain and drink offerings from the most common crops that are in the promised land: grain, olives, and grapes. Yahweh gives a summary statement to finish his list. Yahweh states that the Israelites should do the same thing for each offering that they prepare for Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Think about a common activity that you have to do regularly in the same way each time. Practice instructing people how to do this activity. Listen for how you instruct people and give them details about how to do it. What kinds of words do you use? How do you say the list of steps in the process? Pay attention to how you finish your list of instructions. Is there a certain way that you say that people should do this activity in the same way each time? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh expects the descendants of Israel to keep these rules for sacrifices as a pleasing aroma or smell to Yahweh. If a foreigner, or someone who is from another country but living with the Israelites, also brings a sacrifice, they should also follow these rules for the generations to come. Yahweh sees the foreigners as the same as the Israelites. Yahweh expects the foreigners living with the Israelites to take on the culture and the worship of Yahweh. Yahweh applies the same rules to the Israelites as to the foreigners living among them.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 15:1–16 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
- 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.

Yahweh tells Moses to tell the Israelites that when they enter the land that Yahweh is giving them, whenever they make offerings by fire or sacrifices to Yahweh, they must also include grain and drink offerings. This is true whether the Israelites offer burnt offerings, sacrifices to fulfill a vow, freewill offerings, or festival offerings. These are all pleasing aromas to Yahweh.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "Now it is going to be a long time before we get into the land that Yahweh promised. I hope I remember all of these details to tell the next generation," or, "Yahweh will bring us into the land, but it will be a while. He is so worthy of these sacrifices!"

Yahweh tells Moses the specific amounts that the Israelites are to offer as grain and drink offerings for each animal that is sacrificed. For each lamb, the grain offering is a tenth of an ephah of fine flour mixed with a quarter of a hin of oil. The drink offering is a quarter of a hin of strong alcoholic drink.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I wonder what exactly these offerings of grain and drink mean to Yahweh," or, "I really hope the Israelites remember all of this," or, "I hope when the Israelites make these sacrifices, they remember how faithful Yahweh has been to provide for them."

With each ram, the grain offering is two tenths of an ephah of fine flour with a third of a hin of oil and a third of a hin of strong alcoholic drink. For each bull, whether for a burnt offering, a sacrifice for a vow, or a freewill or fellowship offering, the grain offering is three tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with half of a hin of oil. And the drink offering is a half of a hin of strong alcoholic drink.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I love these people so much. I hope they realize that," or, "I know this seems like a lot, and it is very specific, but I really want them to learn to trust me. I want what is best for them."

Yahweh says that everyone who is born an Israelite must do these things when they present a food offering to Yahweh that is a pleasing aroma. The foreigner who presents an offering must do the same as an Israelite.

Yahweh tells Moses that the foreigners, and those living among the Israelites, are to have the same statutes or rules. This is for all generations to come. The Israelites and the foreigners are the same before Yahweh. The same laws and regulations apply to both.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "Wait, I thought Yahweh chose us as his people. Why are strangers allowed to be among us and live by the same rules?" or, "Yahweh is so gracious to allow anyone who wants to worship him to do so. Yahweh is so worthy."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 15:1–16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Yahweh speaks to Moses and tells him to command the sons of Israel, or the **Israelites**, that when they enter the land that Yahweh is giving to them, the Israelites are to present the **offerings** by fire—a **burnt offering**, a **sacrifice** for a special **vow**, or a freewill offering—at the correct time or during the appointed feasts. Yahweh says these offerings are to make a soothing aroma, or a pleasing smell, to Yahweh from the herd or the flock.

Yahweh is the personal and proper name of God. The people or sons of Israel are the descendants of Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel. An offering is a gift or sacrifice the people offer to Yahweh, usually in the tabernacle or, once it is built, the temple. A burnt offering is when the Israelites kill an animal and burn the whole animal on the altar. A sacrifice is a gift the people give to Yahweh in worship. A **vow** is a solemn promise the people make to Yahweh, usually in return for a favor. And a freewill offering is an offering that people give voluntarily, or simply because they want to. Use the same words that you used for Yahweh, sons of Israel or Israelites, offerings, burnt offerings, sacrifice, and vow that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, Israelites, offerings, burnt offerings, sacrifices, and vow, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **freewill offering**. Look up freewill 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.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **soothing aroma**, or pleasing smell to Yahweh. 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 whoever offers these sacrifices should also offer with them a specific amount of the finest grain that people mix with olive oil as a grain offering, and a drink offering as well, depending on the animal. For each lamb, the Israelites should offer a tenth of an **ephah** of grain that people mix with a quarter hin of oil. An ephah is a dry measure equal to around 13 to 23 kilograms. A hin is around four litres. Olive oil is an oil that is released when the olive fruit is pressed. People often use olive oil for cooking. Use the same translations for ephah and pure olive oil that you have used in previous passages. Ephah is in the Master Glossary.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **hin**. Look up hin 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 drink offering should be a fourth of a hin of a strong alcoholic drink for each lamb.

For a ram, the Israelites should offer the grain that is two tenths of an ephah that the people would mix with a third of a hin of oil. For the drink offering, the Israelites must offer a third of a hin of strong alcoholic drink that is a pleasing aroma to Yahweh.

When the Israelites offer a bull for a burnt offering or sacrifice to fulfill a vow, or a peace offering to Yahweh, then they should offer three tenths of an ephah of flour that the people mix with half of a hin of oil. And for the drink offering, the people should offer half of a hin of wine or strong alcoholic drink as a food offering that is a pleasing aroma to Yahweh. So the Israelites keep this measurement for each one of their offerings.

Both the native Israelite and the **foreigner** who is traveling with the Israelites, or who has moved permanently into the land, should offer these offerings in the same way. The foreigner is someone who is living in a land that

is not their own. Use the same word for foreigner that you have used in previous passages. For more information on foreigners, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh set up the same **statutes** in the assembly, or the official group of Israelites, for the Israelite and for the foreigner. These statutes shall be the same throughout **generations**, or forever. Yahweh sees the Israelite and the foreigner as the same, and the laws apply to both equally. A statute is a decree or law that usually has to do with duties in the tabernacle or temple. Use the same words for statutes and generations that you have used in previous passages. For more information on statutes and generations, refer to the Master Glossary.

This passage uses two other words for law: **law**, or instruction, and **ordinance**. For more information on law or ordinance, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 15:1–16

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (17479672 KB)

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Numbers 15:17-21

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 15:17-21 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 15:17-21 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 15:17-21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Yahweh has been speaking to Moses. Yahweh has been giving Moses instructions that Moses will give to the Israelites at a later time. In the previous passage, Yahweh was telling Moses the measurements for grain and drink offerings that go with burnt offerings. Now Yahweh is telling Moses to instruct the Israelites on offerings of the first harvest or first fruit of the land that Yahweh is taking the Israelites to.

This passage begins with the familiar phrase "Yahweh said to Moses." Once again Yahweh is talking to Moses. Yahweh is giving Moses instructions to share with the Israelites. Yahweh tells Moses that when the Israelites enter the land where Yahweh is taking them, and they eat the food or crops of the land, the Israelites are to present a portion of the food or crops as an offering to Yahweh.

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

The Israelites are to make a loaf of bread or cake from the first grain that they grind on the threshing floor and offer it to Yahweh. The threshing floor is a flat area where the people grind the grain.

Stop here as a group and together look at a picture of people beating or grinding grain on the threshing floor. Look at a picture of a loaf of bread. If available, watch the video of people grinding wheat on the threshing floor. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss the process that people in your culture go through from harvesting grain to gathering the harvest and storing it. If you do not harvest grain in your culture, talk about the main crop that you do harvest. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh wants the Israelites to remember that all good things, including the crops, come from Yahweh. The Israelites are to make this offering every year at the beginning of their grain season. As the people grind the grain on the threshing floor, they need to set some aside—enough to make into a loaf of bread. The people are to offer these loaves of bread to Yahweh by giving them to the priests.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What are some food items that people offer to supernatural beings in your community? Why do they offer these food items? Pause this audio here.

The people were to give this offering every year for generations to come, or for many generations.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 15:17–21 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 one scene.

In the first scene: Yahweh gives Moses instructions to tell the Israelites. Yahweh says that when the Israelites come into the land where Yahweh is taking them, and they eat the food or bread of the land, then they are to present some of the food as an offering to Yahweh. The Israelites are to present the loaf of bread made from the first grain on the threshing floor as an offering. The Israelites are to give this offering of the first grain to Yahweh throughout the generations to come.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- The Israelites

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

Yahweh is speaking to Moses while the Israelites are in the wilderness. The instructions Yahweh is giving Moses for the Israelites are to be carried out once they reach the promised land and begin to produce crops.

This passage begins with the familiar phrase, "Yahweh said to Moses." Yahweh tells Moses that when the Israelites enter the land where Yahweh is taking them, and they eat the food or crops of the land, they are to present, or lift up, a portion of that first crop, a loaf of bread, as an offering to Yahweh. They would offer this bread to Yahweh by giving it to the priests.

The Israelites are to offer, from the first grain that they grind on the threshing floor, a loaf of bread they made for Yahweh from that first grain. The threshing floor is a flat area where people grind the grain. The grain was dry, and people beat it with a stick or allowed an animal to walk over it in order to remove the grain from its case or hull. Then the people would sift out the grain from the hull and grind into a smaller size if needed.

Stop here as a group and together look at a picture of a threshing floor and a picture of coarsely ground grain. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh wants the Israelites to remember that all good things, including the crops, come from Yahweh. The Israelites are to make this offering every year at the beginning of their grain season. As the people grind the grain on the threshing floor, they need to set some aside—enough to make into a loaf of bread.

The people are to offer this offering every year for generations to come, or for many generations.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 15:17–21 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:

- 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. If helpful, have people act out, on the side, what Yahweh is saying to Moses.

Yahweh gives Moses instructions to tell the Israelites. Yahweh says that when the Israelites come into the land where Yahweh is taking them, and eat the food or bread of the land, then the Israelites are to present some of the food as an offering to Yahweh. The Israelites are to present the loaf made from the first grain on the threshing floor as an offering. The Israelites are to give this offering of the first grain throughout the generations to come.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "How does Yahweh expect us to remember this for forty years?" or, "I pray that the Israelites always remember that all good things come from Yahweh."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 15:17–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Yahweh gives Moses instructions to tell the **Israelites**. Yahweh is God's personal and proper name. The Israelites are the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who Yahweh brought out of Egypt. Use the same words for Yahweh and Israelites that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh and Israelites, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh says that when the Israelites come into the land where Yahweh is taking them, and eat the food or bread of the land, then they are to present some of the food as an **offering** to Yahweh. An offering is a gift or

sacrifice that people give in a ritual to God. People often give offerings in thanksgiving and worship, or to ask for forgiveness. Use the same word you have used for offering in previous passages. For more information on offering, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Israelites are to present the loaf of bread made from the first grain on the **threshing floor** as an offering. The threshing floor is a flat surface where people crush grain into powder or flour. The Israelites are to give this offering of the first grain throughout the **generations** to come. Generations are lines of descendants, in this case, of the Israelites. Generations can also mean one lifetime after another. Use the same word you have used for generations in previous passages. For more information on generations, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word you will use for **threshing floor**.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 15:17-21

Audio Content

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Numbers 15:22-31

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Number 15:22–31 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Number 15:22–31 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Number 15:22–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Yahweh is still giving Moses instructions that Moses will then give to the Israelites. Yahweh takes Yahweh's commands very seriously, and Yahweh is also gracious in purifying people who sin without realizing that they have sinned. Yahweh gives the Israelites instructions on the appropriate sacrifices when the community unintentionally sins, when only one person unintentionally sins, and when someone sins defiantly.

Stop here and talk about a time you did something wrong without realizing it. What happened when you realized what you had done? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh's provision for the community, whether Israelite or foreigner, shows that Yahweh's character is gracious and understanding. If the community of people unintentionally fails to keep the commands that Yahweh is giving, Yahweh will forgive the whole community when the people offer the appropriate sacrifice. Yahweh tells Moses that these instructions will begin as soon as Moses gives Yahweh's commands to the people, and for all of the generations to come. The whole community must provide a young bull, or male cow, along with the grain and drink offering that Yahweh said goes with this offering in the previous passage. The community must also present a male goat as a sin or purification offering. The priest must offer the bull and male goat as burnt offerings on behalf of the whole community, as a pleasing smell to Yahweh. When the priest

offers these to Yahweh, he makes atonement for the people. In other words, Yahweh will purify the whole community, Yahweh will restore them to a right relationship with Yahweh, and Yahweh will forgive the people.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What is the function of priests or holy people in your community? How do they serve God or other supernatural deities, and how do they serve the people of your community? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh also gives a provision for the individual who unintentionally sins. The individual must bring a young, year-old, female goat to the priest for the sacrifice. The priest will make atonement for that person. That sacrifice will purify the person, whether an Israelite or a foreigner. Yahweh will forgive that person when they make the sacrifice.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How does your community try to purify the whole community together or have someone purify them if they have made a mistake? How does the community try to remove their guilt? Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do individual people in your community try to purify themselves or have someone purify them as an individual if they have made a mistake? How do they try to remove their guilt? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh's punishment is much more severe for someone who sins on purpose. Some translations translate this as sinning with a high hand, which means to act in defiance or rebellion. This person knows the laws and yet chooses to sin against them anyway, with no feelings of guilt. This person despises Yahweh. The sin of this person is against Yahweh, not just against the community. This person is to pay their own penalty, and carry their own guilt, instead of being able to place the penalty on a sacrificial animal. The defiant person must be cast out from the community, because the guilt cannot stay within Yahweh's camp.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What happens to people in your community who intentionally sin or break laws on purpose? What are the consequences? How does the community treat this person?

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 15:22–31 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 three scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh gives Moses a command from this day and for generations to come. Yahweh tells Moses that when the community unintentionally does not keep all of Yahweh's commands, the community needs to bring a young bull to the priest to sacrifice. The Israelites also need to bring the appropriate grain and drink offering, as well as a young male goat for a sin or purification offering. The priest will offer this as a burnt offering to Yahweh, and it will be a pleasing smell to Yahweh. The priest will purify the people with this offering, and Yahweh will forgive the people.

In the second scene: If a person unintentionally sins, that person should bring a one-year-old female goat to the priest for a sin or purification offering. The priest will make atonement for that person by offering the goat as a burnt offering to Yahweh. Yahweh will forgive that person, whether that person is an Israelite or a foreigner.

In the third scene: If any person, whether an Israelite or a foreigner, sins on purpose, violates Yahweh's commands, and opposes Yahweh's will, they must be cast out of the community. Since they deliberately disobeyed Yahweh, and treated Yahweh with hate, they must suffer the punishment by leaving the community.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- The priest
- The Israelite community
- The person who unintentionally makes a mistake
- The person who deliberately sins

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

Yahweh is still giving Moses commands for Moses to give to the Israelites. Yahweh is telling Moses how the Israelite community can be restored to relationship with Yahweh when they do not obey Yahweh's commands. These commands start the day that Yahweh gives the commands, and the commands continue for future generations.

In scene one, the passage speaks of Yahweh's commands, and these are all of the commands that Yahweh gives to the people of Israel. So if the community makes a mistake against Yahweh by violating one of Yahweh's commands, the community must sacrifice a burnt offering of a young bull, a grain offering, and drink offering, along with a male goat for a sin offering. The priest will sacrifice these offerings, and Yahweh will forgive the people.

Notice in scenes one and two that the community and the person sin unintentionally. It is likely that the people acted intentionally, but they did not know that the actions were sinful. In this situation, you should not use the general word for sin. Instead, you may wish to use a phrase like, "fails to keep Yahweh's commands."

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will describe unintentional sin or mistakes. Pause this audio here.

In scene three, the phrase "high hand" is used to describe someone who intentionally acts boldly and defiantly against Yahweh and Yahweh's word. This phrase refers to someone who does not feel guilty about their actions and sins against Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss a way that you will describe someone who sins rebelliously and defiantly against Yahweh and is not sorry for their actions. 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

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 15:22–31 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 priest
- The Israelite community
- The person who unintentionally makes a mistake
- The person who deliberately sins

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 that when the community unintentionally does not keep all of Yahweh's commands, the community needs to bring a young bull to the priest to sacrifice. Yahweh says this is true from the day they receive the commands until generations to come. The Israelites also need to bring the appropriate grain and drink offering, as well as a young male goat for a sin or purification offering. The priest will offer this as a burnt offering to Yahweh, and it will be a pleasing smell to Yahweh. The priest will purify the people with this offering, and Yahweh will forgive the people.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I am so grateful that if we accidentally make a mistake that there is a way to be forgiven," or, "There are so many commands to remember that I am sure I may forget some! I am thankful that there is a way to be restored," or, "I better keep a lot of goats."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the priest, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I am so honored to be able to help go between the people and Yahweh," or, "I better get used to killing these animals and the sight of blood. I do not like it, but I understand it," or, "This makes me not want to do anything wrong since I know the penalty and have to carry out that penalty."

If a person unintentionally sins, they should bring a one-year-old female goat to the priest for a sin offering. The priest will make atonement for that person by offering the goat as a burnt offering to Yahweh. Yahweh will forgive that person, whether they are an Israelite or a foreigner.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelite, who Yahweh forgave, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I am so grateful that Yahweh forgave me. I honestly did not know that what I did was wrong," or, "I better pay more attention or ask someone if I am not sure whether something is wrong for me to do or not," or, "I need to have goats ready to sacrifice."

If any person, whether an Israelite or a foreigner, sins on purpose and violates Yahweh's commands and opposes Yahweh's will, then they must be cast out of the community. Since they deliberately disobeyed Yahweh, and treated Yahweh with contempt, they must suffer the punishment by leaving the community.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the sinner, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I do not care what Yahweh thinks, because I want to do my own thing," or, "What do you mean I have to leave the community?" or, "I am not sure if this sin was worth the consequences."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 15:22–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Yahweh tells Moses that when the congregation or community unintentionally does not keep all of Yahweh's commands, from the day they receive the commands until **generations** to come, they need to bring a young bull to the **priest** to sacrifice as a **burnt offering**. Yahweh is the personal and proper name of God. Generations are one lifetime after another. Some versions use the word descendants, which are the children, grandchildren, and future generations. A priest is the person who works in the tabernacle and makes sacrifices on behalf of the people of Israel. A burnt offering is an animal that is killed and completely burned on the altar before God. Use the same words you have used for congregation or community, Yahweh, generations or descendants, priest, and burnt offering that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, generations, priest, and burnt offering, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Israelites also need to bring the appropriate **grain offering** and **drink offering**, as well as a young male goat for a **sin or purification offering**. A grain offering is a mixture of the finest flour and olive oil. A drink offering is a strong alcoholic drink or wine that the priest poured out on the altar. A sin or purification offering is typically a goat that the priest burned on the altar to purify or cleanse a person or community and to restore them to relationship with Yahweh. Use the same words or phrases that you have used for grain offering, drink offering, and sin or purification offering previously. For more information on grain offering, drink offering, and sin offering or purification offering, refer to the Master Glossary.

The priest will offer this as a burnt offering to Yahweh, and it will be a pleasing smell to Yahweh. The priest will **purify** or **atone** for the people with this offering and Yahweh will **forgive** them. To purify is to go through a ritual bath or something that symbolically cleanses a person or community and makes them fit for a relationship with Yahweh. This is similar to atonement, which is when the priest restores the relationship between the people and Yahweh. Use the same words you have used for purify, atone, and forgive in previous passages. For more information on purify, atonement, and forgiveness, refer to the Master Glossary.

If a person **unintentionally sins**, they should bring a one-year-old female goat to the priest for a sin offering. The priest will make atonement for that person by offering the goat as a burnt offering to Yahweh. Yahweh will forgive that person, whether they are an Israelite or a foreigner. Unintentional sin is an action that is done without realizing that the action is a sin.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **unintentional sin**. Remember that you may use a word for mistake or unintentional sin. 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.

An **Israelite** is someone who is a descendant of Jacob. A **foreigner** is someone who is living in a country different from the one they were born in. Use the same words for Israelites and foreigners that you have in previous passages. For more information on Israelites and foreigner, refer to the Master Glossary.

If any person, whether an Israelite or a foreigner, sins on purpose or does anything **with a high hand** and violates Yahweh's commands and opposes Yahweh's will, then they must be cast out of the community. Since that person deliberately disobeyed or blasphemed Yahweh by insulting or dishonoring Yahweh, that person must suffer the punishment by leaving the community. A high hand means that someone does something boldly and defiantly. Some versions use defiantly.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **blaspheme** and for **a high hand**, or someone who acts defiantly. If you have already translated these phrases in another book of the Bible, use the

same words that you have used there. See the Master Glossary for more information about blasphemy. Pause this audio here.

These people have hated Yahweh's word and broken his commands, or his rules. In this case, Yahweh's word is the things that Yahweh tells his people to do, and Yahweh's commands are the rules that Yahweh gives his people to live by.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 15:22-31

Audio Content

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Numbers 15:32-36

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 15:32–36 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 15:32–36 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 15:32–36 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The timing of when the events in this passage take place is unclear. We know that these events happened one day when the Israelites were in the wilderness. The events in this passage likely do not take place right after the previous passage. Instead, this passage is used to show that Yahweh is serious about his people obeying him and that Yahweh will punish disobedience as he says he will. The man who broke the Sabbath in this passage intended to start a fire with the wood, or firewood. However, Yahweh had forbidden the people to make a fire on the Sabbath. The Sabbath was a special day that Yahweh had set aside as a day of rest for his people. Yahweh was very serious about his law that his people take the Sabbath day of rest every week. Yahweh considered breaking the Sabbath an act of raising a fist in defiance to Yahweh, or having a high hand, as described in the previous passage.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What in your culture is considered an act of defiance against God, or against divine or supernatural beings? Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How does your community determine if someone is purposely doing something wrong against other people, God, or the deities they serve? Pause this audio here.

Those who found the man were not quite sure what to do with him. The people may have been shocked at the man's defiance. The people brought the man to Aaron and Moses and kept him in custody, or in a secure location where the man could not leave.

Yahweh tells Moses that the entire community of Israel must stone the man to death outside of the camp. To stone someone to death is to throw stones at a person until they are dead. The dead body of the man could not be within the camp of the Israelites or it would defile the camp and the people. So Yahweh tells Moses to have the Israelites take the man outside of the camp to stone the man. So the Israelites take the man outside of the camp and stone him as Yahweh commanded.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What are some actions of people in your community that would make your community put those people to death? Pause this audio here.

Because this story happened while the Israelites were still in the wilderness, we know that Yahweh wanted his people to keep the Sabbath day even before they arrived in the promised land.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 15:32–36 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 three scenes.

In the first scene: When the Israelites are in the wilderness, a man picks up wood on the Sabbath.

In the second scene: The Israelites who find the man gathering wood bring the man to Aaron and Moses and the whole community. The people keep the man in custody because they are not sure what they should do with him. Yahweh tells Moses that the man needs to be put to death by stoning outside the camp.

In the third scene: The whole assembly takes the man outside of the camp and stones the man to death, just as Yahweh commanded Moses.

The characters in this passage are:

- The Israelites
- A man gathering wood
- Aaron
- Moses
- Yahweh

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

We do not know the timing of this passage, other than it happened one day while the Israelites were in the wilderness.

Notice that there are a few different settings in this passage. The entire Israelite community is in the wilderness. In the first scene the man is out picking up wood on the Sabbath. We do not know exactly where this man is, whether in the camp of the Israelites or out of the camp. In the second scene the group that finds the man takes him to where Aaron and Moses are. The man goes into a secure place where he cannot leave until the people know what to do with him. In the third scene the whole community takes the man outside of the camp of the Israelites and stones the man to death.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 15:32–36 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:

- The Israelites
- A man gathering wood
- Aaron
- 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.

When the Israelites are in the wilderness, a man picks up wood on the Sabbath.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the man picking up wood, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "It is cold out here in the wilderness. I want to get warm and help my family get warm," or, "I am sure something like picking up wood is not a big deal on the Sabbath. It is necessary," or, "I just want a little comfort."

The Israelites who found the man gathering wood brought him to Aaron and Moses and the whole community. The people kept the man in custody because they were not sure what they should do with him.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "Now what do we do with the man? Did the man know that this was wrong to do?" or, "What was the man thinking? I cannot believe he was out gathering wood. Does he not know that Yahweh forbids that on the Sabbath?" or, "I am so sad that the man was out gathering wood! What will happen to him?"

Yahweh tells Moses that the man will need to be put to death by stoning outside the camp.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I am heartbroken for this man, but I take my word seriously," or, "I am sad for this community, but I want them to know how important obedience is," or, "It is like they do not listen or do not fully believe I will do what I said I would do."

Ask the person playing the man, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "What do you mean I have to die? All I did was gather some wood!" or, "I cannot believe this is happening! What about my family? How can something so simple be that wrong?" or, "I should have listened! I guess Yahweh did mean what he said."

So the whole community takes the man outside of the camp and stones him to death, just as Yahweh commanded Moses.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "This is terrible. I cannot believe we have to do this," or, "I hope I do not ever do something that I am not supposed to do!" or, "I cannot imagine what would happen to someone who does something truly terrible."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 15:32–36 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

One day, the sons of Israel, or the **Israelites**, are in the **wilderness**. The sons of Israel, or the Israelites, are the descendants of Jacob, or Israel. The wilderness is a lonely and barren place with little to no water. Use the same words you have used for Israelites and wilderness in previous passages. For more information on Israelites and wilderness, refer to the Master Glossary.

At this time a man is picking up wood on the **Sabbath**. The Sabbath is the seventh day of the week for the Israelites, or Jews. It is a time that the Israelites rested and worshiped God.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word you will use for **Sabbath**. Use the same word for Sabbath that you have used in previous books of the Bible. For more information on Sabbath, refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

The Israelites who find the man gathering wood bring the man to Aaron and Moses and the whole community, or group of Israelites. The Israelites keep the man in a secure place because they are not sure what they should do with him. **Yahweh** tells Moses that the people should kill the man by stoning him outside the camp. Yahweh is the personal and proper name of God. Stoning means to throw stones at someone until they die. Use the same words you have used for community, Yahweh, and stoning, or stone, in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

So the whole community of Israelites took the man outside of the camp and stoned him to death, just as Yahweh commanded Moses.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 15:32-36

Audio Content

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Numbers 15:37-41

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 15:37–41 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 15:37–41 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 15:37–41 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this passage, Yahweh continues to give instructions to the people of Israel through Moses. These instructions are to help the Israelites remember to obey all of the commands that Yahweh has given them. The previous passage is an example of how someone did not obey Yahweh's commands and the consequences of those actions. Here Yahweh is giving the Israelites a symbol to help them remember to obey his commands.

The Israelites are to make tassels for the corners of their garments for generations to come. The corners of the garments were also called wings, as they formed a wing-like shape at the bottom of the garment. The garments were more than likely the outer garment or cloak. These tassels are possibly connected to their garments with a blue cord or rope. In that time, blue was a bluish purple color and symbolized royalty. This color could have been used to mark the people as belonging to Yahweh.

Stop here and look at a close-up picture of tassels, and at a picture of the tassels attached to the corners of garments. Pause this audio here.

The tassels were not only to help the Israelites remember the commands of Yahweh, but also to help the Israelites remember to obey the commands instead of doing what they wanted to do. Yahweh says that the Israelites are likely to follow the desires of their own hearts and eyes. However, the Israelites are to remember to do all of the commands of Yahweh and to be holy or set apart for Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What are the symbols that people in your community have to remind them not to do wrong things against their God, gods, or other deities? Pause this audio here.

Stop here and take the time to make that symbol that helps remind you not to sin against God. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh makes a very strong declaration at the end of this passage. Yahweh declares that he is Yahweh, the Israelites' God who brought them out of Egypt in order to be their God. Then again Yahweh repeats that he is Yahweh, the Israelites' God. This seems to be Yahweh's strong reminder to the Israelites that Yahweh has every right to insist that they obey his commands.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 15:37–41 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 tells Moses to give the following instructions to the people of Israel, or the Israelites. The Israelites are to put tassels on the corners of their garments for all of the generations to come. These tassels were to have a blue thread or cord in each tassel.

In the second scene: The Israelites shall look at the tassels on their own garment, and on each other's garments, and remember to do all the things that Yahweh commanded. The Israelites are not to defile themselves by following their own desires or lusts, as they are likely to do. The tassels are to help the Israelites remember to obey the commands and keep themselves holy to God.

In the third scene: Yahweh tells the Israelites that he is their God who brought them out of the land of Egypt so that he could be their God. He is Yahweh, their God.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Israelites

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

We do not know the exact setting of this passage, but we do know that once again Yahweh is talking to Moses and giving Moses instructions for the whole Israelite community. These instructions are to help the Israelites remember all of Yahweh's commands and to obey those commands.

Each tassel had a blue cord. It is unclear whether this blue cord was a bluish purple color, and whether or not the blue cord attached the tassel to the garment, or the blue cord was woven into the tassel.

Stop here and look together as a group at items that you may have that are different colors of blue or purple. How do you describe the colors of those items? Pause this audio here.

The Israelites are not to follow after the desires of their own hearts and eyes. Some versions say that the Israelites are inclined to "whore after" their own desires. This phrase refers to sexual immorality and describes the actions of a prostitute. Here the idea of prostitution and the unfaithfulness of a spouse is used to describe the way Israelites sinned against God. The Israelites were unfaithful to God like an adulterous spouse. The Israelites followed their hearts and eyes, which means that their own emotions and desires were more important to them than what they knew was right.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will describe this kind of unfaithfulness to God. How will you describe that they were like prostitutes, or unfaithful to God, and how will you describe that they wanted to follow their own hearts and their own eyes? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh then repeats himself in a very important declaration. Yahweh says twice that he is the Israelites' God and that he is the God who brought them out of Egypt in order to be their God.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you talk about the most important event in your community's history. Tell each other the story of that important event, and pay attention to the words or phrases you repeat or say to make sure people know it is 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

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 15:37–41 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

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 give the following instructions to the people of Israel, or the Israelites. Yahweh says the Israelites are to put tassels on the corners of their garments for all of the generations to come. Each of these tassels was to have a blue thread or cord in each tassel. The Israelites were to look at the tassels on their own garments, and on each other's garments, and remember to do all that Yahweh commanded so that they would be set apart for Yahweh.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I do not know how I could make it easier for them to remember," or, "I know the hearts of men. The people are likely to follow their own desires instead of my desires," or, "I really want them to remember because my desire is the best thing for them, and it keeps them in relationship with me."

The Israelites are not to follow their own desires or lusts as they are likely to do. The tassels are to help the Israelites remember to obey Yahweh's commands and keep themselves holy to God.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I think Yahweh does not really believe we can obey," or, "I really want to obey, so I am glad that Yahweh is giving us a reminder."

Yahweh tells the Israelites that he is their God who brought them out of the land of Egypt so that he could be their God. He is Yahweh, their God!

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I do not know that I can make my commands any clearer," or, "They have the tendency to want to be their own God, so I need to make sure they know that I AM their God."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 15:37–41 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Then **Yahweh** told Moses to give the following instructions to the sons of Israel, or the **Israelites**. Yahweh is the personal and proper name of God. The Israelites are the descendants of Jacob who was renamed Israel. Use the same words you have used for Yahweh and Israelites in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh and Israelites, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Israelites are to put **tassels** on the corners of their garments, or robes, for all of the **generations** to come. Tassels are a bunch of loose threads that are twisted together and bound at one end. These tassels are to have a blue thread in each one. Generations to come means one lifetime after another lifetime, or all of the lifetimes of the people to come after this one. Use the same word for generations to come that you have used in previous passages. For more information on generations, refer to the Master Glossary.

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

The Israelites shall look at the tassels on their own garments, and on each other's garments, and remember to do all that Yahweh commanded, or follow all of Yahweh's laws for living. The Israelites are not to follow their own desires or lusts as they are likely to do. The tassels are to help them remember to obey the **commands** and keep themselves **holy** to God. To be holy is to be set apart for God's special purposes. Use the same word for holy and for commands that you have used in previous passages. For more information on holy, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells the Israelites that he is their **God** who brought them out of the land of Egypt so that he could be their God. He is Yahweh, their God. Use the same general word for God that you have used in previous passages. See the Master Glossary for more information about God.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 15:37-41

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (10499281 KB)

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Numbers 16:1–19

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 16:1–19 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 16:1–19 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 16:1–19 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This story continues to show the confusion and uncertainty that the Israelites are experiencing in the desert. This is the story of a few rebels that unite together to form a rebellion. They are rebelling against the authority of Moses.

This story starts with a genealogy, meaning a list of families. The following names are the ancestors of the main people in this story:

- Levi had a son called Kohath.
- Kohath had a son called Izhar.
- Izhar had a son called Korah.
- Korah is one of the men in this story. Korah is a Levite and the leader of one of the rebel groups who approaches Moses first.

Eliab had two sons called Dathan and Abiram. These two men, Dathan and Abiram, are both Reubenites. Dathan and Abiram join forces with Korah to start a rebellion, but Dathan and Abiram allow Korah to represent them and let him do the talking!

A man named Peleth had a son called On. On only appears briefly in this story. On is a Reubenite, just like Dathan and Abiram. We do not know why On is only mentioned at the beginning. We do not know what happens to On. On may not appear again in the story because On withdrew from the rebellion, or maybe the author of this story felt that On did not need to be mentioned again.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Share a story about the family history of someone you know, or share a story that has a family history in it. Pause this audio here.

The family history in this story is confirmed in Exodus and other parts of Scripture. Kohath is from the tribe of Levi, and Kohath has four sons. Kohath's youngest son is called Izhar. Izhar is the father of Korah. Kohath's eldest son was called Amram. Amram is the father of Moses and Aaron, making Moses and Aaron brothers. So we can see that Moses and Aaron's father and Korah's father were brothers. This makes Korah a cousin of Moses and Aaron. Korah, Moses, and Aaron are all from the same family.

Dathan, Abiram, and On were from the tribe of Reuben. These three men, along with Korah, all decided to join together and rebel against Moses. These men were also joined by 250 other Israelites who were chiefs, or leaders, of the community. The congregation, or community of the Israelites, had chosen these men as leaders in their community. People highly respected these men and probably came to these men when they needed to resolve an issue in the community.

These four men gained power by gathering people in large numbers who were also complaining with them. Although all of these people were from different groups, they all had something in common; they were all wanting to rebel against the way Yahweh had planned for things to be done.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, if you feel that you would like more authority over something, what do you do? How many people would you gather to go with you, and who would you go to speak with? Pause this audio here.

Korah the Levite may have felt ignored or hurt, or Korah may have felt that they were not able to carry out the same duties as Moses and Aaron. Korah may have felt that Yahweh had taken the rights of the firstborn from Korah. This is because Korah's father Izhar was the firstborn son of Kohath.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell of a time when you wanted a particular job, or you worked hard to impress someone, and then that person ended up choosing someone else. How did it make you feel? What did you do? Pause this audio here.

It seems that Korah and his 250 Israelite followers come to Moses and Aaron. Moses asks for Dathan and Abiram to be summoned later on, so it is likely that Dathan and Abiram are back at their camp at this point and not present in this current conversation.

Korah accuses Moses and Aaron of having too much authority by saying, "You have gone too far! The whole community is holy, every one of them. They have been set apart by Yahweh, and Yahweh is with them." Because Korah says each person is holy, Korah asks why Moses and Aaron are acting as if they are greater than the rest of Yahweh's people, the assembly of the Israelites. Korah really wants others besides Aaron's family to be able to be priests in the tabernacle, and Korah thinks it unfair that the people currently doing the roles are all descendants of Aaron.

When Moses hears what they are saying, Moses falls face down onto the ground. Moses is showing how much he relies on Yahweh's wisdom. Moses is not in fear of Korah, and Moses is not bowing in praise of, or submission to, Korah; instead, Moses is bowing to Yahweh.

Moses gets up from the ground and tells Korah what they will do to see who Yahweh has chosen to be set apart to serve Yahweh. Only Yahweh's chosen priests could burn incense in Yahweh's presence, so Moses tells Korah and all of Korah's 250 followers to prepare their incense burners.

Moses then challenges Korah and Korah's 250 followers to fill censers and present them to Yahweh. Censers were made of bronze or gold in the shape of a bowl or vase, mounted on a base, and attached to the end of a long handle. This long handle would keep a distance between the person and the altar but also prevent the priest's hands from getting burnt. The bowl was wider at the bottom and narrower at the top. Some translations call these censers fire pans. People put incense such as frankincense or cedar inside, and the frankincense or cedar would catch fire when they touched the burning coals. This incense would then burn and create a sweet smelling smoke.

Stop here as a group and look at a picture of a censer with coals burning inside. Pause this audio here.

Moses tells Korah and Korah's 250 followers that they are to present the burning incense as an offering to Yahweh and that they will see who Yahweh chooses as his holy ones. Remember, Yahweh will allow only those whom he chooses to enter his presence.

Moses is angry because Korah and Korah's followers are not only doubting Moses and Aaron's authority, but they are questioning Yahweh's authority and judgement too. Moses is saying that Korah and Korah's followers have gone too far.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell of a time when you wanted to be more involved in something, but you did not have the authority to do so. If you spoke too boldly or accidentally interfered, what happened? Pause this audio here.

Moses reminds Korah and the other Levites what Yahweh has done for them. Yahweh has separated the Levites from the Israelites and brought them near to himself. Yahweh has given them the honour of doing the work at Yahweh's tabernacle, or temple, and the privilege of ministering to the people in the community. Moses tells them that they are not rebelling against Aaron, but they are rebelling against Yahweh.

Moses summons Dathan and Abiram, which means that Moses asks Dathan and Abiram to come and talk with Moses and join in this discussion. But Dathan and Abiram refuse to go to Moses. Dathan and Abiram send a message to Moses. Dathan and Abiram complain that Egypt was a land "flowing with milk and honey," a fertile land. They complain that Moses wanted to "lord it over them," or treat them like Moses is their master. Dathan and Abiram complain that Moses still has not brought the people to any other land as fertile as Egypt. The men ask questions to show their anger. They ask, "Do you want to treat these men like slaves?" Dathan and Abiram accuse Moses of tricking the people to follow Moses into the wilderness. Dathan and Abiram say, "Will you put out the eyes of these men?" meaning, "Are you trying to make these people blind to the truth?"

It is Moses' turn to become angry. Moses asks Yahweh to not accept the offering from these men who are rebelling against Moses and against Yahweh. Moses is probably asking Yahweh to not accept the offering of incense that the men would bring the next day. In any case, Moses does not want the men to have access to Yahweh. Moses reminds Yahweh that Moses has taken nothing from these men and that Moses has not wronged or hurt any of the men.

Moses then tells Korah and Korah's followers that they are to appear before Yahweh the next day, and that they each need to bring their own incense burner to burn incense and present them before Yahweh. Moses asks Aaron to also be there and bring his own incense burner and incense. In the past Yahweh punished priests who offered incense in the wrong way, because Yahweh took these rituals seriously. Korah's men would discover whether or not Yahweh accepted them when they tried to offer the incense before Yahweh.

The next day Korah gathered his entire community of rebels, and perhaps the entire community of the Israelites. Once Korah had gathered everyone, Korah brought them along to the tent of meeting, or the tabernacle. The group of Korah's men filled their censers with incense and added burning coals. Korah was ready!

Stop here as a group and look at a picture of the entrance to the tent of meeting, or the tabernacle. Pause this audio here.

Moses and Aaron were also at the tent of meeting holding their burning censers. Everyone was ready for the test to see who Yahweh would choose to be his holy priest.

Suddenly, the glory of Yahweh appeared to the entire assembly. Yahweh is most likely appearing as a very bright light, almost too bright for people to look at. Imagine a sunny day where you feel the warmth of the sun, but the sun is so bright you can only open your eyes a little. This shows how powerful Yahweh is.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 16:1–19 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 three scenes.

In the first scene: We hear the family history of Korah, Dathan, Abiram, and On, and we see these men form a rebellion against Moses and Aaron. Korah approaches Moses and says that Korah and Korah's followers are not happy with how things are being done. Moses seeks Yahweh's wisdom and says to the men that it will be Yahweh who will choose who is holy and that there will be a test to show this.

In the second scene: Moses summons Dathan and Abiram, but Dathan and Abiram refuse to come to Moses. Instead, Dathan and Abiram complain about how Moses had promised to bring them to a land flowing with milk and honey but, instead, the Israelites are now worse off than when they were slaves in Egypt. Moses then instructs Korah and Korah's followers with specific details about what they are to do with their censers so that Yahweh can test them to see who is holy.

In the third scene: The next day Korah brings his entire congregation, or community of followers, and they all gather at the tent of meeting, ready to be tested. Then the glory of Yahweh appears to everyone.

The characters in this passage are:

- Korah
- Dathan
- Abiram
- On, although only briefly mentioned at the beginning
- 250 Israelite leaders
- Moses
- Aaron
- Korah's entire congregation, or community of rebels
- The glory of Yahweh

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

This passage begins with some information about the ancestors of Korah, Dathan, Abiram, and On. On appears only briefly in this story. On is a Reubenite, just like Dathan and Abiram. We do not know why On is only mentioned at the beginning, and we do not know what happens to On.

In the first scene Korah is unhappy that Moses and Aaron have so much authority, so Korah decides to form a rebellion against his cousins, Moses and Aaron.

At this point in the story, it is just Korah and Korah's 250 followers. These 250 men were highly respected Israelites, chosen by their fellow Israelites from the congregation or community. Dathan and Abiram do not appear to be present in this scene. Moses summons Dathan and Abiram later on, so it is likely that they are back at their camp at this point. Korah seems to be the spokesperson for the group. We do not know what happens to On, but as On is not mentioned again, On may have changed his mind and left the rebellion.

Korah says that every person in the Israelite congregation is holy, or set apart for Yahweh. Korah wants more than just Aaron's family. Korah wants to be a priest. In response, Moses seeks Yahweh's wisdom and falls face down to submit to what Yahweh has to say.

Moses gets up from the ground and then says to Korah and Korah's followers, "In the morning Yahweh will show who belongs to him and who is holy, and he will have that person come near him." Moses instructs Korah and Korah's men to prepare their incense burners. Moses says the men are to present the incense as an offering to Yahweh and that the men will see who Yahweh chooses as his holy one. Remember, Yahweh will only allow those whom he chooses to enter his presence. Moses contrasts what the men said to Moses with the truth. Moses says it is not Moses who has taken too much authority, but it is Korah and Korah's followers who have taken too much authority.

Korah says, "You have gone too far!" meaning that Korah thinks Aaron and Moses have used too much of their own authority. Korah then asks, "Why do you set yourselves above Yahweh's assembly?" In this case, Yahweh's assembly is the official gathering of Israel's entire congregation or community of people. Korah and his followers are not only doubting Moses' and Aaron's authority, they are questioning Yahweh's authority and judgement.

Moses then says "Now listen, you Levites!" It is not known if all the people gathered with Korah were Levites, but if Moses is saying these words, it may be that most of the people there are Levites.

Moses reminds Korah and the other men of what Yahweh has done for them by asking them questions. Moses does not expect Korah and the men to answer these questions. Moses reminds Korah and the men of the honour of doing the work at Yahweh's tent of meeting, or tabernacle, and the privilege of ministering to the people in the community.

Moses asks Korah, "Who is Aaron that you should grumble against him?" This is a question that Moses does not expect to hear an answer to. Moses is saying that Aaron is not the one they are really complaining about, because Aaron did not choose to be high priest. Moses is saying they are actually complaining against Yahweh, because Yahweh chose Aaron to be the high priest.

Moses tells the men that they are going against the plans of Yahweh, and that the act of Korah gathering these followers to rebel against Moses and Aaron is wrong. These questions show that Moses is angry.

In scene two, Moses sends a message to Dathan and Abiram. Moses asks Dathan and Abiram to come talk with Moses and join in this discussion, but they refuse to go to Moses. It is not clear how this message from Dathan and Abiram gets back to Moses. It is likely that they told a messenger and that messenger delivered the message to Moses in person. Dathan and Abiram remind Moses that they were better off as slaves in Egypt, and that Egypt was a land flowing with milk and honey compared to the wilderness! Dathan and Abiram are angry that Moses has not brought them to the land that Yahweh promised, but instead to a wilderness.

It is Moses' turn to become angry. When Moses receives this message from Dathan and Abiram, Moses asks Yahweh to not accept the offering from these men. Most likely, Moses is referring to a general offering and is really asking Yahweh to not accept the incense offering that the men will bring to him the following day. In any case, Moses does not want Yahweh to accept these men. Moses reminds Yahweh that Moses has taken nothing from these men and Moses has not wronged or hurt any of them. Moses says he has not taken even donkeys from these men. In this culture, taking someone's donkeys would be hurting them. It means that Moses has not taken anything from the men and has not raised himself over them in any way.

Moses then tells Korah and his followers again that they are to appear before Yahweh the next day. Moses tells the men that they each need to bring their own incense burner, or censer, and burn incense and present it before Yahweh.

The order of the third scene may be confusing. The next morning, Korah gathers together all of Korah's followers, and perhaps the entire community of the Israelites, and comes with them to the entrance to the tent of meeting. Each of the people has a censer, and they put burning coals and incense in each censer.

Stop here as a group and, if needed, look at a picture of a censer with coals burning inside, or at a picture of a fire pan that has burning coals on it and that also has smoke coming out of it. Pause this audio here.

Moses and Aaron are also at the tent of meeting, or tabernacle. Aaron is holding his burning censer. Everyone is ready for the test to see who Yahweh will choose to be his holy priest.

Suddenly, the glory of Yahweh appears to the entire assembly. Yahweh is most likely appearing as a very bright light, almost too bright for people to look at. This shows how powerful Yahweh is.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 16:1–19 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:

- Korah
- Dathan
- Abiram
- On, although only briefly mentioned at the beginning
- 250 Israelite leaders
- Moses
- Aaron
- Korah's entire congregation, or community of rebels
- The glory of 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.

At the start of the first scene, just Korah and Korah's 250 followers are present with Moses. Korah accuses Moses and Aaron of having too much authority, and Korah suggests that Moses and Aaron are acting as if they are greater than the rest of Yahweh's people, the Israelites.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Korah, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I have gained a lot of followers, so I have the confidence to challenge Moses," or, "I am fed up with them getting to do all the work as priests," or, "We are going to make some changes around here!"

Ask the person playing Korah's followers, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer with things like: "I am glad we joined this rebellion and are standing up for ourselves," or, "I am glad that Korah is the one doing the talking!" or, "I wonder how Moses will respond?"

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I cannot believe they are questioning my authority and Yahweh's authority!" or, "They have been given so much and now they want the priesthood too!" or, "I need to seek Yahweh's wisdom in this matter."

In response, Moses seeks Yahweh's wisdom and falls face down to submit to what Yahweh has to say. Moses gets up from the ground and then says to Korah and all of Korah's followers that it is Yahweh who will choose who belongs to Yahweh and who is holy. Moses instructs Korah and Korah's men that the following day they are to prepare their incense burners and present them as an offering to Yahweh to see whom Yahweh chooses as his holy one.

Moses reminds Korah and the other men of what Yahweh has done for them. Moses reminds them of the honour of doing the work at Yahweh's tabernacle and the privilege of ministering to the people in the community. Moses tells them that they are going against the plans of Yahweh and that Korah gathering these followers to rebel against them is wrong.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Korah, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "We have to do a test? Fine! We will surely pass as we are all holy!" or, "Yahweh knows how holy we are, so we are not afraid," or, "Even Moses doesn't get to decide who is holy and who is not holy."

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I am glad I asked for Yahweh's wisdom in this," or, "Yahweh will decide who is and who is not holy. Then they will not be able to criticise our authority anymore," or, "Korah seems to have gained followers, but I am not afraid of him."

In the second scene Moses summons Dathan and Abiram, but they refuse to go to Moses. Dathan and Abiram send a message to Moses instead. Dathan and Abiram remind Moses that they were better off as slaves in Egypt and that Egypt was a land flowing with milk and honey compared to the wilderness! They also complain that Moses has not brought them to a new land flowing of milk and honey, but instead to a wilderness where living is hard.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing Dathan and Abiram, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer with things like: "We are angry that you took us away from a land that was better than this one!" or, "We would have been happier to stay as slaves in Egypt," or, "I cannot believe we have been here in the wilderness for so long with no results."

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I am angry now," or, "They were miserable in Egypt and Yahweh saved them from a terrible life," or, "Being here in the wilderness is part of Yahweh's plan. Why can they not see that?"

Moses is angry, so he asks Yahweh to not accept the offering from these men who are rebelling against Moses and Yahweh. Moses reminds Yahweh that Moses has taken nothing from these men and has not wronged or hurt any of them.

Moses then tells Korah and Korah's followers that they are to appear before Yahweh the next day. Moses says that each person needs to bring their own incense burner to burn incense before Yahweh.

The next morning, once Korah had gathered all of the community of Israel, he brought them along to the tent of meeting so that they could see what was happening. Korah and his Israelite followers each took a censer and put incense inside it and set the incense on fire.

Moses and Aaron were also at the tent of meeting. Aaron was holding his burning censer. Everyone was ready for the test to see who Yahweh would choose to be his holy priest. Korah and his rebels were facing Moses and Aaron.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Korah, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer with things like: "I have managed to gather the entire group of my followers!" or, "Now everyone will see that I am holy and that Yahweh has chosen me!" or, "I am ready to face Yahweh and be tested."

Ask the people playing the 250 Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer with things like: "We are ready with our censers, but we are a little nervous as well," or, "We want to rebel, but we also are fearful at what Yahweh might do," or, "We hope Korah knows what he is doing!"

Ask the people playing the rest of the assembly, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer with things like: "We are not sure of what is about to happen," or, "We have come to witness what Korah will do," or, "We are not sure what Yahweh will do."

Ask the people playing Moses and Aaron, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer with things like, "I see Korah has managed to gather his entire community," or, "Korah has gained a lot of followers and seems powerful, but Yahweh is more powerful," or, "Yahweh knows who is holy."

Suddenly, the glory of Yahweh appears to the entire assembly. Yahweh is most likely appearing as a very bright light, almost too bright for people to look at.

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

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 16:1–19 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Throughout this passage, the name **Yahweh** is a name that God gives himself. Use the same word for Yahweh that you have used in previous passages. Yahweh is in the Master Glossary.

Korah, Dathan, Abiram, and On become insolent, which is a way to say that they took action or tried to take authority that they did not have in order to form a rebellion against the leaders.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will describe these men as becoming insolent, or taking authority that they did not have. Pause this audio here.

Korah approaches Moses. With Korah are 250 Israelite men, well-known community leaders who had been appointed members of the council. The council was an official group of leaders that people would have come to for wisdom and help to make decisions.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for council. 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.

Korah accuses Moses and Aaron of having too much authority by saying, "You have gone too far! The whole **congregation**, or **community**, is **holy**, every one of them, and Yahweh is with them. Why then do you set yourselves above Yahweh's **assembly**?" Use the same word for holy that you have used in previous passages, and see holy in the Master Glossary for more information. The assembly is when the entire community of Israelites gathers together for an important or legal reason, but the congregation is just when the community of the Israelites gathers together. Use the same words for the official assembly of Israelites and for community, or congregation of Israelites, as you have used in previous passages.

Moses seeks Yahweh's wisdom and falls face down to submit to what Yahweh has to say. Moses most likely gets down on his knees and bends his head towards the floor. Moses is doing this act of submission to submit to Yahweh's wisdom and to show that Moses is relying on Yahweh for what to do next. This does not mean that Moses is afraid of Korah and Korah's men.

Moses instructs Korah and Korah's men on what they must do. Korah and Korah's men must take **censters**, or fire pans, and tomorrow put burning coals and incense in them and offer them before Yahweh. Censers were sometimes bowl shaped and mounted on a base. Censers could also be wider at the bottom and narrower at the top. censers were possibly made of bronze or sometimes gold. The censers would hold a few pieces of coal to be burned and then people would add the incense. These censers may have been at the end of a long handle to keep a distance between the person holding the censer and the altar but also to prevent the priest's hands from getting burnt. People could put incense such as frankincense or cedar inside and then the burning coals. This incense would then burn and create a sweet smelling smoke.

Stop here as a group and, if needed, look at a picture of a censer with coals burning inside or a picture of a fire pan that has burning coals on it and also smoke coming out of it. Talk about what words you will use to describe the incense burner and coals. Pause this audio here.

Moses says, "Isn't it enough for you that the **God** of Israel has separated you from the rest of the Israelite community and brought you near himself to do the work at Yahweh's tabernacle and to stand before the community and **minister** to them?" Minister meaning to serve the people there. This is also the only place in this passage where the general term for God is used instead of Yahweh. Moses is reminding the people that their God is the God who chose Israel to be his own people. Use the same general term for God that you have used in previous passages. See the Master Glossary for more information about God.

Moses tells the people that, as well as going against Yahweh, they are trying to take the **priesthood** too! Use the same word or phrase for priesthood that you used in previous passages. For more information on priest, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses then summons Dathan and Abiram, but they refuse to come. Dathan and Abiram say, "Isn't it enough that you have brought us up out of a land flowing with milk and honey to kill us in the **wilderness**? And now you also want to lord it over us!" Dathan and Abiram are suggesting that when they were slaves in Egypt, they were already in a land flowing with milk and honey, and that Egypt was better than the wilderness that they are in now. Use the same word for wilderness that you have used in previous passages, and see the Master Glossary for more information about wilderness. To lord something over someone means to behave as if you are their master or more important than someone and have a right to tell that person what to do. If you use the word for **lord** or **master**, use the same word for lord or master that you have used in previous passages, and see the Master Glossary for more information about lord.

Do you recall in previous passages when Yahweh makes his covenant with Abraham about the promised land being the land of Canaan? The land of Canaan is also described as being a land flowing with milk and honey. Only this time Dathan and Abiram are saying that Moses has failed to bring them to that promised land flowing with milk and honey. They also accuse Moses of treating people like **slaves**. Use the same word for slaves that you have used in previous passages, and see the Master Glossary for more information about slaves.

Moses becomes angry and asks Yahweh to not accept the **offering** from these men. Although the word used here is the same word as grain offering, it is most likely just the general word for offering. Most likely, Moses is asking Yahweh to not accept the offering of incense that the men will offer the next day. Use the same word for offering that you have used in the previous passages, and remember that offering is in the Master Glossary.

Once Korah had gathered everyone, he brought them along to the **tent of meeting**, or **tabernacle**, facing Moses and Aaron. Use the same word or phrase for tent of meeting, or tabernacle, that you used in previous passages. Tabernacle is in the Master Glossary.

Suddenly, the **glory** of Yahweh appeared to the entire assembly. Use the same word for glory that you have used in previous passages, and remember that glory is in the Master Glossary. Yahweh is most likely appearing as a very bright light, almost too bright for people to look at. This shows how powerful Yahweh is.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 16:1–19

Audio Content

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Numbers 16:20-35

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 16:20–35 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 16:20–35 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 16:20–35 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Do you recall previously that Yahweh was testing Korah, Dathan, and Abiram along with 250 of their followers? They were all gathered, probably with the entire congregation or community of the Israelites, at the tent of meeting. This group of Israelites either represents all of the Israelite community, or it is the group that followed Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. Then the glory of Yahweh appears.

We continue our story here as Yahweh shows himself to the entire community of Israel and tells Moses and Aaron what he plans to do. Yahweh asks Moses and Aaron to move away from the entire group. This is for Moses and Aaron's protection, as Yahweh is about to kill the entire group of Israelites in an instant.

But Moses and Aaron beg Yahweh not to kill everyone else. They both fall face down to pray and show that they are asking Yahweh for mercy. They ask Yahweh if Yahweh will be angry with the entire community of Israel and if all should die just because one man has sinned. When Moses and Aaron say one man, they are referring to Korah, who had gathered the community of Israel against Moses, Aaron, and Yahweh.

Although Moses says "one man," Moses is also including Dathan and Abiram here as well. This is a question that Moses does not expect Yahweh to answer. Yahweh does reply to Moses, and Yahweh says to ask the groups of people near the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram to move away from them.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell us about a time when you have seen an entire community or group of people suffer the consequences of only one person's sin. How did you feel? Who did you talk to about it? How would you talk to God about this situation? Pause this audio here.

Moses gets up, and most likely Aaron also gets up, and together they go to the area where Korah, Dathan, and Abiram live in their tents. Do you recall how previously Moses summoned Dathan and Abiram, but Dathan and Abiram refused to come and talk to Moses? Some of the Israelite elders go with Moses towards where these rebels are living.

Stop here as a group and look at a picture of the layout of the camps of the 12 tribes, showing where each tribe camped around the tabernacle. Pause this audio here.

Moses may not know what Yahweh is about to do, but he instructs the Israelites who are near the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram to move away from the whole area. Moses also says to the Israelites to not touch anything that belongs to these evil men, because the men have sinned. Sinning makes people unclean, or unfit to worship Yahweh. If the people touched the things of the families who were sinning, they would become unclean also, and Yahweh would also destroy them.

So everyone who was near the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram moved away from them. Dathan and Abiram had come out of their tents and were standing in the entrance of their own tents with their families, which were their wives, children, and little ones, meaning toddlers and babies. We do not know where Korah is at this point as he was previously at the tent of meeting, preparing for the test with his censer. Korah most likely followed Moses to the tents of Dathan and Abiram.

Stop here as a group and look at a picture of a tent that would have been big enough for a large family to live in. Pause this audio here.

Then Moses says that the people will soon know that it was Yahweh who sent Moses to do all these tasks that Moses had done so far on their journey. Moses says that Moses was obeying Yahweh and that these things did not come from the mind of Moses, but from the mind of Yahweh.

Moses says that if these men just continue to live now and die a natural death at some point in the future, then it will prove that Yahweh did not send Moses to lead these people out of Egypt. However, if Yahweh does something supernatural here, and the earth opens its mouth and swallows them with all their belongings, it will prove that Yahweh is in charge. Moses says that if the earth opens up underneath them to form a big hole, they will go down into the realm of the dead, whilst they are still alive. Some translations will say, "they will go down alive into Sheol," which means a wasteland, or a big void where the dead people go. Moses says that if this happens, the people will know that they have hated Yahweh by disobeying him. Moses is reminding them that when they are rebelling against Moses, they are really rebelling against Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Have you ever had to trust in someone else to prove that you were right about something or not guilty of something? How did it feel to put so much trust in someone else when your character or reputation was at risk? Pause this audio here.

As Moses finishes speaking these words, the ground beneath the families of Dathan, Abiram, and Korah split apart. The earth opened its mouth, meaning a huge hole opened up beneath them and swallowed up everything. The hole they fell into was deep and the sand piled back on top of them, refilling the hole. The earth swallowed up all the possessions and followers of Korah, Dathan, Abiram, their wives, and all their children. It is most likely that Korah and his family were near enough to Dathan's and Abiram's tents that he too was swallowed up by the ground. The earth closed up over them and they all died, and they vanished from the community. At some point, Yahweh sent fire to destroy the 250 Israelites leaders, the followers of Korah. This happened either as soon as they began to offer their incense, or now, after the earth had swallowed up the households.

As soon as all the other Israelites saw this happen, they panicked, started running around, and screamed, "The earth is going to swallow us too!"

Stop here and look at a picture as a group of a censer with coals burning inside or a fire pan that has burning coals on it, that also has smoke coming out of it.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 16:20–35 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: Yahweh instructs Moses and Aaron to separate themselves from the congregation of people so that Yahweh can destroy the congregation. Moses and Aaron pray and beg for Yahweh to not let the sin of

one man, Korah, cause the death of others. Yahweh then asks Moses to tell the congregation to move away from the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.

In the second scene: Moses approaches the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram and tells the rest of the congregation to move away from the tents. Dathan and Abiram come out of their tents to see what is happening. Moses says that if these men die a natural death, then Yahweh has not sent Moses. But if something out of the ordinary happens, like the earth opening up and swallowing them up, then it will prove that Korah, Dathan, and Abiram have treated Yahweh with hatred and have questioned Yahweh's judgment.

In the third scene: As soon as Moses has finished speaking these things, the ground opens up and swallows Korah, Dathan, Abiram, and their families and little ones. The Israelites then panic and fear that the same thing will happen to them, so they start running around and screaming. At some point, a fire comes out from Yahweh and burns up the 250 men who were offering the incense.

The characters in this passage are:

- Korah and his family
- Dathan and his family
- Abiram and his family
- 250 Israelite leaders
- Moses
- Aaron
- The entire congregation, or community of the Israelites with them in the wilderness
- Yahweh

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

Yahweh asks Moses and Aaron to move away from the entire congregation of Israel. Yahweh does this to protect Moses and Aaron, because Yahweh is about to kill the entire congregation. Do you recall in the previous passage how everyone had gathered at the tent of meeting to see who Yahweh would choose as holy? There are several thousand people all gathered together. We are not sure what time of day it is, but it most likely would have been during the day.

But Moses and Aaron beg Yahweh not to kill everyone else. They both fall face down to pray. Moses and Aaron are most likely kneeling so far down onto the ground that their faces are almost touching the ground. This posture shows full submission to Yahweh and his desires, but they are also begging Yahweh to have mercy on these people. Moses and Aaron beg Yahweh strongly, or cry out, "God, the God who gives breath to all living things. Will you be so angry with the entire community of Israel that everyone should die just because one man has sinned?" Moses and Aaron do not expect an answer to their question, but they appeal to Yahweh's compassion. Yahweh has created all people and given them breath. Moses and Aaron cannot believe that Yahweh would kill people that Yahweh has created when those people have not sinned themselves. Yahweh shows mercy and instructs Moses to ask people to move away from the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.

Moses, and most likely Aaron, get up and, along with Korah, they walk to the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. Some of the Israelite elders go with Moses.

Although we do not know the exact distance from the tent of meeting to where Korah, Dathan, and Abiram are living, Moses and the rest of the men that go with him are most likely walking towards the tents.

Stop here and, if needed, look again as a group at a picture of the layout of the camps of the tribes of Israel around the tent of meeting. Pause this audio here.

Moses instructs the Israelite community who are near the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram to move away from the whole area. They obey Moses. Moses also says to the community of Israel to not touch anything that belongs to these evil men as it will make them unclean, or not pure. The Israelites believed uncleanness was

contagious, and a holy Yahweh would not allow uncleanness in his camp. Moses warns the Israelite community that they may be "swept away" if they touch anything these evil men have touched. Moses uses special language that reminds people of strong water that can destroy things when it comes too quickly. Moses wants to show the people that Yahweh is serious about punishing sin.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story about punishment or destruction that comes quickly and strongly. How do you describe it? Pause this audio here.

Dathan and Abiram come out of their tents and are standing in the entrance of their own tents with their families, including their wives, children, and little ones, meaning toddlers and babies. We do not know where Korah is at this point, as he was previously at the tent of meeting, preparing for the test with his censer. Korah most likely followed Moses to the tents of Dathan and Abiram.

Stop here as a group and, if needed, look again at a picture of a tent that would have been big enough for a large family to live in. Pause this audio here.

Moses talks about these men continuing to live and suffering the fate of all mankind. All people die, so Moses is saying that these men might just continue to live and die a natural death later. If that happens, it will prove that Yahweh did not send Moses to lead these people out of Egypt. But if Yahweh makes something completely new happen, like the earth opens its mouth and swallows these men with all their belongings, then it will prove that Yahweh is in charge. Moses is fully trusting Yahweh here.

Moses says that if the earth opens up underneath them to form a big hole, they will go down into the realm of the dead and be buried alive. Everyone will know that they treated Yahweh with contempt or hate. They showed by their disobedience that they did not love Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss as a group: The earth is not a person with a mouth, but Moses describes it this way when he talks about the ground opening up and the families falling down into the hole. How will you translate this picture in your language? Pause this audio here.

As Moses finishes speaking these words, the ground beneath them splits apart. A huge hole opens up and swallows up all the people who were disobedient to Yahweh and all of their families and belongings, including Dathan and Abiram, their wives, children, and little ones. It is most likely that Korah and some of his family were near enough to Dathan's and Abiram's tents that he too was swallowed up by the ground. Then the hole filled back up again with the sand and earth.

Although the 250 Israelite leaders were also followers of Korah and Korah's men, the ground did not swallow them up. Yahweh decided to kill them separately. The other people that had witnessed what just happened started to run around and panic, thinking that they were also going to be swallowed up by the ground.

At some point, Yahweh sent fire to destroy the 250 Israelite leaders, the followers of Korah. This happened either as soon as they began to offer their incense, or now, after the earth had swallowed up the households.

These men had been especially disobedient. They most likely believed themselves to be so holy that they could have more power and did not have to obey Yahweh. They showed that they did not trust Yahweh and doubted his authority.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 16:20–35 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatise the passage.

This passage has three scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Korah and his family
- Dathan and his family
- Abiram and his family
- 250 Israelite leaders
- Moses
- Aaron
- The entire congregation or community of 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.

In the first scene Yahweh asks Moses and Aaron to move away from the entire congregation. Yahweh does this for Moses and Aaron's protection, as Yahweh is about to kill the entire congregation.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing Moses and Aaron, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer with things like, "This is so sad. It is not fair that all these people should die because of the sins of this rebel Korah and his men," or, "We will pray to Yahweh to ask if there is another way to save the rest of these people," or, "We will be obedient to what Yahweh asks us to do."

Moses and Aaron beg Yahweh not to kill everyone else, and they fall face down to pray and show that they are asking Yahweh to show mercy. Yahweh shows mercy and instructs Moses to ask people to move away from the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing Moses and Aaron, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer with things like: "Praise Yahweh that he has shown mercy to the other people," or, "At least it is only those that have been part of the rebellion that are being punished," or, "We will be obedient and follow Yahweh's new instructions."

In the second scene Moses, and most likely Aaron, get up and walk along with Korah to the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. Some of the Israelite elders go with Moses.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing Moses and Aaron, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer with things like: "We are not exactly sure what will happen next," or, "Whatever happens next, Yahweh will show that Yahweh is in charge," or, "I hope the other people will listen to us and move away from the tents."

Ask the person playing Korah, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer with things like: "What is going on? What did Yahweh say to Moses?" or, "I am not sure where Moses is marching off to, but I better follow him!" or, "What is going to happen now?"

Moses instructs the Israelite community who are near the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram to move away from the whole area, and they obey Moses. Moses tells them not to touch anything that belongs to these evil men, as it will make them unclean, or not pure. If they touch anything, they will also be swept away because of all the sins of these evil men. The Israelites believed uncleanness was contagious, and a holy Yahweh would not allow uncleanness in his camp.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer with things like: "Why is Moses asking us to move and not touch anything?" or, "What does he mean we will be swept away? Is there a strong wind coming?" or, "Why is Moses standing near the tents of Dathan, Abiram, and Korah?"

Ask the people playing Dathan and Abiram, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer with things like: "What is all that noise happening outside? Why is Moses telling everyone to move away from our tents?" or, "We better step outside of our tents to see what is going on!" or, "Why has everyone backed away from our tents?"

Dathan and Abiram come out of their tents and are standing in the entrance of their own tents with their families.

Moses says that if these men just continue living, it will prove that Yahweh did not send Moses to lead these people out of Egypt. But if Yahweh makes something completely new happen, like the earth opens its mouth and swallows them with all their belongings, then it will prove that Yahweh is in charge. Moses is fully trusting Yahweh here.

Moses says that if the earth opens up underneath them to form a big hole, they will go down into the realm of the dead and be buried alive.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer with things like: "We are not sure what is about to happen, but we are fearful," or, "What will happen if Moses is wrong and the ground does not open up? Moses will look like a fool!" or, "What if Moses is right and the ground does open up and swallow them whole?"

Ask the people playing Dathan, Abiram, and their families, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer with things like: "What is Moses talking about?" or, "The ground cannot just open up and swallow us whole. Moses has gone mad!" or, "We have not done anything wrong. It was Korah who started all this!"

Ask the people playing Moses and Aaron, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer with things like: "We trust Yahweh fully, but we are not sure what will happen next," or, "If the ground does open up and swallow the rebels, how will the other Israelites react?" or, "We pray that everyone else will be safe and that only those rebels will be punished."

In the third scene, as Moses finishes speaking these words, the ground beneath them splits apart. A huge hole opens up and swallows all the people who were disobedient to Yahweh, and all their families and belongings. Then the hole fills back up again with the sand and earth.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing Moses and Aaron, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer with things like: "We have seen Yahweh at work many times, but this shows how powerful Yahweh is," or, "Yahweh is holy and holiness is so important to Yahweh that he will do anything to keep it," or, "We pray that everyone else will learn from this and not rebel."

Ask the people playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer with things like: "We did not realise Yahweh was going to actually cause the ground to swallow all those people up! Was what they did really that bad?" or, "Is Yahweh going to just stop there? Or will he make the ground swallow us up too?" or, "What if we are not holy enough?"

The other people who witnessed what just happened start to run around and panic, thinking that they are also going to be swallowed up by the ground.

Although the 250 Israelite leaders are also followers of Korah and his men, they do not get swallowed up by the ground.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the 250 Israelite leaders, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer with things like: "Yahweh has only killed the leading rebels," or, "Maybe we have gotten away with it. Maybe we passed the holiness test," or, "Maybe we are holy enough and that is why Yahweh is keeping us alive."

Fire came out from Yahweh and then consumed, or burnt up, the 250 men who had been following Korah and were offering the incense.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer with things like: "Now they have killed some of the Israelite leaders," or, "We thought they were very holy. Why did Yahweh kill them too?" or, "What if we are not holy enough; are we going to die too?"

Ask the people playing Moses and Aaron, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer with things like: "We have seen Yahweh at work many times, but this shows how powerful Yahweh is," or, "Yahweh is holy and holiness is so sacred to God that he will do anything to keep it sacred," or, "We pray that everyone else will learn from this and not rebel against Yahweh."

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

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 16:20–35 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Yahweh said to Moses and Aaron, "Separate yourselves from this **community** of Israel, or **congregation**, so I can put an end to them at once." Community of Israel, or congregation, means all of the Israelites who were with them in the wilderness. Use the same word for congregation or community that you have used in previous passages.

Moses and Aaron fell face down and cried out, "O **God**, the God who gives breath to all living things, will you be angry with the entire community of Israel when only one man **sins**?" Use the same word for sin that you have in previous passages, and remember that sin is in the Master Glossary. Moses and Aaron used the general word for God when they cried out to God. Use the same general word for God that you have used in previous passages, and remember that God is in the Master Glossary.

Moses got up and went to Dathan and Abiram, and the **elders** of Israel followed him. 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 for elder that you have used in previous passages, and remember that elder is in the Master Glossary.

Moses warned the congregation, "Move back from the tents of these **wicked** men! Wicked means the same thing as **evil**. Moses is saying that these men are going against what God wants. Use the same word for wicked or evil that you have used in previous passages, and remember that wickedness or evil is in the Master Glossary.

Moses talked about the earth opening its mouth and swallowing people so that they go down alive into the realm of the dead, or **Sheol**. Sheol is the word used throughout the Old Testament for the place of the dead. People believed that Sheol was under the earth. Therefore, they talked about going down to Sheol. Sheol includes the ideas of death, the underground, and grave or place of burial. It was also a place of darkness and silence, weakness, and no joy. Most ancient cultures had a concept of a place for the dead under the earth.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word you will use for **Sheol**. Sheol is in the Master Glossary. If you have translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word here. Pause this audio here.

Then the people really did fall into the hole in the ground and they were gone from the **assembly**. The assembly was the official gathering of the community of Israelites. These families were gone forever from the Israelite people. Use the same word for assembly, or official gathering of the Israelites, that you have used in previous passages.

And fire came out from Yahweh and consumed the 250 men who were offering the incense. We do not know exactly what the fire that came from Yahweh looked like.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How will you translate the idea of a fire coming out from Yahweh? Pause this audio here.

The 250 men would have still most likely have been holding their censers containing incense and burning coals. This incense would create a sweet smelling smoke. Use the same word for incense and censers that you have in previous passages.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 16:20-35

Audio Content

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Numbers 16:36–50

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 16:36–50 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 16:36–50 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 16:36–50 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last passage, some men of Israel rebelled against Yahweh. Yahweh made the earth swallow some of the men and their families, and Yahweh sent fire to burn up 250 of the men who were offering incense. The rest of the people of Israel fled.

This next passage happens right after Yahweh sent the fire to burn up the 250 men.

Yahweh speaks to Moses and gives instructions for Moses to give to Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest. Yahweh probably commands Eleazar to do this task instead of Aaron because, as the high priest, Yahweh does not allow Aaron to be near anything that is unclean. Through Moses, Yahweh tells Eleazar to pick up the censers that had belonged to the men who had been burned and to scatter the burning coals from the censers outside the camp. Eleazar has to do this because the censers now belong to Yahweh. Because the men had presented the censers to Yahweh, the censers are now holy, or set apart from ordinary use. Yahweh tells Eleazar to hammer the censers until they are thin sheets of bronze metal and then attach the sheets of metal to the altar as a covering. We do not know exactly which altar they covered with the sheets of bronze, but it was probably the altar for burnt offerings because we know that the altar for burnt offerings was made of bronze. When the people of Israel see the covering on the altar, they will recognize that it is a sign to remember what happened when the men who were not priests tried to do the work of a priest.

Stop here as a group and look at a picture of a censer. Look at a picture of the altar that they will cover with the thin sheets of bronze metal. Pause this audio here.

So Eleazar takes the censers that the 250 men presented before Yahweh before they died in the fire. Some men hammer out the metal to make it thin so it can cover the altar—a reminder to the Israelites that no one except a descendant of Aaron should approach the altar. If a person who is not a descendant of Aaron approaches the altar, Yahweh will destroy that person like he destroyed Korah and Korah's followers. Eleazar does everything Yahweh commands through Moses.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story about an important or spiritual job that can only be done by certain people in your culture. What happens if the wrong person tries to do that job? Pause this audio here.

But the next day, the whole community of the people of Israel grumble against Moses and Aaron. They accuse Moses and Aaron of killing Yahweh's people. The Israelites gather together against Moses and Aaron, and then all of the Israelites turn and look at the tabernacle. This is what they see: The cloud of Yahweh covers the tabernacle, and the powerful light, or glory, of Yahweh's presence shines brightly. The cloud of Yahweh always covered the tabernacle when the people camped, but this time the cloud of Yahweh and Yahweh's presence are different. The cloud of Yahweh and Yahweh's presence shows the people that Yahweh is about to do something about their rebellion.

Moses and Aaron come to the entrance of the tabernacle. Yahweh speaks to Moses again and tells Moses and Aaron to move away from the people so that Yahweh can kill all the people in a single moment. But instead, Moses and Aaron fall on their faces on the ground to beg for Yahweh to spare the lives of the people. By falling on their faces, Moses and Aaron show that they love the Israelites and are pleading with Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story about a time someone acted on behalf of someone else who was in trouble. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh's wrath comes out from Yahweh, and Yahweh's anger burns against the people, meaning Yahweh is very angry with the people. Yahweh sends a plague. We do not know what the plague looks like, but the plague is killing the people. Therefore, Moses tells Aaron to quickly take Aaron's censer, add burning coals from the altar of incense, and lay incense on the coals. Moses tells Aaron to take the burning incense to the community of people and to atone for the people, or to take away Yahweh's anger and make peace between the people and Yahweh. Moses tells Aaron to do this very quickly because the plague is already killing many people.

Aaron does as Moses says and runs into the middle of the Israelites. Aaron sees that the people have already started to die. Aaron takes incense and lays it on the burning coals in his censer. Aaron stands with his burning incense between the people who have already died and those who are still alive, and the plague stops. Even though Aaron is a priest who was not supposed to be close to dead bodies, he still follows Moses' instructions so that he can save the people. By burning incense and offering it to Yahweh, Aaron makes atonement for the people, or makes peace between the people and Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story about a time someone put themselves between danger and other people in order to save those people, even though that action cost them something. Pause this audio here.

Although the plague stopped, 14,700 people died in that plague, in addition to those who died in the rebellion led by Korah. Aaron returns to Moses at the entrance to the tabernacle when the plague stops.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 16:36–50 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 speaks to Moses. Yahweh gives Moses instructions for Eleazar the priest.

In the second scene: Eleazar obeys the instructions Yahweh gives through Moses.

In the third scene: The next day, the Israelites complain against Aaron and Moses. Yahweh's presence covers the tabernacle. Moses and Aaron go to the entrance of the tabernacle, and Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron to separate themselves from the people so Yahweh can kill the people.

In the fourth scene: Moses tells Aaron to take Aaron's censer, fill it with burning coals and incense, and take away Yahweh's anger because a plague has already begun. Aaron quickly obeys Moses' instructions. The plague stops and Aaron returns to Moses at the tabernacle.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Eleazar
- Aaron
- Israelites

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

In scene one, Yahweh speaks to Moses and gives instructions for Moses to give to Eleazar, Aaron's son. Yahweh tells Eleazar to remove the censers from among the burning coals and the remains of the 250 men who just died. Yahweh also tells Eleazar to take the burning coals outside the camp. A censer is a bronze fire pan that holds burning coals. Priests used censers to burn incense before Yahweh. Because men had presented these censers to Yahweh, the censers are now set apart from everyday use, so Yahweh tells Eleazar to take the censers and to hammer them into thin sheets of bronze metal. Eleazar himself does not do the work, but he instructs workmen to hammer the bronze and cover the altar, probably the burnt offering altar, with the bronze metal sheets. The metal covering on the altar will be a sign, or warning, to the Israelites.

Stop here and discuss: What language will you use to show that something is set apart or special? Pause this audio here.

In scene two, Eleazar obeys Yahweh. Eleazar takes the censers from among the burning coals and human remains and has workmen hammer them out into thin sheets of bronze to cover the altar. The metal covering on the altar will be a sign to remind the Israelites that no one except a descendant of Aaron can approach the altar as a priest. If someone else tries to do the job of a priest, Yahweh will destroy him just as Yahweh killed Korah and Korah's followers.

In scene three, the next day, the whole community of Israel complains again about Moses and Aaron. The Israelites accuse Moses and Aaron of killing Yahweh's people—the 250 men who died in the fire. Even though Moses and Aaron have prayed for Yahweh to spare the Israelites, the people still grumble about Moses and Aaron. As the people complain, all of them turn and look at the tabernacle. Then Yahweh's cloud and the bright light of Yahweh's presence cover the tabernacle. Moses and Aaron approach the entrance to the tabernacle, and Yahweh tells them, "Separate yourselves from the people so I can kill all of them in one instant." However, Moses and Aaron fall on their faces before Yahweh. Moses and Aaron are so distressed that they quickly bow down all the way until their faces touch the ground.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story about a time one person acted on behalf of someone else who was in trouble. What words do you use to talk about this? Pause this audio here.

In scene four, we know the plague has already begun because Moses tells Aaron to take Aaron's censer, fill it with burning coals, and burn incense on it to take away Yahweh's anger and to make atonement for the people. If necessary, you can include the fact that the plague has already begun in your translation to clarify the order of events. To make atonement means to cover the people's sins so that Yahweh will restore his relationship with the people. One of the roles of the priest was to make atonement for the people by offering sacrifices and incense before Yahweh. The last time Moses and Aaron interceded for the people, Yahweh did not punish the people. This time, Moses tells Aaron to hurry, because wrath has come from Yahweh. Yahweh's anger is so intense that he sent a plague that has already begun to kill some of the people.

Stop here and discuss as a group: What words will you use to describe Yahweh's intense anger here? Pause this audio here.

We do not know exactly what the plague was, but it was a deadly punishment from Yahweh. Aaron quickly obeys Moses and runs into the middle of the people. Aaron stands between the people who are dying from the plague and the people who are still alive. The plague stops, and Aaron returns to Moses at the tabernacle. That day, 14,700 people died from the plague along with those who died with Korah.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How will you talk about Aaron standing between the living and the dead to atone for the people? What words will help people understand what Aaron was doing for the people? 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

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 16:36–50 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
- Eleazar
- 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 speaks to Moses. Yahweh gives instructions for Moses to give to Eleazar the priest. Yahweh says Eleazar should pull all the censers out of the burning coals and human remains of the 250 men killed by the fire. Yahweh also tells Eleazar to scatter the burning coals outside of the camp. Yahweh instructs Eleazar to take the censers and hammer them into thin sheets of bronze metal. These sheets will be fastened to the altar as a sign to the Israelites.

Pause the action.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you thinking and feeling?" You may hear: "I am angry with the people for rebelling against me," or, "I feel sad that I had to kill some people for rebelling," or, "I am hopeful that the people will remember what happened and will not rebel against me or my chosen leaders again."

Moses gives Yahweh's instructions to Eleazar, and Eleazar obeys. Eleazar takes the censers that the 250 men offered before Yahweh and has men hammer them into thin sheets of bronze. The sheets of metal are fastened to the altar as a reminder to the Israelites that no one who is not a descendant of Aaron should approach the altar or perform priestly duties. If an unqualified person tries to perform a job for a priest, Yahweh will destroy that person just like Yahweh destroyed Korah and Korah's followers.

Pause the action.

Ask the person playing Eleazar, "What are you thinking and feeling?" You may hear: "I do not understand why I have to do all these things," or, "I am concerned that I will be unclean after touching the censers that were among the dead men," or, "I am honored that Yahweh chose to use me to create this reminder for the people to obey."

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you thinking and feeling?" You may hear: "I feel hopeful that the people will listen and obey Yahweh now," or, "I feel cautious because I think the people still have rebellious hearts towards Yahweh."

The next day, the entire community of the Israelites begin to complain against Moses and Aaron again. They accuse Moses and Aaron of "causing the death of Yahweh's people."

Pause the action.

Ask the persons playing Moses and Aaron, "What are you thinking and feeling?" You may hear: "I knew the people's hearts had not changed! They are still rebelling against Yahweh," or, "I feel so sad that the people have forgotten that just yesterday we prayed and Yahweh did not kill all the people. We saved the people's lives, but they still complain!"

All the community looks towards the tabernacle, and Yahweh's cloud and bright light cover the tabernacle. Moses and Aaron move to the entrance of the tabernacle, and Yahweh tells them to "Separate yourselves far from the people so I can destroy them all in one instant." However, Moses and Aaron again fall on their faces before Yahweh.

Pause the action.

Ask the persons playing Moses and Aaron, "What are you thinking and feeling?" You may hear: "I love the Israelites and really want Yahweh not to kill any more of them," or, "I am afraid of Yahweh's judgment on the people."

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you thinking and feeling?" You may hear: "I am angry with the people for rebelling, and I am tired of keeping them alive," or, "I am frustrated that Moses and Aaron keep trying to save these rebellious people."

Ask the Israelites, "What are you thinking and feeling?" You may hear: "We are angry that the 250 men died, because we respected them," or, "We do not trust Yahweh to lead us safely with Moses and Aaron," or, "We want to be as important as the priests."

Moses turns to Aaron and tells Aaron to fill the censer with burning coals and to lay incense on top of it. Moses tells Aaron to hurry to the people with the burning incense to atone for the people, because Yahweh's anger burns against them and a plague has already begun to kill some people.

Pause the action.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you thinking and feeling?" You may hear: "I am terrified that Yahweh will punish all the people," or, "I feel confident that Aaron can make peace between Yahweh and the people," or, "I am anxious about what Yahweh will do."

Aaron runs into the midst of the people with the burning incense. Some people have already died from the plague, and Aaron stands between them and the people who are still alive. Because Aaron stands between the dead and living people with burning incense, and makes atonement for the people, the plague stops. But, 14,700 people died from the plague along with Korah and Korah's followers. After the plague stops, Aaron returns to Moses at the entrance to the tabernacle.

Pause the action.

Ask the person playing Aaron, "What are you thinking and feeling?" You may hear, "I am relieved that Yahweh stopped the plague when I presented the burning incense before Yahweh," or, "I am so sad that so many people had to die before I could intervene."

Ask the people playing Israelites, "What are you thinking and feeling?" You may hear: "We are sad that so many of our community died," or, "We are angry that Yahweh punished us so severely with a plague," or, "We are relieved that Aaron intervened for us and made peace between us and Yahweh," or, "We are terrified of doing something else wrong and causing Yahweh to kill more of us!"

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 16:36–50 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 proper name for God. Use the same word for Yahweh that you used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh speaks to Moses with instructions for Eleazar the **priest**. Priests were people appointed by Yahweh to be in-between Yahweh and the people. Priests offered sacrifices and performed rituals to make the people clean before Yahweh. Only people from the tribe of Levi, descendants of Aaron, could be priests. Use the same word for priest that you used in previous passages. For more information on priests, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses that Eleazar should collect the **bronze censers** from among the burning coals and remains of the 250 men killed by fire because they **sinned**. A censer is a fire pan designed to hold burning coals in order to burn incense. Censers were used by priests in the tabernacle to burn incense before Yahweh. Use the same word for censer, for bronze, and for sin that you used in previous passages. Sin and bronze are in the Master Glossary.

Stop here and look at a picture of a censer as a group, if needed. Discuss what word you will use for **bronze**. If you have already translated bronze in another book of the Bible, use the same word here. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Eleazar through Moses that Eleazar should take the censers and hammer them into thin sheets of bronze to be used as a covering for the **altar**. Eleazar should do this because the censers are **holy**. To be holy means to be dedicated to Yahweh and to be set apart for Yahweh's special purposes. Holy things cannot be used for everyday purposes. Use the same word for holy and for altar that you used in previous passages. For more information on holy and altar, refer to the Master Glossary.

The day after Eleazar obeys, the whole **congregation**, or **community**, of **Israelites** complained against Moses and Aaron. The Israelites are descendants of Abraham. Use the same word for Israelites and community, or congregation, that you used in previous passages. For more information on Israelites, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Israelites complain and accuse Moses and Aaron of killing Yahweh's people. Then the Israelites all turn to look at the **tabernacle**, or tent of meeting. This was a large tent that was moved from place to place for the Israelites to worship Yahweh. Yahweh lived in the tabernacle as a cloud when the people were stopped to camp. It is also called the tent of meeting. Use the same word for tabernacle or tent of meeting that you used in previous passages. For more information on tabernacle, refer to the Master Glossary.

The people see the **glory** of Yahweh covering the tabernacle. The glory of Yahweh is something that is special and rare. It is so impressive that people who see it are often afraid. Sometimes it shows a big bright light. Yahweh's glory is also Yahweh's power and splendor. Use the same word for glory of Yahweh that you used in previous passages. For more information on glory, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron to separate themselves from the people so Yahweh can kill all the Israelites in a single moment. Moses and Aaron fall on their faces before Yahweh. Moses tells Aaron to take his censer and offer fire and incense to Yahweh to make atonement for the people because Yahweh's **wrath**, or strong anger, has come. To make atonement is to cover over and reconcile, or restore, a relationship with Yahweh when the relationship has been broken due to sin or impurity. Only priests could offer incense or sacrifices to make

atonement for the people. Use the same words for atonement and wrath that you used in previous passages. For more information on atonement and wrath, refer to the Master Glossary.

Aaron runs with his censer into the midst of the people. Aaron moves quickly because Yahweh has already sent a **plague** among the people. A plague is a deadly punishment from Yahweh. Some plagues are described as disease or pestilence, but in this passage we do not know exactly what the plague is, only that it causes immediate death.

Aaron places himself between the Israelites who are dead and those who are still alive. Because Aaron presents incense to Yahweh, the plague stops. 14,700 people died from the plague along with Korah and Korah's followers. Aaron returns to the entrance of the tabernacle where Moses waits.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 16:36-50

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Numbers 17:1–13

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 17:1–13 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 17:1–13 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 17:1–13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the past several passages, we have seen how, again and again, the Israelites rebelled against Yahweh and the leaders Yahweh gave them. In the passage right before this one, the Israelites rebelled against Moses and Aaron, and many people died. Aaron stood between the people who died and those who were still alive to make atonement for the people. After doing this, Aaron returned to stand with Moses at the entrance to the tabernacle. In this passage, Yahweh makes sure that the people understand the authority of the priests.

Yahweh speaks to Moses and gives instructions for the Israelites. Yahweh says the leaders of each father's house or tribe should each bring a staff to Moses, and Moses should write the name of each leader on that leader's staff. These leaders came from the 12 tribes of Israel who left Egypt. These 12 tribes include the two half tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, but they do not include the tribe of Levi because that tribe is set apart to serve Yahweh. However, Yahweh tells Moses to write or carve Aaron's name on the staff of the Levites, because Yahweh chose Aaron to be the leader of the tribe of Levi. Yahweh tells Moses to include Aaron's staff along with the other 12 so there will be a staff representing each tribe. The staff Yahweh wanted the leaders to bring was probably an official walking stick that the leaders of each tribe used as a symbol of authority.

Stop here and look at a picture of a staff as a group. What kinds of symbols of authority do the leaders in your culture have? Why do you have those particular symbols? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses to put the staffs in the tabernacle, or tent of meeting, in front of the testimony. The testimony was the stone tablets containing the ten commandments or words Yahweh gave to the people to keep in the ark of the covenant. Yahweh wants Moses to put the staffs in front of the ark, where Yahweh regularly meets with Moses. Yahweh will choose one leader's staff, and that staff will sprout or flourish even though it is not alive. Yahweh's choice will show the people who will lead them as a priest. In this way, Yahweh will finally put a stop to the people's constant complaining against Moses and Aaron. Moses gives Yahweh's instructions to the people, and all the leaders obey Yahweh's commands. They bring their staffs to Moses. Moses places all the staffs in the presence of Yahweh in front of the ark, or testimony.

Stop here and look at a picture of the tabernacle and the ark of the covenant. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story about a time when it was not clear who was in charge. How did people react? What happened when that leader became clear? Pause this audio here.

The next day, Moses goes into the tabernacle and looks at the staffs. Overnight, Aaron's staff had not only sprouted buds, but it also had grown full flowers and almonds!

Stop here and look at a picture of buds, flowers, and almonds from an almond tree. Pause this audio here.

Moses brings all of the staffs outside the tabernacle, and the leaders see what has happened to Aaron's staff. Each leader takes his own staff. Yahweh tells Moses to put Aaron's staff back in the tabernacle in front of the testimony. Aaron's staff will be a sign, a visible warning and reminder to the Israelites, that any rebellious people should not challenge Yahweh's authority or the authority of the leaders Yahweh chooses. This should end the constant grumbling of the Israelites so they will not risk dying. Moses does everything exactly as Yahweh commands.

The Israelites become afraid. They cry out to Moses in panic, "Look! We are doomed! We are all lost! Anyone who even comes close to the tabernacle dies. Are we all doomed to die?" The people have rebelled against Yahweh over and over, and Yahweh has punished their rebellion severely. Now the people are terrified of Yahweh's punishment as they recognize how serious Yahweh takes their rebellion.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 17:1–13 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 two scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh speaks to Moses and tells Moses to instruct the leaders of the 12 tribes and the tribe of Levi to bring staffs to Moses. Yahweh tells Moses to write the name of each leader on that leader's staff. Yahweh tells Moses to collect the staffs and to put them in the tent of meeting in front of the testimony. Yahweh will cause the staff of the man Yahweh chose to lead as priest to sprout. Moses follows Yahweh's instructions.

In the second scene: The next morning, Moses enters the tabernacle to find that Aaron's staff has sprouted buds, flowers, and almonds overnight. Moses brings the staffs outside the tabernacle to the leaders, but Yahweh tells Moses to leave Aaron's staff in front of the testimony, or ark, as a reminder to the people not to complain anymore about who will lead. But the people are terrified and cry out, "Are we all going to die?"

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Leaders of each tribe or father's house, 12 people
- Aaron, leader of the tribe of Levi
- Israelite people

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

In scene one, Yahweh speaks to Moses with instructions for the leader of each father's house, or the leader of each ancestral tribe. These leaders are the chiefs of each tribe that came out of Egypt. Each tribe represents a son of Jacob, except one: the tribe representing Joseph split into two half tribes for Joseph's two sons. This makes 12 tribes. However, Yahweh also tells Moses to include a staff for the tribe of Levi. Even though both Moses and Aaron come from the tribe of Levi, Yahweh chose Aaron to lead the tribe of Levi. While Moses leads all of the Israelites, Aaron will lead the tribe of Levi as the priest. Yahweh has already chosen the tribe of Levi to serve Yahweh. Most of the people in the tribe of Levi, or Levites, will serve Yahweh in the tabernacle. Yahweh has also already chosen the Levites who are descendants of Aaron to be priests in the tabernacle. The staff or rod that each leader brings with his name on it is probably an official walking stick that indicates the authority of a leader of a tribe.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story about different types of leadership roles. How do people know who performs what role? What do you call each leadership role? Pause the audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses to put the staffs in the tabernacle, or tent of meeting, in front of the testimony where Yahweh meets with people. This means that Moses should put the staffs in the tabernacle in front of the ark of the covenant, which contains ten commandments from Yahweh written on two stone tablets.

Yahweh will choose a leader, and that leader's staff will sprout. The dead stick will produce living buds, flowers, and fruit. With this action, Yahweh will show the Israelites who Yahweh has chosen to lead the Israelites. This will stop the people from grumbling against Moses and Aaron, because the people will know once and for all who Yahweh chose to lead them as a priest. Moses tells the people all of Yahweh's instructions, and the leaders bring their staffs to Moses. Moses puts the 12 staffs from the tribes, plus Aaron's staff, exactly where Yahweh commanded.

The next day, Moses enters the tabernacle. The language of the story shows us that something miraculous and incredible has happened. Moses sees that Aaron's staff has miraculously produced buds, fully grown flowers, and almonds! Almonds were valuable fruits with white flowers that symbolized purity and holiness. Almond flowers also decorated the lampstand in the tabernacle.

Stop here and look at a picture of almond flowers and fruit. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss how you will show the surprising revelation that Aaron's staff has produced buds, flowers, and almonds! How will you show that this is an important part of this story? Pause this audio here.

All of the Israelites are at the tabernacle to see what will happen. Moses brings all of the staffs out of the tabernacle and shows them to all the Israelites. Each leader takes his own staff, but Yahweh tells Moses to put Aaron's staff back in front of the ark. Aaron's staff will be a reminder or sign to the rebellious people so that they will stop complaining. The people now know that Yahweh has chosen Aaron and his descendants to lead the tribe of Levi and to be priests for the people. Moses has done everything Yahweh told him to do.

But the people are now terrified that Yahweh will kill anyone who even comes close to the tabernacle. Their words show that they are panicking: "Look! All of us are doomed to die! Whoever goes near Yahweh's tabernacle will die! Are we all going to die?" The people are not expecting an answer to their questions. They have watched Yahweh punish their rebellion over and over, and now they are terrified that Yahweh will punish them no matter what they do.

Stop here and discuss: Tell a story about a time when someone truly panicked. What words and tone of voice will you use to show how terrified the Israelite people are? 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

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 17:1–13 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
- Leaders of each father's house, 12 people
- Aaron, leader of the tribe of Levi
- Israelite 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.

Yahweh speaks to Moses and gives instructions for the people. Yahweh says the leader of each father's house should bring a staff to Moses, and Moses should write the name of each leader on each leader's staff. This also includes Aaron's staff as the leader of the tribe of Levi. Moses should put all 13 of the staffs in the tabernacle in front of the testimony, or the ark that contains the ten commandments. Yahweh will cause the staff of the man Yahweh has chosen as the leader or priest for the people to sprout. When the people see the man Yahweh chose, they will stop complaining against Moses and Aaron.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I am relieved that Yahweh will make Yahweh's choice of leader clear once and for all," or, "I am frustrated with the people's constant complaining about who leads."

Moses speaks to the people and shares Yahweh's instructions. The leaders obey and each one gives Moses a staff. Aaron also gives his staff to Moses. Moses places all of the staffs in the tabernacle as Yahweh instructed.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the leaders of each father's house, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The people might answer things like: "We are hopeful that Yahweh will make leadership clear," or, "We want to trust Yahweh to show us who should lead," or, "We each want to be chosen to lead the people!"

Ask the person playing Aaron, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The person might answer things like: "I already know Yahweh has chosen me to lead as priest, and I am ready for Yahweh to confirm that," or, "I am

wearied of the people's grumbling about leadership," or "I feel angry that Yahweh has to confirm his choice one more time."

The next day, Moses enters the tabernacle and looks at the staffs. The staff that belongs to Aaron has sprouted buds, flowers, and almonds. Moses brings the staffs outside the tabernacle, and each leader takes his staff. However, Yahweh told Moses to place Aaron's staff back in the tabernacle in front of the ark. Aaron's staff will remind the rebellious people not to grumble, or they will die.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the leaders of each father's house, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The people may answer things like: "We are angry that we were not chosen to lead, and we do not understand why Yahweh chose Aaron and the Levites," or, "We are afraid that Yahweh may judge us for our grumbling."

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The person may answer things like: "I am relieved that Yahweh's choice is clear," or, "I am not certain the people will stop complaining now."

Ask the person playing Aaron, "What are you thinking and feeling?" That person may answer things like: "I am glad that Yahweh has made it clear that I am to lead as priest," or, "I am not sure why Yahweh chose me, but I will trust Yahweh."

Moses obeys Yahweh's command and returns Aaron's staff to its place in front of the ark in the tabernacle. Then all the people of Israel come to Moses in a panic. The people are afraid that anyone who even comes near the tabernacle will die. They tell Moses, "Look! We are all doomed! Anyone who even comes near the tabernacle will die. Are we all doomed to die?"

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Israelites, "What are you thinking and feeling?" The people may answer things like: "We are terrified that Yahweh will kill us all just like Yahweh killed Korah and his followers and the people with the plague," or, "We do not know if we can trust Yahweh now," or, "We are horrified at how our rebellion against Yahweh will affect us now."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 17:1–13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Yahweh speaks to Moses and gives instructions for the leaders of each father's house. The leaders of each father's house are the chiefs of the ancestral tribes that left Egypt and are named after Jacob's 12 sons. There are 13 ancestral tribes because Jacob's son Joseph had two sons who are both named in the tribes of Israel as half tribes. Use the same word or phrase for Yahweh and for leaders of each father's house or tribe that you used in previous passages. Yahweh is in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses the leaders should each bring a **staff** to Moses, and Moses should write the name of each leader on each leader's staff. Moses must also include the staff belonging to Aaron to represent the tribe of Levi. The staffs are probably ceremonial walking sticks, or rods or branches, that signify the authority of each tribal leader.

Stop here and look at a picture of a staff as a group. Discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **staff**. 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 place the staffs in the tent of meeting in front of the **testimony**. The tabernacle is a large tent the Israelites moved from place to place. It is where the Israelites worshiped Yahweh. In this passage, it is called the tent of meeting or tent of the testimony. The testimony is the ten commandments or words that Yahweh wrote on two stone tablets to show Yahweh's covenant with his people. Yahweh told the people to put the tablets in the **ark of the covenant**. The ark of the covenant is a box made of acacia wood and placed in the part of the tabernacle where Yahweh met with people. In this passage, the ark of the covenant is referred to as

the testimony. Moses also says that he put the staffs before Yahweh's presence, which also means that Moses put them in front of the ark, because the ark of the covenant is the place where Yahweh himself meets with his people. You may use whichever description you prefer, either testimony or ark of the covenant. Use the same words for tabernacle or tent of meeting, for testimony, and for ark of the covenant that you used in previous passages. For more information on tabernacle, testimony, and ark of the covenant, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses that the staff of the man Yahweh chooses will **sprout**. The staff that sprouts will belong to the man Yahweh has chosen to lead the people, and the people will stop complaining. To sprout means that a branch produces flower buds, which blossom into full flowers and then produce fruit.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **sprout**. 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 morning, Moses brings the staffs out of the tabernacle. The staff belonging to Aaron has sprouted and produced buds, full flower blossoms, and ripe almonds.

Stop here and look at a picture of buds, flowers, and fruit from an **almond** branch as a group. Discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for almonds. 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 gives each leader his staff, but Yahweh instructs Moses to return Aaron's staff to the tabernacle in front of the Ark or testimony. This staff will be a **sign** to the Israelites that they should not rebel and complain about leadership again, or they will die. A sign is something unusual that is happening for a special reason. A sign is very similar to a miracle. Use the same word for sign that you used in previous passages. For more information on sign, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses did exactly what Yahweh told him. But the people were terrified and cried in panic, "Look, we are all doomed to die! Anyone who even comes close to the tabernacle will die. Will we all perish?"

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 17:1-13

Audio Content

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Numbers 18:1–7

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 18:1–7 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 18:1–7 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 18:1–7 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In a recent passage Yahweh punished Korah and Korah's followers by putting them to death for challenging the authority of Aaron and Moses and for entering Yahweh's presence to burn incense in an unauthorised way. In the last passage, following Korah's rebellion, Yahweh confirmed Aaron as the high priest Yahweh chose to lead Israel. Yahweh confirmed Aaron as the high priest Yahweh chose by making Aaron's walking stick bud and

produce almonds overnight, while the sticks of the other ancestral tribal leaders of Israel did not. The Israelites worried that Yahweh would now kill them if they merely approached the tent of meeting, so they cried out to Moses.

So Yahweh speaks to Aaron following the fearful cry of the Israelites in the previous passage. Yahweh addresses Aaron directly, which is unusual. Yahweh usually speaks to both Moses and Aaron, to Moses alone, or to Aaron through Moses. Yahweh says to Aaron that Aaron, Aaron's sons, and "his father's household" will "bear the guilt in connection with the sanctuary." Aaron's sons are his two remaining sons, Eleazar and Ithamar the priests. "His father's house" refers to the Levite clan of Aaron's grandfather Kohath, the Kohathites. You will remember that Aaron the high priest, and Aaron's sons the priests, are responsible for the sanctuary, or tabernacle, and all the holy items in it. The Kohathites are responsible for assisting Aaron and Aaron's sons with the upkeep of the holy objects from the sanctuary and for carrying the holy objects when the Israelites are moving camp. Yahweh instructs Aaron, saying that Yahweh will hold Aaron, Aaron's sons, and the Kohathites accountable for any offences the Israelites commit against the sanctuary. Aaron, Aaron's sons, and the Kohathites will receive judgement from Yahweh if anybody breaks Yahweh's commands concerning the sanctuary or the holy objects in it. The Israelites will break Yahweh's command if they come too close to the sanctuary. They will also break Yahweh's command if they handle sacred objects in a way which Yahweh does not allow.

Yahweh speaks to Aaron and says that only Aaron and Aaron's sons will bear the guilt connected with priesthood. Only Aaron the high priest, and Aaron's sons the priests, will be responsible, or will receive judgement, if they break any rules relating to doing the priestly duties. Those duties include making offerings, burning incense, and performing various purification rites. If the priests break Yahweh's instructions on how to perform those duties, Yahweh will punish them. This includes allowing somebody other than Aaron, or Aaron's sons, to carry out the duties.

Yahweh continues speaking to Aaron. Yahweh says that Aaron is to also bring Aaron's kinsmen, the whole tribe of Levi, so that the tribe of Levi will join Aaron and Aaron's sons and assist them at the tent of testimony. Only Aaron and Aaron's sons are allowed to serve Yahweh at the tent of testimony, but the remaining Levites, the clans of Gershon and Merari, are to come and support Aaron and Aaron's sons as they serve at the tent. You will remember that earlier in the book of Numbers, Yahweh gave the Gershonites and the Meratites the task of carrying parts of the tent of meeting, but not the holy objects inside the tent.

Yahweh continues speaking. The Levites are to fulfil their duties to Aaron and to the tent as a whole, which means the whole compound of the tabernacle. But Yahweh does not allow the Levites to come near the sacred items inside the sanctuary or the altar of sacrifice in front of the entrance to the tabernacle. If the Levites disobey these laws, Yahweh will punish them, Aaron the high priest and the other priests, by death.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Think about the government or a religious group in your people group. Discuss the different roles and responsibilities that various members of the government or the religious group have. Talk about what happens to the people and to their leaders when the people who work for the leaders do not do their work correctly. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh continues instructing Aaron. Yahweh says that the Levites are to join Aaron and take responsibility for the care of the tent of meeting, where Yahweh meets with his people. However, Yahweh does not allow any unauthorised person who is not a Levite to come near Aaron and Aaron's sons to assist them as they work there.

Yahweh says to Aaron that Aaron and Aaron's sons alone are to personally perform the sacred duties inside the sanctuary and at the altar. Yahweh does not permit anyone else, not even the Levites, to perform these priestly duties at the sanctuary. Yahweh makes these rules for the priests to make sure that Yahweh never again has to punish the Israelites in his anger for breaking the rules against the sanctuary and its holy objects like he did during the rebellion of Korah.

Yahweh emphasises to Aaron that Yahweh personally chose the Levites out of all the tribes of Israel. You will remember that Yahweh had set apart for Yahweh every firstborn son in Israel to assist Moses and Aaron in serving the people. Then Yahweh chose every man from the tribe of Levi to replace the firstborn sons from every Israelite tribe. Yahweh dedicated, or set apart, the Levites for Yahweh so they would serve him by assisting the priests at the tent of meeting. Yahweh said that the Levites were a gift from Yahweh to Aaron the high priest and to Aaron's sons the priests.

Yahweh said to Aaron that only Aaron and Aaron's sons were allowed to do the work of priests and to serve in any way at the altar of sacrifice or inside the curtain where the Most Holy Place is. In fact, you will remember that Yahweh only allowed Aaron the high priest to serve in the Most Holy Place. Yahweh said that the work of Aaron and Aaron's sons as priests was a gift, or a blessing, from Yahweh. Yahweh would punish by death any outsider who was not Aaron's descendant, including the other Levites, who came near the sacred objects that they used to worship Yahweh. They could not come near the sacred objects in the sanctuary, so that meant that they could not come into the sanctuary.

Stop and discuss as a group: In your community, what kinds of groups are responsible for different important roles in the community? For example, what tribes or families are known to do certain types of jobs? How do you know which families are responsible for which activities in the community? Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 18:1–7 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 four scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh speaks to Aaron. Yahweh tells Aaron that Yahweh will hold Aaron, Aaron's sons the priests, and the Levite clan of Kohathites accountable for any offences the Israelites commit against the sanctuary, or tabernacle. Yahweh tells Aaron that only Aaron the high priest, and Aaron's sons the priests, will be responsible if they break any rules relating to doing priestly duties.

In the second scene: Yahweh tells Aaron that Aaron is to bring Aaron's relatives, the whole tribe of Levi, so that they will join Aaron and Aaron's sons and assist them at the tent of testimony. The Levites are to take care of the whole compound of the tabernacle. But Yahweh does not allow the Levites to come near the sacred items inside the sanctuary or the altar of sacrifice in front of the entrance to the tabernacle. Yahweh also does not allow anyone who is not a Levite to assist Aaron and Aaron's sons.

In the third scene: Yahweh tells Aaron that Aaron and Aaron's sons alone are to personally perform the sacred duties inside the sanctuary and at the altar. Yahweh does not permit anyone else to perform these priestly duties at the sanctuary.

In the fourth scene: Yahweh tells Aaron that Yahweh personally chose the Levites out of all the tribes of Israel. The Levites are a gift from Yahweh to Aaron the high priest and to Aaron's sons the priests. Yahweh has set the Levites apart for Yahweh, so the Levites will serve Yahweh by assisting the priests at the tent of meeting. However, only Aaron and Aaron's sons are allowed to do the work of priests and serve in any way at the altar of sacrifice or inside the curtain where the Most Holy Place is. Yahweh tells Aaron that the work of Aaron and Aaron's sons as priests is a gift, or a blessing, from Yahweh.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Aaron the high priest
- Aaron's sons the priests
- Aaron's father's household, or the Levite clan of Kohathites
- The whole tribe of Levi

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

The first scene continues the story from the previous passage. Yahweh speaks to Aaron after the Israelites cried in fear when they witnessed Aaron's staff bud and produce almonds.

Stop here and as a group discuss words or phrases you will use to show that this story continues from the story in the previous passage. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh addresses Aaron directly. Yahweh says to Aaron that Aaron, Aaron's sons, and "his father's household," or the tribe of Kohathites, would "bear the guilt in connection with the sanctuary." Aaron, Aaron's sons, and the Kohathites will receive punishment from Yahweh if anybody breaks Yahweh's commands concerning the sanctuary or the holy objects in the sanctuary. Yahweh also tells Aaron that only Aaron the high priest and Aaron's sons the priests will be responsible, or will receive punishment, if they break any rules relating to doing priestly duties. If the priests break Yahweh's instructions on how to perform these duties, Yahweh will punish them.

In the second scene Yahweh continues speaking to Aaron. Yahweh says that Aaron is to also bring Aaron's relatives, the whole tribe of Levi, so that the Levites will join Aaron and Aaron's sons and assist them at the tent of testimony. The Levites are to fulfil their duties to Aaron and to the tent as a whole, which means the whole compound of the tabernacle. But Yahweh does not allow the Levites to come near the sacred items inside the sanctuary or the altar of sacrifice in front of the entrance to the tabernacle. If the Levites disobey these laws, Yahweh will punish the Levites, Aaron the high priest, and the other priests, by death.

Yahweh summarises to Aaron the responsibilities of the priests and of the rest of the Levites. Yahweh wants to make sure that everyone understands each role and that Aaron and Aaron's sons, the priests, are in authority over the others. Yahweh says that the Levites are to join Aaron and be responsible for the care of the tent of meeting, where Yahweh meets with Yahweh's people. However, Yahweh does not allow any unauthorised person to come near Aaron and Aaron's sons as they work there. Yahweh does not allow anyone who is not a Levite to assist Aaron and Aaron's sons.

In the third scene Yahweh says to Aaron that Aaron and Aaron's sons alone are to personally perform the sacred duties inside the sanctuary and at the altar. Yahweh does not permit anyone else, not even the Levites, to perform these priestly duties at the sanctuary. Yahweh makes these rules for the priests to make sure that Yahweh never again has to punish the Israelites in Yahweh's anger for breaking any rules against the sanctuary and its holy objects, like Yahweh did during the rebellion of Korah.

In the fourth scene Yahweh says to Aaron, "Look! I have taken your brothers the Levites from among the people of Israel." Yahweh is using language that shows that Yahweh is saying something important. The important thing Yahweh is telling Aaron is that Yahweh personally chose the Levites out of all the tribes of Israel. Yahweh says that the Levites are a gift from Yahweh to Aaron the high priest and to Aaron's sons the priests. Yahweh dedicates, or sets apart, the Levites for Yahweh, so the Levites will serve Yahweh. The Levites are to serve Yahweh by assisting the priests at the tent of meeting.

Stop here and as a group discuss: When telling a story in your language, how do you tell the audience that you are saying something important? What words or phrases do you use? Pause the audio here.

However, Yahweh says that only Aaron and Aaron's sons are allowed to do the work of priests and serve in any way at the altar of sacrifice or inside the curtain where the Most Holy Place is. Yahweh emphasises that the priestly duty belongs only to Aaron and Aaron's sons, and these things are Aaron's responsibility. Yahweh says that the work of Aaron and Aaron's sons as priests is a gift, or a blessing, from Yahweh. Yahweh will punish by death any outsider who is not Aaron's descendant, including the other Levites, if that person comes near the sacred objects or the sanctuary. Here again Yahweh summarises to Aaron the responsibilities of the Levites and the priests. Yahweh wants to make sure that everyone understands each role.

Stop here and as a group do the following activity: Using sticks and stones, or drawing on the ground, create a picture of the courtyard and the tent of meeting. Select four types of items to represent Aaron the high priest, Aaron's sons the priests, the Levite clan of the Kohathites, and the entire tribe of Levites. Talk about how the responsibilities of the high priest, the priests, the Kohathites, and the Levites are similar and how they are different. 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

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 18:1–7 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
- Aaron the high priest
- Aaron's sons the priests
- Aaron's father's household, or the Levite clan of Kohathites
- The whole tribe of Levi

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 Aaron, "You, your sons and your family are to bear the responsibility for offences connected with the sanctuary, and you and your sons alone are to bear the responsibility for offences connected with the priesthood."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Aaron, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "Yahweh is making me, my sons, and the Kohathites personally responsible for guarding the sanctuary," or, "Yahweh really loves his nation Israel and wants me, my sons, and the Kohathites to protect them from dying. We are to stop them from coming too close to the sanctuary," or, "My sons and I need to make sure we perform our priestly duties well, according to Yahweh's instructions. If we do not, Yahweh will punish me and my sons."

Yahweh continues instructing Aaron, "Bring your fellow Levites from your ancestral tribe to join you and assist you when you and your sons minister before the tent of the covenant law. They are to be responsible to you and are to perform all the duties of the tent, but they must not go near the furnishings of the sanctuary or the altar. Otherwise both they and you will die. They are to join you and be responsible for the care of the tent of meeting—all the work at the tent—and no one else may come near where you are."

"You are to be responsible for the care of the sanctuary and the altar, so that my wrath will not fall on the Israelites again. I myself have selected your fellow Levites from among the Israelites as a gift to you, dedicated to the Lord to do the work at the tent of meeting."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "The Levites are my precious possession. I set them apart to serve me instead of the firstborn of all the tribes of

Israel," or, "I give the Levites as a gift to the priests. The Levites will assist the priests in ministering to my people Israel."

Yahweh continues instructing Aaron, "But only you and your sons may serve as priests in connection with everything at the altar and inside the curtain. I am giving you the service of the priesthood as a gift. Anyone else who comes near the sanctuary is to be put to death."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Aaron, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "It is such an honour that Yahweh chose me and my sons to be his priests. Even when it is hard to carry out some tasks, we must remember that priesthood is a gift from Yahweh," or, "I am a bit nervous! We have a big responsibility to guard the sanctuary from unauthorised people coming too close. If we fail to stop them, they will die!"

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 18:1–7 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Yahweh says to Aaron that Aaron and Aaron's sons, and Aaron's father's household, or the clan of Kohathites, shall bear the guilt in connection with the **sanctuary**. Sanctuary refers to a holy place, and in this case it means the tabernacle or tent of meeting itself, and all the sacred or holy objects in the tabernacle. Use the same word or phrase for sanctuary that you used in previous passages. For more information on sanctuary, refer to the Master Glossary.

Aaron and Aaron's sons shall bear the guilt in connection with their **priesthood**. Priesthood means the actions of being a priest or priests.

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

Yahweh tells Aaron to bring with him the tribe of Levi, that they may join Aaron and Aaron's sons and assist them while Aaron and his sons are before the tent of the testimony, or tent of covenant law. The Levites will join Aaron and keep guard over the tent of meeting for all the service of the tent, and no outsider will come near Aaron.

There are two ways to refer to the tent in this passage: tent of the **testimony**, or **covenant** law, and tent of meeting. Moses may have used the name tent of the testimony because the testimony, or the two stone tablets with the Law that Yahweh gave to Moses, were there in the ark. Some translations say covenant law instead of testimony. Moses may have used the name tent of meeting because this is where Moses met with Yahweh. Tent of the testimony, or tent of meeting, means the same as sanctuary, or tabernacle. Use the same phrase or word you used for tent of the testimony or covenant law and tent of meeting that you used before. Testimony and covenant are in the Master Glossary, if you use one of those words and need more information.

The tribe of Levi are to be responsible to Aaron and perform duties over the whole courtyard and the tent of meeting, but they are not to come near the furnishings of the sanctuary or the **altar**. 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 Aaron's sons, the priests, are to take care of the sanctuary and altar so that no one else touches them and experiences Yahweh's **wrath**. Use the same word or phrase for wrath as you used in previous passages. For more information on wrath, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh has taken Aaron's relatives, the **Levites**, from among the people of Israel. The Levites are a gift to Aaron from Yahweh to assist Aaron in his duties at the tent of meeting. The Levites refers to men from the tribe of Levi. Use the same word or phrase for Levites as you used in previous passages. For more information on Levites, refer to the Master Glossary.

People or sons of Israel refers to Yahweh's chosen nation, the descendants of Abraham's grandson Jacob, or Israel. Use the same word or phrase for **people of Israel** or **Israelites** that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Israelites, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 18:1–7

Audio Content

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Numbers 18:8–20

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 18:8–20 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 18:8–20 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 18:8–20 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last passage Yahweh reminded Aaron what the duties of the priests and the Levites were regarding who could enter the tent of meeting. Yahweh also gave the priests special new responsibilities in connection with keeping the tent of meeting holy. If anyone broke Yahweh's rules, even the Levites, Yahweh would hold the priests responsible, and they would have to die along with the people who broke the rules.

In this passage Yahweh tells Aaron what Aaron and the priests will receive for their work.

Yahweh continues to speak to Aaron alone. Even though Yahweh speaks to Aaron alone, the things Yahweh is telling Aaron also concern Aaron's whole extended family. Yahweh says that Yahweh is putting Aaron in charge of the holy offerings, or gifts dedicated to Yahweh, which the people of Israel brought to Yahweh. You will remember that people brought offerings such as animals, birds, grain, oil, new wine, gold, and silver and gave them to the high priest. The high priest then presented the offerings before Yahweh according to Yahweh's instructions. Most often the high priest burned a part of, or all of, the food offerings, or sacrifices, on the altar of burnt offering. The people brought their gifts either to worship Yahweh, to say thank you to Yahweh, or to ask Yahweh to forgive their sin or wrongdoing, or to make them clean. Yahweh says to Aaron that from now on, Aaron and Aaron's sons, the priests, will always receive part of those offerings that the Israelites bring to Yahweh. Yahweh gives these offerings to the priests because Yahweh himself is the one who will provide the

priests' livelihood. Yahweh explains that the priests will get this livelihood from the gifts that others bring to the altar instead of from a field like the other Israelites do.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What do employers pay as salary in your people group? Is it mostly money, or are there any other things employees may receive in payment? How do the employers decide how much to pay as salary? Pause this audio here.

Now Yahweh lists the different food offerings that Yahweh is giving to the priests, and Yahweh explains who can eat these food offerings.

Yahweh says to Aaron that Yahweh will receive a share of the most holy offerings, or sacrifices, which is the part of the offering that Aaron did not burn on the altar. Yahweh calls these offerings "most holy" because the people dedicated them, or set them apart, for Yahweh's special purposes. The offerings include all grain offerings, all sin or purification offerings, and all guilt offerings, which the people bring to Yahweh. Grain offerings consist of finest flour and oil. People bring grain offerings to show honour and respect to Yahweh in worship. A sin or purification offering can be a bull, goat, lamb, doves, or flour. People bring sin or purification offerings to make payment for becoming unclean or sinning unintentionally in other ways. A guilt offering is a ram, a lamb, or silver. People bring guilt offerings for sins or wrongdoings against Yahweh or others. Everything that the Israelites bring to Yahweh as a most holy, or sacred, offering belongs to Aaron and Aaron's sons. The sacrifices are a way for the Israelites to bring, or give back, to Yahweh a small portion of what Yahweh has given them as a blessing.

Aaron and Aaron's sons are to eat any of the offerings "in a most holy place." This may mean that the priests need to eat the offerings in the court of the tabernacle, as the most holy place, and that they are to treat the gifts as most holy when they eat them. Only males can eat these offerings. Yahweh says that the offerings are "to be holy to Aaron." Yahweh is possibly stressing that Yahweh reserved the offerings specifically for Aaron and Aaron's sons, or Yahweh may be instructing Aaron and Aaron's sons to consider the offerings as holy.

Yahweh tells Aaron about other special contributions that will also be for Aaron and Aaron's descendants who are priests. Yahweh calls the contributions wave offerings, or heave offerings. These are part of the peace or fellowship offering. People bring peace offerings to express gratitude to Yahweh and show that they are in a good relationship with Yahweh. When people present wave, or heave, offerings to Yahweh, the priest waves or lifts up the breast or right thigh of the offered animal by the altar of burnt offering, but the priest does not burn the offerings. Yahweh gives this offering to Aaron and Aaron's descendants—both male and female—to eat, from then and for all time to come. Any member of Aaron's family who is ceremonially clean can eat the wave offerings. The words clean and unclean here are not talking about whether something is clean or dirty from the outside. A clean person is someone who is fit for service to God, who is acceptable to participate in worship to God. A person who is unclean is unfit for service to God. People are naturally clean or pure, but if they accidentally come into contact with something unclean, like a dead body, they have to offer a sin or purification offering to be clean again.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: This passage talks about offerings that only men can eat and about offerings that both men and women from Aaron's household can eat. Talk about differences in pay between different groups of people in your community. For example, what are the differences in pay between men and women, older and younger people, and those who live in your area versus those who have come from a different area? Talk about the differences in jobs that men and women can do in your culture. What are the jobs that only men can do, only women can do, or both men and women can do? Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What are the things within the religions in your people group that would make a person unclean, or unfit, to take part in worship of a god? Talk about situations where people consider other people unsuitable to take part in non-religious celebrations or gatherings due to illness or other circumstances. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh says to Aaron that Yahweh is giving Aaron all the best of the first produce, which the Israelites bring to Yahweh each year as a first fruit offering: olive oil, new wine, and grain. Grain includes beans and peas as well as crops like wheat and barley. Any member of Aaron's family who is ceremonially clean can eat the first fruit offerings.

Yahweh is also giving to Aaron everything that the people of Israel devoted, or set apart totally for Yahweh alone. A devoted item is something that people absolutely and forever give over to Yahweh. Nobody can redeem that devoted item, or buy it back, no matter how worthy the item is that they want to offer in that item's place. Also, people cannot use the devoted item for some other purpose.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Yahweh gives the offerings that the people bring to Yahweh as a reward to Aaron and to the priests for their work. Discuss what happens to offerings brought to other gods that people worship in your culture. Talk about the kind of reward that priests of those other religions get for their work. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh describes another category of offerings that Yahweh is giving to the priests. Everything that opens the womb, whether man or beast, that people offer to Yahweh, is to belong to Aaron. So, Yahweh is giving to Aaron every firstborn son and every firstborn male animal that the Israelites present to Yahweh. But Yahweh tells Aaron that Aaron has to accept payment from the Israelites so they can redeem, or buy back, every firstborn child and every firstborn male animal that is ritually unclean. Firstborn sons belong to Yahweh but are not acceptable for sacrifice because their life is sacred. Firstborn male animals that are ritually unclean are also not acceptable for sacrifice, because they are unfit to be in Yahweh's presence. Therefore, Yahweh cannot accept the firstborn males of unclean animals as sacrifices.

Yahweh tells Aaron that Aaron should collect the redemption price, or payment, for each firstborn son when he is one month old. The price to release firstborn sons is to be five shekels, or five pieces of silver weighed according to the standard weight of the tabernacle, or the tabernacle shekel. The tabernacle shekel weighs 20 gerahs, or about 12 grams of silver. So, the redemption price for a firstborn son is around 60 grams of silver.

However, Aaron is not to accept payment to release a firstborn male calf, lamb, or goat. Yahweh considers these animals holy, or set apart, for Yahweh, and they belong to Yahweh. After a person who brings an animal kills it in front of the priest, the priest has to throw the blood of the animal against the altar of burnt offering. You will remember that the blood of an animal represents the life of the animal. By throwing the blood against the altar, the priest is giving the life of the animal over to Yahweh. The priests have to burn the fatty parts of these animals, because all the fat belongs to Yahweh. The priests are not allowed to eat the fat of the animals. The fat is an offering that the priests make with fire, which gives a smell that is pleasant to Yahweh.

Yahweh says that the meat of the firstborn male calf, lamb, or goat will belong to Aaron, just as the breast meat of the wave, or heave, offering and the right thigh are to be Aaron's.

Yahweh is now repeating what Yahweh said to Aaron in this passage so far. Yahweh says that he is giving Aaron and Aaron's sons and daughters the contributions, or holy offerings, that people of Israel bring to Yahweh. From now on, Aaron and Aaron's sons and daughters will always receive part of these offerings that the Israelites bring to Yahweh. Yahweh gives these contributions, or offerings, to the priests and allows the priests to keep them for their work. Yahweh says that these privileges will apply forever—no one can stop them. Yahweh calls this act of giving Aaron and the priests these privileges a "covenant of salt." The term "covenant of salt" means a covenant that nobody can break. This covenant, or agreement, will be between Yahweh and Aaron and Aaron's children, or offspring.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What type of covenants, or binding agreements, do people make in your people group? Discuss customs that people follow when making such agreements. Pause the audio here.

Yahweh says that Aaron will have "no inheritance in their land, and neither would he have a portion among them." This means that the priests will receive no land inheritance in Canaan among the other tribes of Israel. Yahweh says that he will be the priests' inheritance instead of land. Yahweh promises to give the priests whatever they need as they serve Yahweh as priests, because the priests do not get a land inheritance. Yahweh says he is giving the priests the offerings due to Yahweh instead.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 18:8–20 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 seven scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh speaks to Aaron as the representative of Aaron's extended family and Aaron's descendants. Yahweh tells Aaron that Yahweh is putting Aaron in charge of the holy offerings that the people of Israel bring to Yahweh. From now on, Aaron and Aaron's sons, the priests, will always receive a share of the offerings that Yahweh instructed Aaron not to burn, including all grain offerings, all sin or purification offerings, and all guilt offerings. Yahweh says that only Aaron and Aaron's sons may eat these offerings.

In the second scene: Yahweh tells Aaron that Yahweh is also giving Aaron wave offerings, or heave offerings. Yahweh tells Aaron that any member of Aaron's family, whether male or female, who is ceremonially clean, may eat the wave, or heave, offerings.

In the third scene: Yahweh tells Aaron that Yahweh is giving Aaron all the best of the first produce that the Israelites give Yahweh each year: olive oil, new wine, and grain. Any member of Aaron's family who is ceremonially clean can eat the firstfruit offerings.

In the fourth scene: Yahweh tells Aaron that Yahweh is giving Aaron and Aaron's descendants everything that the people of Israel devoted, or set apart, for Yahweh alone.

In the fifth scene: Yahweh is giving to Aaron every firstborn son, and every firstborn male animal that the Israelites present to Yahweh. Yahweh tells Aaron that he must redeem, or buy back, every firstborn child. Aaron also must redeem every firstborn male animal that is ritually unclean. Yahweh sets the redemption price for the firstborn sons. However, Yahweh tells Aaron that Aaron must not redeem, or buy back, the firstborn of a cow, of a sheep, or of a goat, because they are holy. The meat of the firstborn male calf, lamb, or goat is to belong to Aaron, just as the breast meat of the wave, or heave, offering and the right thigh are to be Aaron's.

In the sixth scene: Yahweh summarises what Yahweh said in this passage so far. Yahweh tells Aaron that Yahweh is giving Aaron and Aaron's sons and daughters the contributions that people of Israel bring to Yahweh. From now on, Aaron and Aaron's descendants will always receive part of those offerings for their work. Yahweh calls the act of Yahweh giving Aaron and the priests these privileges a covenant of salt, or a covenant that nobody can break.

In the seventh scene: Yahweh tells Aaron that Aaron and Aaron's descendants will receive no land inheritance in Canaan among the other tribes of Israel. Yahweh himself will be the priests' inheritance instead of land.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Aaron
- People of Israel
- Aaron's male descendants
- Aaron's female descendants
- Everyone in Aaron's house who is clean
- Firstborn sons of Israel

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

Yahweh continues to speak to Aaron alone. Even though Yahweh speaks to Aaron alone, the things Yahweh is telling Aaron apply also to Aaron's extended family. Yahweh starts this section by using language that shows that Yahweh is saying something important.

Stop here and discuss as a group: When telling a story in your language, how do you tell the audience that you are saying something important? What words or phrases do you use? Pause the audio here.

Yahweh is putting Aaron in charge of the offerings—all the holy offerings that the people of Israel bring to Yahweh. Yahweh says to Aaron that from now on, Aaron and Aaron's sons, or descendants, the priests, will always receive part of these offerings.

The passage now lists the different food offerings that Yahweh is giving to the priests, and Yahweh says who can eat these offerings.

Yahweh says to Aaron that Aaron and Aaron's male descendants will receive a share of the most holy offerings, or sacrifices, that the people bring. The sacrifices are "most holy" because people offer them to Yahweh. Aaron will receive the part of the grain, sin, or purification offerings and guilt offerings that Yahweh instructed Aaron not to burn. The word "bring" in Hebrew means "give back." The sacrifices are a way for the Israelites to give back to Yahweh a small portion of what Yahweh has given to the Israelites as a blessing.

Stop here and discuss as a group: What different words or phrases do you use in your language to describe giving or bringing something to someone? What words do you use to describe someone giving a gift? What words do you use to describe someone paying someone a salary? What words do you use to describe someone giving back what they owe or giving back part of what they received? Pause the audio here.

Yahweh speaks to Aaron about the manner of eating the offerings. Aaron and Aaron's male descendants are to eat any of the offerings "in a most holy place." This may mean that the priests need to eat the offerings in the court of the tabernacle, as the most holy place, and that they are to treat the gifts as most holy when they eat them. Yahweh says that the offerings are "to be holy to Aaron." Yahweh is possibly stressing that Yahweh is reserving the offerings specifically for Aaron and Aaron's sons, or Yahweh may be instructing Aaron and Aaron's sons to consider the offerings as holy.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How will you talk about describing how the offerings will be "holy to Aaron?" Pause the audio here.

Yahweh tells Aaron about other special contributions that will also be Aaron's. When Yahweh says that the contributions are to be "Aaron's," Yahweh means "Aaron and his descendants." Yahweh calls the contributions wave offerings, or heave offerings. When people presented wave, or heave, offerings to Yahweh, the priest waved or lifted up the breast or right thigh of the offered animal by the altar of burnt offering, but the priest did not burn the offerings. Any member of Aaron's family who is ceremonially clean can eat the wave offerings.

Yahweh says to Aaron that Yahweh is giving Aaron all the best of the first produce that the Israelites give Yahweh each year: olive oil, new wine, and grain. Grain included beans and peas as well as crops like wheat and barley. Any member of Aaron's family who is ceremonially clean can eat the firstfruit offerings.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How will you translate "grain" when it refers to things like beans, peas, and crops like wheat and barley? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh is also giving to Aaron everything that the people of Israel devote, or set apart totally for Yahweh alone. When people devote something to Yahweh, no one can ever redeem it or take it back.

Yahweh describes another category of offerings that Yahweh is giving to the priests. Every male person or animal that "opens the womb," or is the firstborn of its mother, belongs to Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How do you talk about your firstborn children? How do you describe firstborn humans and firstborn animals? Pause this audio here.

But Yahweh tells Aaron that Aaron has to accept payment from the Israelites so they can redeem, or buy back, every firstborn child and every firstborn male animal that is ritually unclean. Yahweh tells Aaron that Aaron should collect the redemption price, or payment, for each firstborn son when he is one month old. The price to release them is to be five shekels, or five pieces of silver weighed according to the standard weight of the tabernacle, or the tabernacle shekel. The tabernacle shekel weighs 20 gerahs. The gerah is the smallest unit of weight in Israel. People estimate the gerah to weigh 0.6 grams, so one shekel weighed about 12 grams. So, the redemption price for a firstborn son is about 60 grams of silver.

Now Yahweh makes a contrast with the firstborn male calves, lambs, and goats. These animals belong to Yahweh. People are not able to buy these animals back. The person who brings the animal kills it in front of the priest. Then the priest throws the blood of the animal against the altar of burnt offering. Then the priest burns

the fatty parts of the animals. The burning fat makes a pleasing smell for Yahweh. Yahweh says that the meat of the firstborn male calf, lamb, or goat will belong to Aaron, just as the breast meat of the wave, or heave, offering and the right thigh are to be Aaron's.

Now Yahweh summarises everything again to emphasise that these privileges last forever. Yahweh says that from now on, Yahweh is giving Aaron and Aaron's male and female descendants the contributions, or holy offerings, that people of Israel bring to Yahweh. Yahweh calls the act of Yahweh giving Aaron and the priests these privileges a covenant of salt, which is a covenant that nobody can break. This covenant, or agreement, between Yahweh and Aaron, and Aaron's children, or offspring, will last forever.

Stop here and discuss as a group: What different words do you use to describe a covenant or an agreement in your language? Pause the audio here.

Then Yahweh speaks to Aaron, but Yahweh is talking about the entire family of Aaron. Yahweh says that Aaron will have "no inheritance in their land, and neither would he have a portion among them." This means that the priests will receive no land inheritance in Canaan among the other tribes of Israel. Yahweh says that Yahweh will be the priests' "portion and inheritance" instead of land. Yahweh promises to give the priests whatever they need as they serve Yahweh as priests. By giving Aaron and Aaron's descendants meat and grain from the offerings people bring to Yahweh, Yahweh gives Aaron and Aaron's descendants Yahweh's portion, and Yahweh is the inheritance of Aaron's descendants. Yahweh is repeating the words "portion" and "inheritance" in this passage to stress that Yahweh will be the priests' inheritance instead of land.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 18:8–20 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
- Aaron
- People of Israel
- Aaron's male descendants
- Aaron's female descendants
- Everyone in Aaron's house who is clean
- Firstborn sons 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.

Yahweh gives these further instructions to Aaron: "I myself have put you in charge of all the holy offerings that are brought to me by the people of Israel. I have given all these consecrated offerings to you and your sons as your permanent share."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Aaron, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "Yahweh is so generous! He is sharing his holy offerings with us!" or, "Are we worthy to receive Yahweh's holy offerings? Yahweh has given us the most precious things he has as our pay," or, "Being a priest is such an honour. Yahweh really values our work."

From now on Aaron and Aaron's sons, the priests, will always receive a share of offerings that Yahweh instructed Aaron not to burn, including all grain offerings, all sin or purification offerings, and all guilt offerings. Yahweh says that only Aaron and Aaron's sons can eat these offerings.

Yahweh tells Aaron that Yahweh is also giving Aaron wave offerings, or heave offerings. Any member of Aaron's family, whether male or female, who is ceremonially clean, can eat the wave, or heave, offerings.

Yahweh tells Aaron that Yahweh is giving Aaron all the best of the first produce that the Israelites give Yahweh each year: olive oil, new wine, and grain. Any member of Aaron's family who is ceremonially clean can eat the firstfruit offerings.

Yahweh is also giving to Aaron everything that the people of Israel devote, or set apart totally for Yahweh alone. Yahweh is also giving to Aaron every firstborn son, and every firstborn male animal that the Israelites present to Yahweh. Yahweh tells Aaron that Aaron has to redeem, or buy back, every firstborn child. Aaron also has to redeem, or buy back, every firstborn male animal that is ritually unclean. Yahweh sets the redemption price for the firstborn sons at five shekels, or five pieces of silver weighed according to the tabernacle shekel.

However, Yahweh tells Aaron that Aaron is not to redeem, or buy back, the firstborn of a cow, of a sheep, or of a goat, because they belong to Yahweh. The priest is to throw the blood of the animal against the altar and burn the fat as a food offering. The meat from these animals will belong to Aaron, just as the breast meat of the wave, or heave, offering and the right thigh are to be Aaron's.

Yahweh tells Aaron that Yahweh is giving Aaron and Aaron's male and female descendants the contributions that people of Israel bring to Yahweh. From now on, Aaron and Aaron's descendants will always receive part of these offerings for their work. Yahweh calls the act of Yahweh giving Aaron and the priests the privileges a covenant of salt, which is a covenant that nobody can break.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Aaron's sons, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "Yahweh has truly provided for us! He is sharing all the different offerings with us," or, "Yahweh cares about our whole household, including the women who do not work as priests," or, "Yahweh said that Yahweh's provision is a covenant, which will last forever. When we do our work at the tent of meeting, Yahweh will never stop looking after us and our families."

Yahweh says to Aaron, "You priests will receive no inheritance of land or share of property among the people of Israel. I am your share and your inheritance."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "The priests are my special possession. I will not give any land to them though. I am their inheritance. I want to care for all their needs myself. It gives me pleasure to do that."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 18:8-20 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Yahweh gives these further instructions to Aaron: "I myself have put you in charge of all the holy offerings that are brought to me by the Israelites. I have given all these consecrated or holy offerings to you and your sons as your permanent share."

Yahweh is the personal name for God, and this name is used throughout this passage. Use the same name for Yahweh, and the same term for **Israelites**, that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh and Israelites, refer to the Master Glossary.

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.

Consecrate, or make **holy**, means to dedicate something or set it apart for God. Use the same word or phrase for consecrate or holy that you have used in previous passages. For more information on consecrate or holy, refer to the Master Glossary.

Everything that the Israelites **bring** to Yahweh as a most holy, or sacred, offering belongs to Aaron and Aaron's sons. In Hebrew, the word that people translated here as "bring" means "to give back."

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

Yahweh continues to give instructions to Aaron: "This portion of all the most holy offerings—including the grain offerings, sin or purification offerings, and guilt offerings—will be most holy, and it belongs to you and your sons. You must eat it as a most holy offering."

Grain offerings consisted of finest flour and oil. People brought grain offerings to show honour and respect to Yahweh in worship. Use the same word or phrase for grain offering that you have used in previous passages. For more information on grain offering, refer to the Master Glossary.

A **sin or purification offering** could be a bull, goat, lamb, doves, or flour. People brought sin offerings to restore their relationship with Yahweh and to restore their standing as acceptable to Yahweh if they became unclean or sinned unintentionally in other ways. Use the same word or phrase for sin offering that you have used in previous passages. For more information on sin offering, refer to the Master Glossary.

A **guilt offering** was a ram, a lamb, or silver. People brought guilt offerings to acknowledge their wrong doing and to restore their relationship with Yahweh or others. Use the same word or phrase for guilt offering that you have used in previous passages. For more information on guilt offering, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh continues to speak to Aaron: "This also is yours: the contribution of their gift, all the wave offerings of the people of Israel. Any member of your family who is ceremonially clean may eat of these offerings."

Wave offerings, or heave offerings, were a part of the peace offering. Use the same word or phrase for wave offering that you have used in previous passages. For more information on wave offering, refer to the Master Glossary.

The words **clean** and **unclean** here are not talking about whether something is clean or dirty on the outside. A ceremonially clean person was someone who was fit for service to God. Ceremonially clean animals were animals that had split hooves and chewed cud, like cows, sheep, or goats, among others. Some unclean animals ate meat and did not have split hooves. Unclean animals included pigs and horses, among others. Use the same word or phrase for unclean that you have used in previous passages. For more information on clean/unclean, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh says that the **devoted things** belonged to Aaron. A devoted item is something that people absolutely and forever give over to Yahweh. Nobody can redeem that item, no matter how worthy the item is that they want to offer in that item's place. Also, people cannot use the devoted item for some other purpose. Use the same word or phrase for devoted that you have used in previous passages.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **devoted**. 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 is to **redeem** the firstborn human males when they are one month old. The redemption price is five **shekels** of silver, which people measure by the weight of the sanctuary shekel, which equals twenty gerahs. A

shekel is a unit of weight. Shekels used in the sanctuary, or sanctuary shekels, were different in weight from ordinary shekels. Gerahs were the smallest unit of weight. People estimated the gerah to weigh 0.6 grams. Use the same words or phrases for redeem and shekel that you have used in previous passages. For more information on redeem and shekel, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh did not permit Aaron to redeem the firstborn of cattle, sheep, or goats. Cattle, sheep, and goats were holy, or set apart, for Yahweh. Yahweh instructed Aaron to sprinkle their blood on the **altar**, and to burn their fat as a special gift, a pleasing aroma to Yahweh. Here the word altar refers to the altar of burnt offering, which was just outside the tabernacle. 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 says that the meat of these animals will belong to Aaron, just like the breast and right thigh that Aaron presented by waving them as a special offering before the altar. Yahweh calls it an eternal and unbreakable **covenant** of salt between Yahweh and Aaron, and this covenant would also apply to Aaron's descendants. 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.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 18:8-20

Audio Content

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Numbers 18:21-24

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 18:21–24 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 18:21–24 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 18:21–24 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage Yahweh told Aaron that Yahweh is giving Aaron and the priests the offerings that the Israelites bring to Yahweh as a gift. Yahweh is giving the offerings to the priests for their work. The priests will not receive an inheritance of land in Israel, like the other Israelite tribes. Yahweh will be the priests' inheritance, and Yahweh will provide for the priests' needs.

Yahweh continues to speak to Aaron in order to give Aaron instructions. In this passage Yahweh tells Aaron what the Levites will receive for their work.

Yahweh says that Yahweh will give the Levites the tithes that the Israelites give to Yahweh. Yahweh will do this because the Levites serve Yahweh by taking care of the tent of meeting. You will remember that a tithe is an offering that the Israelites dedicate to Yahweh as a sign of gratitude to show that they knew that all they have belongs to Yahweh. Every Israelite will give one tenth of what the land produces, both crops from the soil and fruit from the trees. The Israelites will also set apart every tenth animal in their herd as holy to Yahweh. Yahweh is giving the Levites these tithes that the Israelites bring to Yahweh. It is not clear whether the tithe the Levites receive includes animals from the flock and herd.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Yahweh is giving the Levites gifts that the Israelites give to Yahweh. Does the government of your people group collect money, crops, or animals from the people? If so, how does the government use the money, crops, or animals that they collect? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh adds that from this time on, the Israelites will not come again near the tabernacle, or tent of meeting. If the Israelites approach the tent of meeting, they will "suffer the consequences of their sin," or die because they do wrong.

The people who came close to the tabernacle did a wrong thing because Yahweh said that only the Levites could serve at the tent of meeting where Yahweh met with Moses. The Levites were to assist the priests at the tent and carry the holy things of the tent of meeting when the Israelites traveled. The service that Yahweh is talking about here refers to the Levites' guard duty to keep the Israelites from approaching the tabernacle, or tent of meeting. Yahweh would punish the Levites if they did not stop people from coming near the tent of meeting. This is a permanent statute, or tabernacle law, for all generations to come.

Also, the tribe of Levi will not receive any inheritance, or territory, like the other Israelites in the land of Canaan. Instead, Yahweh is giving the Levites the tithes that the Israelites bring to Yahweh as a gift. For this reason, Yahweh says that the Levites will not inherit any land in Canaan like the other Israelite tribes.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 18:21–24 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: Yahweh tells Aaron that Yahweh is giving the Levites the tithes that Israelites bring to Yahweh. Yahweh gives the tithes to the Levites for their service to Yahweh.

In the second scene: Yahweh says that from now on, the Israelites will not come near the tabernacle, or tent of meeting, again. If the Israelites approach the tabernacle, they will suffer the consequences of their sin and die.

In the third scene: Yahweh tells Aaron that only the Levites may serve at the tent of meeting. Yahweh will punish the Levites if they do not stop people from coming near the tent of meeting. This is a permanent statute for all generations to come. The tribe of Levi will not receive any inheritance, or territory, like the other Israelites in the land of Canaan.

In the fourth scene: Yahweh says that instead of the land, Yahweh is giving the Levites the tithes that the Israelites bring to Yahweh as a gift. For this reason, Yahweh says that the Levites will not inherit any land in Canaan like the other Israelite tribes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Aaron
- The Levites
- The people of Israel

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

Yahweh continues to speak to Aaron. The text does not mention Aaron, but we know that Yahweh's instructions follow from the previous passage where Yahweh was speaking to Aaron.

Yahweh begins speaking by changing his focus from the priests in the previous passage to the Levites in this passage. Yahweh says that Yahweh is giving the Levites the tithes that the Israelites bring to Yahweh. Because of the Levites' service to Yahweh, Yahweh is giving the tithes to the Levites as an inheritance instead of giving them an allotment of land.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How do you show that you begin a new topic in a story? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh adds that from now on, the Israelites will not come again near the tabernacle, or tent of meeting. If the Israelites approach the tabernacle, they will suffer, or experience the consequences of their sin, and die because they do wrong.

Yahweh says that only the Levites can serve at the tent of meeting where Yahweh meets with Moses. The Levites are to assist the priests at the tent. Yahweh will punish the Levites if they do not stop the Israelites from coming near the tent of meeting. This is a permanent law, or statute, for all generations to come. Also, the tribe of Levi will not receive any inheritance, or territory, like the other Israelites in the land of Canaan.

Instead, Yahweh is giving the Levites the tithes that the Israelites bring to Yahweh as a gift. Now Yahweh reminds Aaron of the reason that the Levites will not inherit land in Canaan. Yahweh repeats, for emphasis, that Yahweh is giving the Levites the tithes of the Israelites as payment for their work, instead of giving them land.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 18:21–24 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:

- Yahweh
- Aaron
- The Levites
- 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 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 Aaron, "I give to the Levites all the tithes in Israel as their inheritance in return for the work they do while serving at the tent of meeting."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Aaron, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "Yahweh is not only providing for the priests, but for the Levites too! Yahweh cares about all those who serve him," or, "Yahweh is giving the Levites the tithes that the Israelites have brought to Yahweh as a gift. The Levites can carry out their work at the tent of meeting and not worry about what they will eat."

Yahweh continues speaking to Aaron: "From now on the Israelites must not go near the tent of meeting, or they will bear the consequences of their sin and will die. It is the Levites who are to do the work at the tent of meeting and bear the responsibility for any offences they commit against it. This is a lasting statute or law for the generations to come. They will receive no inheritance among the Israelites."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Levites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "Yahweh has given us new, important responsibilities at the tent of meeting. We have to keep the Israelites away from the tent," or, "Yahweh will judge us and punish us if we do not do our work well. These are important rules that will last throughout all future generations."

Yahweh continues speaking to Aaron: "Instead, I give to the Levites as their inheritance the tithes that the Israelites present as an offering to Yahweh. That is why I said concerning them: 'They will have no inheritance among the Israelites.'"

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "The Levites are very precious to me, and they have important work to do guarding the tent where I meet with Moses," or, "I will not give them any land among the other tribes in Canaan. Instead, I will give them the tithes that the Israelites bring to me as a gift. The tithes will be the Levites' inheritance from me."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 18:21–24 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Yahweh gives the **Levites** all the tithes in **Israel** for an inheritance. Yahweh does this in return for the work the Levites do while serving at the **tent of meeting**, or **tabernacle**. This is the same kind of work that all the Levites do—guarding the tabernacle from people coming closer than they should.

Use the same words or phrases for Levites, Israel, Israelites, and tent of meeting that you used in previous passages. For more information on Levites, Israel, Israelites, and tabernacle, refer to the Master Glossary.

A tithe was an offering that the Israelites dedicated to Yahweh as a sign of gratitude, and to show that all they had belonged to Yahweh. Every Israelite would give one tenth of what the land produced, both crops from the soil and fruit from the trees. The Israelites would also set apart every tenth animal in their herd as holy, or set apart for Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **tithe**. Look up tithe 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 made this a permanent **statute** for **generations** to come. A statute is a law or instruction, usually about how to do work at the tabernacle. This would be a statute that would never end, but it would continue for the children and grandchildren of the Levites. Use the same words for statute and generations that you have used in previous passages, and see the Master Glossary for more information about statute and about generations.

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.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 18:21-24

Audio Content

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Numbers 18:25–32

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 18:25–32 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 18:25–32 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 18:25–32 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage Yahweh continued to speak directly with Aaron and told Aaron about the rewards for the Levites. The Levites will receive the tithes of the Israelites as the reward for their work and so that their needs will be met. Like the priests, they will not receive an inheritance of land in Israel.

In this passage Yahweh speaks to Moses and addresses Moses directly. Yahweh commands Moses to tell the Levites the following: "You will receive the tithe from the Israelites. Yahweh is giving the tithe to you as your inheritance, or provision that will last forever. When you receive it, you shall give a tithe of it as an offering to me, Yahweh." You will remember that a tithe was an offering that the Israelites dedicated to Yahweh as a sign of gratitude to show that they knew that all they had belonged to Yahweh. Every Israelite would give one tenth of what the land produced, both crops from the soil and fruit from the trees. The Israelites would also set apart every tenth animal in their herd as holy to Yahweh. The Levites would not inherit land in Canaan, and Yahweh gave them the tithes of the Israelites instead. Just as Yahweh expected the Israelites to set aside a contribution to Yahweh from their large inheritance in the land of Canaan, so the Levites are to set aside such a contribution from their inheritance, or the tithes that they receive from the Israelites.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What contributions or taxes do people have to pay from their income in your people group? What does the amount of contribution or tax depend on and who decides the amount? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh says he will consider the Levites' offering to be the same as what the other Israelites give. Yahweh will consider the Levites' offering as though it was the first grain from their own threshing floor or wine from their own winepress. A threshing floor was a level outdoor area people used for threshing sheaves of grain. Threshing is when people remove the seeds or grain from the husks and straw by hitting them with a hand tool or using oxen to drag a heavy object over them. A winepress was a system of connected basins that people cut into a rock and used for making wine. Yahweh tells Moses that the Levites are to give Yahweh an offering from all the tithes that they receive from the Israelites. Yahweh wants the Levites to give their contribution, or offering for Yahweh, to Aaron as the representative of all the priests.

Stop here and as a group look at pictures of a threshing floor. Pause the audio here.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of a winepress. Pause the audio here.

From the gifts, or tithes, that the Levites receive from the Israelites, the Levites are to give to Yahweh every offering that Yahweh should have. Just as the Israelites' tithes are to be from the "best" parts of their crops, so the Levites' tithes to Yahweh are to be the best part. The best of these offerings is what the Levites must set apart as holy to Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about traditions in your culture that may, for example, require you to prepare the best food for someone or wear your best clothes. Talk about different situations when others expect this of you and what the reasons are for it. Talk about what makes something the "best" in your culture. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh continues to speak to Moses and to give Moses more instruction for the Levites. Moses is to say to the Levites, "You shall give the best of these offerings to Yahweh. Then you may consider the rest as your own, as if you harvested the grain and pressed the grapes yourselves." The Levites are to present to Yahweh the tithes, or the best or holy part, from what they have received from the Israelites. Only then they can keep the rest of the gifts. The remainder of the gift is not holy, or set apart, like the tithe that the Levites have given to the priests. The Levites may consider the remainder as if it were crops from the soil and fruit from the trees and enjoy it like the Israelites enjoy their food.

Yahweh tells Moses to tell the Levites that they and their families can eat the remainder of the Israelite tithe wherever they want. The tithe is their reward for their work at the tent of meeting. "Work, or service at the tent of meeting" here most likely refers to the Levites' guard duty of making sure that no unauthorized people approach the tent of meeting. The Levites' other duty is to assist the priests at the tent and carry the holy things of the tent of meeting when the Israelites travel. Like Yahweh gives offerings to the priests, Yahweh gives offerings to the Levites, because Yahweh himself is the one who will provide the Levites' livelihood. Yahweh explains that the Levites will get this livelihood from the gifts others bring to the altar instead of from a field like the other Israelites do.

Yahweh continues to speak to Moses. Moses is to tell the Levites that Yahweh will not consider the Levites guilty by sinning for accepting Yahweh's tithes if they offer the best part of the tithes to Yahweh first. The Levites show that they honor the Israelites' tithes by setting aside a tithe from the Israelites' tithe as Yahweh's portion to give to the priests. Then the Levites can eat the rest of the Israelites' tithe and Yahweh will not consider them guilty by sinning. But the Levites will defile the Israelites' holy offerings or tithes if they do not give a portion to Yahweh. If they defile the tithe, then Yahweh will punish them by putting them to death.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 18:25-32 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 visualize this passage.

This passage has six scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh tells Moses to tell the Levites that when they receive the Israelites' tithe, they are to give an offering of a tithe to Yahweh from the tithe they receive from the Israelites. Yahweh will consider the Levites' offering to be the same as if they gave the first grain from their own threshing floor or wine from their own winepress.

In the second scene: Yahweh tells Moses how to give this tithe to Yahweh. The Levites are to give Yahweh's contribution, or offering, to Aaron as the representative of all the priests.

In the third scene: Yahweh tells Moses that the Levites are to give to Yahweh the tithe offering due to Yahweh out of all the tithes they receive from the Israelites. The Levites are to dedicate, or set apart, the best part of the tithe to Yahweh.

In the fourth scene: Yahweh tells Moses to tell the Levites that when they present to Yahweh the tithes, or the best or holy part from what they have received from the Israelites, they can keep the rest of the gifts.

In the fifth scene: Yahweh tells Moses to tell the Levites that they and their families may eat the remainder of the Israelite tithe wherever they want. The tithe is their reward for their work at the tent of meeting.

In the sixth scene: Yahweh tells Moses to tell the Levites that Yahweh will not consider the Levites guilty of sin for accepting Yahweh's tithes if they offer the best part of the tithes to Yahweh. If the Levites defile the offerings by eating any of the gifts before they offer the best part, Yahweh will punish them by putting them to death.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- The Levites
- The people of Israel
- Aaron, and all the priests
- Families of the Levites

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

Yahweh speaks to Moses and addresses Moses directly. The phrase "Then Yahweh spoke to Moses" introduces a new, small part to the story, because now Yahweh is speaking to Moses rather than to Aaron. Yahweh commands Moses to tell the Levites that Yahweh will give them the tithes of the Israelites as inheritance instead of a part of the land of Canaan. Just as Yahweh expects the Israelites to set aside a contribution to Yahweh from their crops, fruit, and animals in the land of Canaan, so the Levites are to set aside such a contribution, or a tithe, from the tithes that the Levites receive from the Israelites. Yahweh says he will consider the Levites' offering to be the same as what the other Israelites give. Yahweh will consider the Levites' offering as though it is the first grain from their own threshing floor or wine from their own winepress.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What words or phrases do you use in your language to introduce a new, small part to the story? Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you talk about number values when you talk about taxes or contribution of income in your language? Do you use percentages, for example 20%? Do you describe what part of the whole the tax or contribution is, for example, one tenth? Or do you use specific amounts in the money currency of your people group? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses that the Levites are to give Yahweh an offering from all the tithes that they receive from the Israelites. Yahweh wants the Levites to give their contribution, or offering for Yahweh, to Aaron as the representative of all the priests. All the priests will receive this offering, even though the story just says Aaron.

Now Yahweh tells Moses that the Levites should make sure that the tithe or offering they give to Aaron for Yahweh's tithe, or part, should be the best things from the tithe that the Israelites give to them. These best things are what the Levites must set apart as holy to Yahweh. These best things are what the Levites should give to Aaron for the priests.

Yahweh continues to give Moses instructions, and Yahweh tells Moses to say again to the Levites that they are to present to Yahweh the tithes, or the best or holy part, from what they have received from the Israelites. These parts are holy because they are supposed to be set apart for Yahweh, so Moses emphasises this by repeating this information. Yahweh says the Levites can keep the rest of the gifts. The Levites may consider the remainder as if it were their own crops from the soil and fruit from the trees and enjoy it like the Israelites enjoy their food.

Yahweh tells Moses to tell the Levites that they and their families can eat the remainder of the Israelite tithe wherever they want. This tithe is their reward, like payment or provision from Yahweh, for their work at the tent of meeting.

Yahweh continues speaking to Moses. Moses is to tell the Levites that Yahweh will not consider the Levites guilty of sin for accepting Yahweh's tithes if they offer the best part of the tithes to Yahweh first. But the Levites are to be careful not to treat the holy gifts of the people of Israel as though they are common. If the Levites defile, or pollute, the Israelite tithes like that, Yahweh will punish them by putting them to death.

Stop here and as a group discuss the best way to talk about the holy gifts, or tithes, of the people of Israel, and what the Levites need to do to not defile, or pollute, 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

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 18:25–32 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:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- The Levites
- The people of Israel
- Aaron, and all the priests
- Families of the Levites

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 tell the Levites that they are to give an offering of a tithe to Yahweh from the tithe they receive from the Israelites. Yahweh will consider the Levites' offering to be the same as if they gave the first grain from their own threshing floor or wine from their own wine press.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "Yahweh has a plan for how to provide for the Levites, just like Yahweh provides for the priests," or, "The Levites will receive the tithes of the Israelites as a reward for their work at the tent of meeting. It will be their inheritance instead of land in Canaan," or, "The Levites will need to give Yahweh a tenth of the tithe they receive from the Israelites. The Levites are to show gratitude for everything they have in this way. All they have comes from Yahweh."

Yahweh tells Moses to tell the Levites that after they have received the tithe from the Israelites, they are to give Yahweh's contribution, or offering, to Aaron as the representative of all the priests. The Levites are to give to Yahweh the tithe offering due to Yahweh out of all the tithes they receive from the Israelites. They are to dedicate, or set apart, the best part of the tithe to Yahweh.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Aaron, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "Yahweh is commanding the Levites to give their offering for Yahweh to us priests. Yahweh is already giving us Yahweh's offerings from the people of Israel," or, "Yahweh loves the priests and cares for them," or, "Yahweh has provided all we need to live and our inheritance."

Yahweh tells Moses to tell the Levites that when they present to Yahweh the tithes, or the best or holy part from what they have received from the Israelites, they can keep the rest of the gifts. The Levites and their families can eat the remainder of the Israelite tithe wherever they want. The tithe is their reward for their work at the tent of meeting.

Yahweh will not consider the Levites guilty of sin for accepting Yahweh's tithes if they offer the best part of the tithes to Yahweh first. But the Levites must be careful not to treat the holy gifts of the people of Israel as though they are common. If the Levites defile, or pollute, the tithes like that, Yahweh will punish them by putting them to death.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Levites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "Yahweh really cares for us. Yahweh has provided us with a reward for our work and provided our inheritance. Yahweh has provided food for our families too," or, "We must be careful to give our offering to Yahweh from what we receive before we eat any of the tithe. We can only eat from the remainder of the tithe, as it is not devoted to Yahweh. Otherwise we will die!"

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 18:25–32 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Yahweh says to Moses, "You shall speak and say to the Levites, 'When you take from the Israelites the tithe that I have given you from them for your inheritance, then you shall present an offering from it to Yahweh; it will be a tithe of the tithe.'"

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.

Use the same word or phrase for **Levites** that you used in previous passages. For more information on Levites, refer to the Master Glossary.

The **Israelites** are people who descended from Israel, or Jacob, the grandson of Abraham. Use the same word or phrase for Israelites that you used in previous passages. For more information on Israelites, refer to the Master Glossary.

Use the same words or phrases for **tithe** and **offering** that you used in previous passages. In this passage, tithe and offering are used often to mean the same thing, a gift to Yahweh of a tenth of what they received; these tithes and offerings are Yahweh's portion, or Yahweh's part, of the Israelites' crops. For more information on tithe and offering, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh will consider the Levites' offering as though it is the first grain from their own **threshing floor** or wine from their own winepress. A threshing floor was a level outdoor area people used for threshing sheaves of grain. Threshing is removing the seeds or grain from the husks and straw by hitting them with a hand tool or using oxen to drag a heavy object over them. Use the same word or phrase for threshing floor that you used in previous passages.

Stop here and as a group look at pictures of a threshing floor, if needed. Pause the audio here.

A **winepress** was a system of connected basins that people cut into a rock and used for making wine. The large main tub was where people would trample grapes to squeeze out the grape juice, which would then flow to another tub. The grape juice would then ferment and become wine.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **winepress**. See the Master Glossary for more information on winepress. 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 as a group look at a picture of a winepress. Pause the audio here.

Yahweh continues to command Moses to tell the Levites that they must give an offering to Aaron the **priest** from the tithes that they receive from the Israelites. Use the same word or phrase for priest as you used in previous passages. For more information on priest, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Levites may eat the rest of the gifts anywhere with their **households**. The Levites will receive these gifts as their reward for their work in the **tent of meeting**. Use the same words or phrases for work, household, and tent of meeting, or tabernacle, as you used in previous passages. For more information on household and tabernacle, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh will not consider the Levites guilty of **sin** for accepting Yahweh's tithes if they offer the best part of the tithes to Yahweh first. But the Levites must be careful not to treat the **holy** gifts of the people of Israel as though they are common. If the Levites **defile** or **profane**, or make the Israelite tithes unclean or impure like that, Yahweh will punish them by putting them to death. Use the same word or phrase for sin and holy that you used in previous passages. For more information on sin and holy, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will translate the idea of **profaning** or **defiling** something. To profane or defile something is to make it unclean or impure. The thing is no longer holy or set apart for Yahweh's purposes. See the Master Glossary for more information about profane. If you have translated this word in previous books of the Bible, use the same word here.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 18:25-32

Audio Content

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Numbers 19:1-10

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 19:1-10 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 19:1-10 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 19:1–10 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage Yahweh commanded Moses to tell the Levites that they are to dedicate, or set apart, to Yahweh a tenth of the tithes they received from the Israelites. The Levites are to give this holy offering to Aaron and the priests.

In this passage and the next passage, Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron how the Israelites are to purify, or cleanse, themselves after they become ceremonially unclean after touching a dead body or being in the same tent as a dead body. Death represented sin, so contact with a dead body defiled a person so that they could not worship Yahweh. In this passage Yahweh instructs Moses and Aaron how the Israelites are to prepare the water of purification, which will cleanse those who become unclean through touching or being in the same tent as a dead body.

Yahweh speaks to Moses and Aaron and says, "This is the statute, or ritual law that Yahweh commanded." Then Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron that the Israelites are to bring to Moses a reddish-brown heifer, or young cow, that has nothing wrong with it. It is to have no injuries and no faults. The cow must not have worn a yoke. A yoke is an instrument that people made from bent wood and placed on the neck of animals to control them when the animal pulled a plow, a wagon, or some other object. No one should have used the heifer for plowing or other work, as this would have made the heifer weak.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of a red heifer by itself and a red heifer with a yoke pulling a plough. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What animals do you use for farm work in your people group, and what kind of tasks do you use them for? What items do you use to control the animals when they are working on the farm? Pause this audio here.

Moses and Aaron are to give the heifer, or young cow, to Eleazar the priest, Aaron's eldest son. One of the Israelites will take the heifer outside the camp and kill the heifer while Eleazar is supervising. Eleazar will not kill the heifer himself. An Israelite will kill the young cow outside the camp in front of Eleazar. The killing of the heifer has to take place outside the camp so that the impurity of death that the person gives to the heifer does not make the camp ritually unclean.

Eleazar is to take some of the blood from the heifer with his finger and scatter the drops of blood seven times in the direction of the entrance to the tent of meeting. The sprinkling of the blood makes the killing of the heifer into a sacrifice, like a sin or purification offering. You will remember that the blood of an animal represents the life of the animal. By throwing the blood towards the tent of meeting, the priest is giving the life of the animal to Yahweh.

An Israelite is to burn the heifer in the presence of Eleazar. This is probably the same Israelite who killed the cow. The Israelite is to burn the cow completely, including its skin, its flesh, its blood, and the contents of its intestines. Because blood means life, it can therefore undo the impurity of death. By burning the blood with the heifer, the ashes will symbolize Yahweh purifying the unclean person from the impurity of death.

The priest will take cedarwood, hyssop, and scarlet yarn and throw them into the fire where the heifer is burning. The Hebrew word for cedar probably refers to the Phoenician juniper. It is a short evergreen tree that may reach 5 meters, or 17 feet, tall. It has tiny leathery leaves and small berry-like cones. Its wood has a light red color and a fragrant smell. The priest probably uses a small piece of cedarwood that he carries in one hand. The plant called hyssop in the Bible is called marjoram in many countries today. It is a bush that grows to a

height of around 50 to 80 centimeters, or 20 to 32 inches, and it has a pleasant and special smell. The priest would probably burn one branch of marjoram. The scarlet yarn could have been a red cord or a dark red piece of cloth. Each of these three ingredients added to the fire worked as powerful symbolic cleansing agents, or ritual cleansers, that become part of the ingredients of the ashes.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of a cedar, or Phoenician juniper bush. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of a hyssop, or marjoram plant. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and as a group look at pictures of a scarlet yarn and a dark red piece of cloth. Pause this audio here.

The priest must wash his clothes and his body in water. Only then can the priest return to the camp. But Yahweh will not consider the priest to be ritually pure until sunset.

In the same way, the man who burnt the heifer has to wash his clothes and body in water. He also will be ritually unclean till the end of the day.

A different man must gather up the ashes of the cow. This man must be pure before Yahweh. The man must place the ashes in a place that is pure before Yahweh, outside the Israelite camp. The priest and the man who burned the cow are ritually unclean until the evening, so only someone else, a person who is ritually clean, can bring the heifer's ashes to a ritually clean place. The Israelites will need to save the ashes there for the community of Israel. The community of Israel will need to mix the ashes from the heifer with water. They will use this water mixed with ashes to make themselves ceremonially clean. After the man has collected the ashes of the heifer, or young cow, he will have to also wash his clothes in water. However, the man does not need to wash his body like the priest and the Israelite who burned the cow. This man will also be impure before Yahweh until sunset. This entire ritual is most likely "for the removal of sin or impurity," meaning that it acts as a sin or purification offering for the Israelites. The Israelites give the sin or purification offering to clean them from unintentional sins or actions that cause them to become impure or unfit for service to Yahweh.

The whole ritual that Yahweh describes to Moses and Aaron will be a permanent statute of the law for the people of Israel that will last forever. All priests after Eleazar will continue to do this ritual. Even foreigners who live among the Israelites will have to follow this law.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What purification rituals exist in your people group? Discuss different rituals that people have done from generation to generation, either as traditions or as ritual laws.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 19:1–10 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 six scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh speaks to Moses and Aaron. Yahweh gives the people of Israel a new important law, or statute, to obey from now on.

In the second scene: Yahweh tells Moses to tell the Israelites to bring him a reddish-brown heifer, or young cow, which has no defects and has never been used for work.

In the third scene: Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron that they are to give the heifer to Eleazar, the priest, and an Israelite is to take it outside the camp and kill it under Eleazar's supervision. Yahweh says that Eleazar is to take some of the blood from the heifer with his finger and sprinkle it toward the front of the tent of meeting seven times. Someone is to burn the whole heifer in front of Eleazar, and Eleazar, or other priests in the future, are to take cedarwood, hyssop, and scarlet yarn and throw them into the fire that is burning the heifer.

In the fourth scene: Yahweh says that the priest must wash his clothes and bathe his body in water before he comes into the camp. The priest will be unclean until the evening. The Israelite who burnt the young cow must do the same, and that Israelite will also be unclean until the evening.

In the fifth scene: Yahweh says that another Israelite who is clean before Yahweh is to place the ashes from the heifer in a place that is pure for Yahweh, outside the camp. The Israelites are to keep the ashes to use in the water for the purification ritual. They would do this ritual to cleanse their impurity.

In the sixth scene: The Israelite who gathers the ashes is to wash his clothes. He will be unclean until the evening. Yahweh says that the whole ritual will be a permanent statute for the people of Israel that will last forever. This will also apply to foreigners who live among the Israelites.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- The people of Israel who bring the red heifer, or young cow, to Moses
- Eleazar the priest
- The Israelite who kills the heifer, or young cow
- Any of the priests who succeed Eleazar and take part in this ritual
- Another Israelite who is ritually clean
- Foreigners who live among the people of Israel

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

Yahweh speaks to Moses and Aaron saying that Yahweh is commanding a new rule for the Israelites to obey. Yahweh calls the rule a "statute of the law," which shows that it is a specific law concerning a ritual.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What words or phrases do you have in your language that show that a law or rule is not general, but concerns a particular area of life? For example, rules relating to rituals, or driving, or working, and so on. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron to tell the people of Israel to bring Moses a reddish-brown heifer, or young cow. Even though previously Yahweh was speaking to both Moses and Aaron, the expression in the original language means that the Israelites are to bring the cow to one person, Moses. Yahweh says that the cow must have nothing wrong with it. The young female cow must have had no injuries and no faults. The cow must not have worn a yoke.

Stop here as a group and, if needed, look at a picture of a red heifer by itself and a red heifer with a yoke pulling a plough. Pause this audio here.

Now both Moses and Aaron are to give the heifer, or young cow, to Eleazar the priest, Aaron's eldest son. Then one of the Israelites will take the young female cow outside the camp and kill her while Eleazar will be supervising. Eleazar will not kill the heifer himself.

Then Eleazar is to dip his finger into the bowl with the heifer's blood and scatter the drops of blood seven times in the direction of the entrance to the tent of meeting.

An Israelite will burn the heifer in the presence of Eleazar the priest. It will probably be the same Israelite who killed the cow. The Israelite shall burn the cow completely, including its skin, its flesh, its blood, and the contents of its intestines.

Next the priest will take cedarwood, hyssop, and scarlet yarn, or scarlet colored cloth, and throw them into the fire that is burning the heifer. Yahweh is now using the general term "the priest" rather than referring to Eleazar. This shows that the rules for this ritual are for "all time to come" and other priests will do the ritual in the future.

Stop here as a group and, if needed, look at a picture of a cedar, or Phoenician juniper bush. Pause this audio here.

Stop here as a group and, if needed, look at a picture of a hyssop, or marjoram, plant. Pause this audio here.

Stop here as a group and, if needed, look at pictures of scarlet yarn and a dark red piece of cloth. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Yahweh shows that the Israelites are to obey Yahweh's new ritual law from now on by talking about Eleazar first, and then talking about a priest who represents priests in the future. How do stories from your culture show that an activity or situation is continuing for a long period of time? Pause this audio here.

The priest must wash his clothes and his body in water. The word for washing the clothes means scrubbing. The expression "wash his body in water" suggests that the priest had to immerse himself in water or pour water over himself. Only then could the priest return to the camp. But Yahweh will not consider the priest ritually pure until sunset.

In the same way, the man who burnt the heifer shall wash his clothes and body in water. This man will also be ritually unclean till the end of the day.

A different man will gather up the ashes of the cow. This man must be pure, or clean, before Yahweh. This man will place the ashes in a place that is pure before Yahweh, outside the Israelite camp. This refers to a location that is clean, or not polluted, and is acceptable in the eyes of Yahweh. It is a place without any impurities or defilements where people can perform rituals and ceremonies. The Israelites will need to save the ashes in a clean place for the community of Israel. The Israelites will mix the ashes from the heifer with water. The Israelites will use this water in the ritual to become clean again. Most likely, when Yahweh says that "it is to remove sin or impurity," Yahweh is saying that the cow itself is the offering that removes impurity. This means that the entire ritual is a sin or purification offering for the community of Israel. Several translations simply say, "It is the sin or purification offering."

Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron that after the Israelite has collected the ashes of the heifer, or young cow, the Israelite must also wash his clothes in water. However, the Israelite does not need to wash his body like the priest and the Israelite who burned the cow. This man will also be impure before Yahweh until sunset. Yahweh says that the whole ritual will be a permanent law, or statute, for the people of Israel that will last forever. Yahweh repeats from the beginning of this passage that this is a statute, or a specific law concerning a ritual. Even foreigners who live among the Israelites will have to follow this law.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 19:1–10 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:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- The people of Israel who bring the red heifer, or young cow, to Moses
- Eleazar the priest
- The Israelite who kills the heifer, or young cow
- Any of the priests who succeed Eleazar and take part in this ritual
- Another Israelite who is ritually clean
- Foreigners who live among 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 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 speaks to Moses and Aaron saying that Yahweh is commanding a new ritual law for the Israelites to obey.

Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron to tell the people of Israel to bring Moses a reddish-brown heifer, or young cow. The cow must have nothing wrong with it. The young cow must have had no injuries and no faults. The cow must not have worn a yoke.

Moses and Aaron are to give the heifer, or young cow, to Eleazar the priest. Then one of the Israelites will take the cow outside the camp and kill her while Eleazar supervises.

Eleazar is to take some of the heifer's blood with his finger and sprinkle it seven times in the direction of the entrance to the tent of meeting.

The Israelite is to burn the heifer in the presence of Eleazar the priest. The Israelite shall burn the cow completely, including its skin, its flesh, its blood, and the contents of its intestines.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Eleazar, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "Yahweh takes death really seriously! Death makes people unclean," or, "When people are unclean, they cannot worship Yahweh," or, "Yahweh will cleanse us from the impurity of death."

Next the priest will take cedarwood, hyssop, and scarlet yarn and throw them into the fire that is burning the heifer.

After that the priest must wash his clothes and his body in water before he can return to the camp. But Yahweh will not consider the priest to be ritually pure until sunset.

In the same way, the Israelite who burnt the heifer shall wash his clothes and body in water. The Israelite also will be ritually unclean till the end of the day.

A different man who is ritually pure will gather up the ashes of the cow and place them in a place that is pure before Yahweh, outside the Israelite camp. The Israelites will need to save the ashes there for the community of Israel. The Israelites will mix the ashes from the heifer with water. The heifer is a purification offering. The Israelites will do this ritual to cleanse their impurity.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "Yahweh has given us a way to be clean after we have touched a dead body. We can bury our family members now. And then, once we are clean again, we will worship Yahweh!" or, "This ritual is very important and Yahweh wants us to perform it forever," or, "Unless we purify ourselves with the water of purification, we cannot worship Yahweh. Our uncleanness separates us from Yahweh. Praise Yahweh for providing a way for us to be clean."

After the Israelite has collected the ashes of the heifer, or young cow, the Israelite must also wash his clothes in water. This man will also be impure before Yahweh until sunset. Yahweh says that the whole ritual will be a permanent statute of the law for the people of Israel that will last forever. This will also apply to foreigners who live among the Israelites.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 19:1–10 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Yahweh speaks to Moses and Aaron and says that Yahweh is commanding a new statute of the law for the Israelites to obey. 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 phrase statute of the law describes a specific law concerning a ritual.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **statute of the law**. See the Master Glossary for more information about statute and about law. Pause this audio here.

Use the same word or phrase for **Israelites** as you used in previous passages. For more information on Israelites, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron to tell the sons of Israel, or the Israelites, to bring Moses a reddish-brown **heifer**, or young cow. The cow must have no defect and she must not have worn a yoke. A heifer is a young cow which has not yet given birth to a calf.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **heifer**. 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 **yoke** was an instrument that people made from bent wood and placed on the neck of animals to control them when they worked by pulling a plough, a wagon, or some other object.

Stop here as a group and, if needed, look at a picture of a red heifer by itself and a red heifer with a yoke pulling a plough. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **yoke**. 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.

Eleazar the priest is to take some of the heifer's blood with his finger and sprinkle some of it towards the front of the **tent of meeting** seven times. Use the same word or phrase for tent of meeting that you used in previous passages. For more information on tabernacle, which is the tent of meeting, refer to the Master Glossary.

The priest shall take cedarwood, hyssop, and scarlet yarn and throw them into the fire that is burning the heifer. The Hebrew word for cedar probably refers to the Phoenician juniper here. The Phoenician juniper is a short evergreen tree that may reach 5 metres, or 17 feet, tall. It has tiny leathery leaves and small berry-like cones.

Its wood has a light red colour and a fragrant smell. The priest probably used a small piece of cedarwood that he could carry in one hand.

Stop here as a group and, if needed, look at a picture of a cedar, or Phoenician juniper bush. Discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **cedar**. 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 Hebrew word for **hyssop** refers to the marjoram plant, which is a bush that grows to a height of around 50 to 80 centimetres, or 20 to 32 inches, and has a pleasant and distinctive smell. The priest would probably burn one branch of marjoram.

Stop here as a group and, if needed, look at a picture of a hyssop, or marjoram, plant. Discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **hyssop**. 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 scarlet yarn was either a red cord, wool, or a dark red piece of cloth.

Stop here as a group and, if needed, look at pictures of scarlet yarn and a dark red piece of cloth. Discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **scarlet yarn**. 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.

After the Israelite has burnt the heifer, both the priest and the Israelite need to wash their clothes in water and bathe their bodies. Both will be **unclean** till the evening. And a man who is **clean** shall gather up the ashes of the heifer and deposit them outside the camp in a clean place. Use the same word or phrase for clean and unclean as you used in previous passages. For more information on clean/unclean, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Israelites kept the ashes of the heifer to add them to water to purify the Israelites from **impurity**. Use the same word or phrase for impurity as you used in previous passages. For more information on impurity, refer to pure in the Master Glossary.

Most likely, this entire ritual acts as a **sin or purification offering** to clean the Israelites from their impurity. In that case, you could use the same title for the sin or purification offering that you have used in previous passages to describe this ritual. See the Master Glossary for more information about the sin or purification offering.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 19:1–10

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (20410807 KB)

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Numbers 19:11–22

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 19:11–22 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 19:11–22 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 19:11–22 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last passage Yahweh gave Moses and Aaron instructions on how the Israelites were to prepare the water of purification, which would cleanse those who became unclean through touching or being in the same tent as a dead body. In this passage Yahweh describes situations when the Israelites will need to use the water of purification to become ritually pure again.

Yahweh continues to instruct Moses and Aaron and says that whoever touches a corpse or body of a dead person will be ritually unclean for seven days. "Whoever touches" refers to either male or female of whatever age. The person is to make themselves ritually clean, or pure, with the water of purification on the third and seventh day after contact with the human corpse. The water of purification is water mixed with the young cow's ashes. A person who does not cleanse themselves both on the third day and on the seventh day will not be ritually clean.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What are the laws concerning dead bodies in your culture? Talk about any rules regarding touching a dead body or being in the same room as a dead body. Pause this audio here.

Those who touch a human corpse and do not make themselves pure by following the ritual will defile, or make impure, Yahweh's tabernacle. The Israelite community is to cut that person off or drive that person out. The Israelites must not allow the person to be part of their community anymore, and the person will have to live somewhere else. It is possible that the Israelites will execute or kill this person. Such a person will be ritually unclean, because no one threw the water of purification on them. That person's impurity will remain on them.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What do the leaders of your people group consider to be a serious crime? What are the punishments for committing serious crimes in your people group? Pause this audio here.

Now Yahweh gives a law or instruction for what will happen when someone becomes unclean through being in the same space as a human corpse. Anyone who is in the tent at the time of someone's death, or who enters the tent after the death, becomes ritually unclean for seven days. Any jar or pot in the tent that was not closed tightly becomes ritually unclean. Yahweh will consider unclean anything that is in a jar that has any crack in its seal or is standing open in any way.

Any person who is in an open field and touches the body of a dead person will be ritually impure for seven days. The dead body might be of a person who someone killed with a sword or in any other way, or of a person who died naturally. If someone touches any dead person's bone or a grave, that person will also be ritually unclean for seven days.

When someone becomes ritually unclean through contact with a human corpse, another Israelite who is pure, or clean, before Yahweh is to take some of the dust, or ashes, from the cow that they burned as a sin or purification offering. That person is to put the ashes into a container. That person is to pour into the container fresh water from a stream or a source of moving water. After this, the same person will take some of the hyssop branches and dip them in the water mixed with ashes. The plant called hyssop in the Bible is called marjoram in many countries now. That person is to throw the water on the dead person's tent. That person is also to throw it on all the dead man's possessions that are in the tent—their domestic utensils, equipment, and vessels. The ritually clean person is also to throw the water on all the people who are in the tent where the person died. The person must also throw the water on those who touched any dead person's bone, a dead person whom someone else killed, a dead person who died naturally, or a grave.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of a hyssop, or marjoram, plant. Pause this audio here.

On the third day and the seventh day, the person who is pure before Yahweh is to throw the mixture of water and ashes on the person who was defiled, or impure. On the seventh day, after the clean person cleansed the defiled person with the water of purification, the unclean person had to wash themselves and their clothes, and then that person would be ritually clean at sunset.

If the people who were impure before Yahweh did not make themselves pure, the Israelites were to cut them off or drive them out from their community. This was because those people made Yahweh's sanctuary, or tent of meeting, impure. Because no one has thrown on them the water that removes their impurity, they would remain impure before Yahweh.

Yahweh gives Moses and Aaron rules regarding ritual purity of the people who carry out the purification ritual. This law is to be a rule for the Israelites forever. All future generations of Israelites will need to obey it. The person who throws the water that removes uncleanness has to wash his clothes. Everyone who touches the water of purification to remove impurity is ceremonially unclean, or impure, before Yahweh until sunset. This means that the unclean person cannot be in contact with others, worship Yahweh, or take part in rituals until that person becomes clean again.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Is there anything in your culture or the religions in your culture that would make a person or an item unclean for rituals? If so, what things make someone unclean? What are the things you can or cannot do if you are unclean? What do you need to do to become clean again? Pause this audio here.

Now Yahweh gives general rules about being ritually unclean. Everything that a person who is ritually unclean, or impure, touches will be unclean, or impure. Also, if another person touches what the impure man touched, that person will be ritually unclean until sunset.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In Israel, sunset marked the end of the previous day and the beginning of a new day. When does a new day begin in your culture? Does it begin in the evening or in the morning?

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 19:11–22 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 five scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh continues to instruct Moses and Aaron and explains what happens when a person touches a human corpse. Yahweh explains that the person must purify themselves on the third and seventh day after they become unclean. Yahweh explains what happens if the person does not follow this ritual. The person defiles Yahweh's tabernacle, and the community of Israel will drive them away from the community.

In the second scene: Yahweh gives a law for what makes a person unclean through being in the same space as a human corpse. Anyone who is in the tent at the time of someone's death, or who enters the tent after the death, will become ritually unclean for seven days. Any person who is in the open field and touches the body of a dead person will be ritually impure for seven days. If someone touches any dead person's bone, or a grave, that person will also be ritually unclean for seven days.

In the third scene: Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron what the Israelites must do when someone becomes unclean through contact with a dead body. Another Israelite who is pure before Yahweh is to mix the heifer's, or young cow's, ashes with fresh water. Then he is to throw the water of purification on the dead person's tent and their possessions. The person will also throw the water of purification on the third day and the seventh day on all the people who are unclean because of the dead body. On the seventh day the unclean person must wash themselves and their clothes and he or she will be clean again at sunset.

In the fourth scene: Yahweh says that if the people who are unclean before Yahweh do not make themselves pure, the Israelites are to cut them off from their community, because those people have defiled the sanctuary, or tent of meeting. These people will remain impure before Yahweh. The Israelites are to follow this statute, or ritual law, forever.

In the fifth scene: The person who throws the water that removes uncleanness must wash his clothes in water. Everyone who touches the water of purification to remove impurity shall be ceremonially unclean, or impure before Yahweh, until sunset. Yahweh gives more general rules about being ritually unclean. Everything that a person who is ritually unclean touches will be impure. Also, if another person touches what the impure person touched, that person will be ritually unclean until sunset.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh—we know from the previous passage that Yahweh is speaking to Moses and Aaron, although this passage does not mention any of them.
- Moses
- Aaron
- The Israelites
- Anyone who has been in contact with a dead body and is unclean before Yahweh
- A ritually clean person who is purifying people who became unclean by being in contact with a dead body

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

Yahweh continues to talk to Moses and Aaron about the need for the Israelites to purify themselves after contact with a dead body. Yahweh first talks in general terms about what happens when someone comes into contact with a dead body. Next Yahweh talks about specific laws that the Israelites have to follow in order to become pure or clean again.

In the first scene, Yahweh says that whoever touches a corpse of a person will be ritually unclean for seven days. The person is to clean or purify themselves with the water of purification on the third and seventh day after contact with the human corpse. A person who does not cleanse themselves both on the third day and on the seventh day will not be ritually clean.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How do you talk about dead human bodies? Tell a story about what happened to a body after someone died. Pay attention to how you talk about the body of the dead person. Pause this audio here.

Those who touch a human corpse and do not make themselves pure by following the ritual will make Yahweh's tabernacle impure. The Israelite community is to cut them off or drive them out. The Israelites will not allow the person to be part of their community anymore, and the person will have to live somewhere else. It is possible that the Israelites will execute or kill this person. Yahweh says again that because the water of purification has not been thrown on this person, he or she will remain unclean. Yahweh is repeating what Yahweh said before, most likely to show that impurity caused by a human corpse is a very serious matter.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: When you talk about different laws or rules in your culture, how do you show that some of them concern matters that are very serious? What words or phrases do you use when you talk about such a law? How do the people in your community recognize that a law is very important? Pause this audio here.

In the second scene, Yahweh gives a law for what will happen when someone becomes unclean through being in the same space as a human corpse. Anyone who is in the tent at the time of someone's death, or who enters into the tent after the death, will become ritually unclean for seven days. Any open container in the tent where the person died becomes unclean. Any person who is in the open field and touches the body of a dead person will be ritually unclean for seven days. If someone touches any dead person's bone or a grave, that person will also be ritually unclean for seven days.

In the third scene, Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron what the Israelites must do when someone becomes unclean through contact with a dead body. Another Israelite who is ritually clean before Yahweh is to mix the heifer's, or young cow's, ashes with fresh water. Fresh water means that it will come from a stream or water that is moving. After this, the same person takes some of the hyssop branches and dips them in the water mixed with the ashes. The plant called hyssop in the Bible is called marjoram in many countries now. This plant has a many-branched hairy stem. The hairs make it useful as a brush, so people can use it to dip in water and then sprinkle the water. Then the person is to throw the water of purification on the dead person's tent and their possessions. The person will also throw the water of purification on the third day and the seventh day on all the people who are unclean because of the dead body. On the seventh day the unclean person must wash themselves and their clothes, and he or she will be clean again at sunset.

Stop here as a group and, if needed, look at a picture of a hyssop, or marjoram, plant. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Describe throwing or sprinkling water on something or someone. What words do you use to describe water in this situation? Do you talk about the substance or the droplets of water? Try taking a branch, dipping it in water, and shaking the branch with water onto something so that water drops fall on the object. How do you describe this action? How will you describe the action of throwing or sprinkling water in this passage? Pause this audio here.

In the fourth scene, Yahweh repeats to Moses and Aaron that if the people who are impure before Yahweh do not make themselves pure, the Israelites are to cut those people off or drive them out from the Israelite community. This is because those people defiled, or made impure, Yahweh's sanctuary, or tent of meeting. These people will remain impure before Yahweh because no one purified these people by throwing the water of purification at them.

Yahweh gives Moses and Aaron a law or statute regarding how to do this purification ritual. All Israelite generations are to follow this law from now on. Most likely, Yahweh is referring to everything that Yahweh just told Moses and Aaron. However, Yahweh may also be saying that these are statutes for how the person who throws the purification water becomes clean again. In any case, all of these rituals should continue to happen for the following generations.

In the fifth scene, the person who throws the water that removes uncleanness must wash his clothes in water. Everyone who touches the water of purification to remove impurity shall be ceremonially unclean, or impure, before Yahweh until sunset.

Yahweh gives general rules about being ritually unclean. Everything that an unclean person touches will also be unclean. Also, if another person touches what the unclean person touched, that person will be ritually unclean until sunset.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about different ways to describe sunset in your language. 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

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 19:11-22 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:

- Yahweh—we know from the previous passage that Yahweh is speaking to Moses and Aaron, although this passage does not mention any of them.
- Moses
- Aaron
- The Israelites
- Anyone who has been in contact with a dead body and is unclean before Yahweh
- A ritually clean person who is purifying people who became unclean by being in contact with a dead body

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 that whoever touches a corpse of a person will be ritually unclean for seven days. This person is to clean or purify themselves with the water of purification on the third and seventh day after contact with the human corpse. A person who does not cleanse themselves both on the third day and on the seventh day will not be ritually clean.

Those who touch a human corpse and do not make themselves pure by following the ritual will make Yahweh's tent of meeting impure. The Israelite community is to cut that person off or drive that person out. Yahweh says again that because the water of purification has not been thrown on this person, he or she will remain unclean.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "Touching a dead body makes someone unclean. Death represents sin because it came into the world through sin," or, "I want the Israelites to understand how serious it is when they become unclean through contact with a dead body," or, "But they can become clean again! This is my desire and my plan for them—to be clean before me! I will tell them how to become clean again."

Yahweh gives a law, or statute, for what will happen when someone becomes unclean through being in the same space as a human corpse. Anyone who is in the tent at the time of someone's death, or who enters the tent after the death, will become ritually unclean for seven days. Any person who is in the open field and touches the body of a dead person will be ritually impure for seven days. If someone touches any dead person's bone, or a grave, that person will also be ritually unclean for seven days.

When someone becomes unclean through contact with a dead body, another Israelite who is pure before Yahweh is to mix the heifer's, or young cow's, ashes with fresh water. After this, that same person will take some of the hyssop branches and will dip them in the water mixed with the ashes. Then the man is to throw the water of purification on the dead person's tent and that person's possessions. The man will also throw the water of purification on the third day and the seventh day on all the people who are unclean because of the dead body. On the seventh day the unclean person must wash themselves and their clothes, and he or she will be clean again at sunset.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "Yahweh is so just, and Yahweh loves his people Israel so much!" or, "Yahweh hates uncleanness, and Yahweh can have nothing to do with people who are not pure before him. But Yahweh knows that people will get unclean because they have to deal with dead bodies when people die," or, "Yahweh provides a way for his people Israel to be clean before him again so the people can worship Yahweh again. Yahweh loves it when people worship him."

Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron that if the people who are impure before Yahweh do not make themselves pure, the Israelites are to cut those people off, or drive them out, from their community. This is because those people made Yahweh's sanctuary, or tent of meeting, impure. Those people will remain impure before Yahweh, because no one purified them by throwing the water of purification at them. Yahweh gives Moses and Aaron a law or statute regarding ritual purity of the people who carried out the purification ritual. All Israelite generations are to follow this law from now on.

The person who throws the water that removes uncleanness must wash his clothes in water. Everyone who touches the water of purification to remove impurity shall be ceremonially unclean, or impure, before Yahweh until sunset.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the person who carries out the purification ritual, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "It is an honour to make the people of Israel clean before Yahweh again," or, "I need to follow all Yahweh's instructions fully. I need to throw the purification water on those who are impure twice!" or, "Touching the purification water makes me impure. I will have to wash my own clothes afterwards to become pure before Yahweh."

Everything that a person who is ritually unclean touched will be impure. Also, if another person touches what the impure person touched, that person will be ritually unclean until sunset.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 19:11–22 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron that whoever touches a dead body of any person shall be **unclean** for seven days. Use the same word or phrase for unclean that you used in previous passages. For more information on clean/unclean, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and decide as a group how you will translate **dead body** in your translation. What is the most appropriate way to talk about dead human bodies? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh says that whoever touches the body of anyone who has died, and does not **purify** themself, defiles the **tabernacle**, or tent of meeting of Yahweh. Yahweh says that person shall be cut off from **Israel**, because nobody threw the water for impurity on them. That person shall be unclean. When someone **defiles** or **profanes** an object, they make the object unclean, unholy, or unfit for use by Yahweh. Use the same word for defile or profane that you have used in previous passages, and see profane or defile in the Master Glossary for more information. Use the same words or phrases for purify, tabernacle, Yahweh, and Israel that you used in previous passages, and refer to the Master Glossary for more information on these words.

Any dead body—whether the person died by the sword, meaning someone killed them, or by natural causes—or any grave, is considered unclean. Remember that to "die by the sword" means that someone killed someone else. Use the same phrase for this that you have used in previous passages.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will translate the idea of **grave**. A grave is a general term for any place where a dead body is buried. See the Master Glossary for more information about grave. Pause this audio here.

Then a **clean** person will take hyssop and dip it in the water of purification. The clean person will sprinkle the water of purification on the tent where the dead body is and on all of that person's belongings, on everyone who is in the tent, and on all who touched the dead person, his bone, or the grave. Use the same word or phrase for clean that you used in previous passages. For more information on clean/unclean, refer to the Master Glossary. The plant called **hyssop** in the Bible is called marjoram in many countries now. This plant has a many-branched hairy stem. The hairs make it good as a brush, so people can use it to dip in water and then sprinkle the water. Use the same word for hyssop that you used in previous passages.

Stop here as a group and, if needed, look at a picture of a hyssop, or marjoram plant. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh says that if the people who are impure before Yahweh do not make themselves pure, the Israelites are to cut them off, or drive them out, from their community, because they have defiled, or made impure, the **sanctuary**, which is the tent of meeting. Use the same word or phrase for sanctuary that you used in previous passages. For more information on sanctuary, refer to the Master Glossary.

When people **cut someone off**, they forcefully take that person away from the community. They take away that person's rights, and they may even kill that person. Here the phrase most likely refers to the Israelites driving someone out of the community, or making someone leave the community, if they refused to become ritually clean.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **cut someone off**. If you have already translated this idea in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh says that these laws are a **statute**, or ritual law that will last forever. Use the same word for statute that you have used in previous passages, and remember that statute is in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 19:11-22

Audio Content

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Numbers 20:1–13

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 20:1–13 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 20:1–13 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 20:1–13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passages the Israelites were in the land near Canaan. Yahweh explained to Moses about the offerings for the priests and Levites, and about purification rituals. In the previous passage, Yahweh gave instructions about what to do if someone had been in contact with a dead body. The Israelites were unclean if they had been in contact with a dead body. Yahweh explained how to become clean again.

In this passage, the Israelites move to a different place in the wilderness of Zin, or desert of Zin, and stay at Kadesh. This was the southern boundary of the promised land.

Stop here and look again at a map of the desert of Zin and Kadesh as a group. Pause this audio here.

It is the first month of the year. This is probably the last year that the Israelites will be in the desert. You will remember that the Israelites were in this same area forty years ago when Yahweh told them that none of that generation would go into the promised land. Yahweh told them it would be forty years before they could enter the land, when that generation had died. The Israelites are now in the wilderness of Zin at Kadesh, again at the beginning of their fortieth year in the wilderness.

The whole Israelite congregation, or community, has travelled to this area. Yahweh is preparing a new generation to enter the land of Canaan.

Miriam, the sister of Moses and Aaron, died and was buried in this place. The Israelites would have spent some time there mourning and purifying themselves before they moved on.

Probably while they are still in that place, the Israelites gather together and complain to Moses and Aaron that they have no water to drink. They argue with Moses and ask Moses why he has brought them to this place. They ask questions that they do not expect Moses to answer. The Israelites say it would have been better if they had died with the other Israelites who died in Yahweh's presence. You will remember that this is what happened when Korah and his family rebelled against Yahweh. The Israelites tell Moses they are the people of Yahweh, and yet Yahweh still brought them into this desolate place. The Israelites say they will die along with all their livestock—animals such as sheep, goats, and cattle. This emphasises how angry the Israelites are. They are angry because Moses has brought them to a place where they might die. The Israelites continue to complain to Moses that Egypt was a better place because it had grain such as wheat and barley, and figs, grapes, and pomegranates for them to eat.

Stop here and discuss: Tell a story of when you were in a place where there was no water and you were thirsty. If necessary, look at a picture of grains, figs, grapes, and pomegranates. Pause this audio here.

Moses and Aaron move away from the assembly of Israelites who have officially gathered to complain. Moses and Aaron go to the entrance to the tent of meeting, or tabernacle, and fall or lay facedown on the ground before Yahweh to show their submission to Yahweh. They want to turn Yahweh's anger away from the people. You will remember that Moses and Aaron responded in the same manner when the Israelites refused to enter the land of Canaan after the explorers gave a bad report. Yahweh's glory appears to Moses and Aaron here. Yahweh's glory might have been a bright light.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story of when you felt surrounded by Yahweh's presence. How did you feel? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses to take the staff and gather all the people together at the rock, which must have been a large rock nearby. Yahweh tells Moses to take the staff of Aaron that is in front of the ark of the covenant in the tent of meeting.

Yahweh tells Moses to speak to the rock to give water so the people and their livestock can drink. So Moses takes the staff, and Moses and Aaron gather the Israelites in front of the rock, just like Yahweh told Moses. But Moses is angry and speaks harshly to the people. Moses calls them rebels. He asks them, "Do we have to get water out of this rock for you?" Moses is showing his anger and impatience by asking a question. Moses lifts his hand and beats the rock two times with the staff. Water gushes out of the rock and all the people and their livestock have enough to drink.

Stop and discuss: Tell of a time when you have seen an amazing miracle take place. How did you react? Pause this audio here.

But Yahweh rebukes Moses and Aaron. Yahweh says that Moses and Aaron did not have enough faith to trust in Yahweh. Moses and Aaron did not believe that the rock would give water by speaking to the rock. So Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron that they will not be the ones to lead the people into the land Yahweh is giving the Israelites because Moses and Aaron did not believe in Yahweh or honour Yahweh as holy before the people.

We do not know exactly why Yahweh punished Moses and Aaron in this way. What we do know is that Yahweh commanded Moses to take Aaron's staff, to assemble the people, and to speak to the rock. However, instead, Moses took Aaron's staff, assembled the people, spoke to the people harshly, and struck the rock twice. Moses claimed that it was Moses and Aaron who were providing the water. The story of Numbers mentions many times that Moses did exactly as Yahweh commanded. In this part of the story, Moses did not do exactly as Yahweh commanded. Here, Moses was disobedient. This disobedience was enough to stop both Moses and Aaron from going into the promised land as Israel's leaders.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story about when someone punished you because you were with someone else who was disobedient. How did you feel? Pause this audio here.

The Israelites called this place the waters of Meribah, which means arguing, because the people of Israel argued with Yahweh there.

It is hard to understand why Yahweh punished Moses and Aaron in this way after every good thing they had done. However, this passage shows that Yahweh demanded complete obedience to Yahweh, and Yahweh wanted people to know that it was he, Yahweh, who provided for everything they needed.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 20:1–13 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 five scenes.

In the first scene: The whole Israelite community arrives in the desert of Zin and camps at Kadesh. Miriam dies in this place.

In the second scene: The Israelites complain to Moses and Aaron that there is no water for them or their livestock.

In the third scene: Moses and Aaron go to the tent of meeting, and Yahweh speaks to them. Yahweh shows Moses and Aaron his glory and gives them instructions.

In the fourth scene: Moses and Aaron gather the people together. Moses speaks harshly to the people and strikes the rock. Water comes out of the rock for the people and their livestock to drink.

In the fifth scene: Yahweh punishes Moses and Aaron for not honouring Yahweh before the people. Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron that Moses and Aaron will not lead the people into the promised land.

The characters in this passage are:

- The congregation, or community of Israelites
- Moses
- Aaron
- Yahweh

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

This passage takes place in the first month of the fortieth year of the Israelites wandering in the desert. This first month of the year would be what we would call mid-March to mid-April. In this same area where, forty years ago, Yahweh punished the Israelites for not trusting Yahweh. At that time, Yahweh said that it would be the next generation that would go into the promised land of Canaan. The Israelites had wandered around and were now back in the same area again.

This passage mentions that the *whole* Israelite congregation, or community, was there. You will remember that the number of men from the census was 603,500. The community also includes women and children who were not counted in the census, as well as all the different animals they kept. This was a large crowd of people.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story when you have been in a large crowd of people. What did it feel like? Pause this audio here.

The wilderness of Zin was a desert. It was very barren and there was little water or vegetation. It would have been dusty and very hot. The last time the book of Numbers mentioned that the Israelites were in Kadesh-Barnea, it said that the Israelites were in the wilderness of Paran. It is possible that the wilderness of Zin and of Paran overlapped or were close to each other.

In the first scene, Miriam dies. The Israelites would have had a period of mourning and purification before they moved on.

In scene two the story changes suddenly to the complaints of the people about a lack of water.

Stop and discuss: How do you change a story setting from one thing to another? Discuss how you will show that the story moves from the death of Miriam to the complaints of the Israelites. Pause this audio here.

The Israelites are still complaining, just as the previous generation had done. The people complain that there are no figs, grapevines, or pomegranates, and no grain of any kind.

Pay attention to the attitude of the Israelites. The Israelites say it would have been better to have died with their brothers when they fell dead before Yahweh. Earlier in Numbers, Yahweh killed Korah and Korah's family when they rebelled against Yahweh. Notice how Moses reacts to the complaints of the people. Moses is angry and annoyed with the people. Yahweh was not angry with the people, but Yahweh instead made arrangements to give the people water.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story of when someone made you angry. How did you react? Pause this audio here.

In scene three Moses and Aaron move away from the assembly of people to the tent of meeting. Moses and Aaron fall down on their faces before Yahweh, which means that they lay down on the ground, face down, to show their respect for Yahweh. Yahweh shows his glory to Moses and Aaron. The glory of Yahweh is probably like a beautiful light that surrounded Moses and Aaron. Yahweh gives Moses and Aaron instructions to get water for the people.

Yahweh tells Moses to take the staff and gather the community of Israelites together. Although Aaron is with Moses, Yahweh seems to be speaking only to Moses when Yahweh tells Moses to get the staff. You will remember that in the previous story in Numbers, all the tribe leaders brought their staffs and placed them in front of the tent of meeting. The staff that budded was the leader. This staff was Aaron's. Yahweh instructed Moses to place the staff in the front of the ark of the covenant inside the tent of meeting. This is the place where Yahweh lives, so in this story Moses says that Moses took the staff from the presence of Yahweh himself.

Yahweh tells Moses to take the community of the Israelites to the rock, which must have been a large rock nearby that everyone knew about. In scene four Moses and Aaron take the staff and gather the people at the rock. But Moses speaks harshly to the people and calls them rebels, or people who resist or protest against authority. Moses asks the question, "Must we bring water out of this rock for you?" Moses is angry and frustrated with the people.

Stop and discuss: How will you show that Moses is angry and frustrated? What tone of voice will you use? Practice being Moses as Moses speaks to the people and calls them rebels. Pause this audio here.

Moses strikes the rock twice with his staff. Moses uses the staff that Yahweh instructed Moses to get, so in this case "his" staff most likely means the staff Moses has just gotten from inside the tent of meeting. Moses struck the rock. Moses did not speak to the rock as Yahweh had instructed Moses.

In scene five Yahweh rebukes Moses and Aaron because Moses and Aaron had not trusted Yahweh or shown that Yahweh was holy. Yahweh says that Moses and Aaron will not lead the assembly of Israelites into the promised land. In other words, Moses and Aaron will die before the Israelites enter the land. Again Yahweh shows that if people rebel against Yahweh, and do not follow Yahweh's instructions, then those people will die.

The Israelites called this place the "waters of Meribah." The word Meribah means quarrelled.

Stop and discuss: How do you describe quarrelling or arguing in your language? What word will you use here for Meribah? 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

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 20:1-13 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:

- The congregation, or community of Israelites
- Moses
- Aaron
- 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 travelling through the wilderness and arriving at Kadesh. The Israelites would have set up camp here in the same way that they had done at all the other places before. Miriam dies and they bury her.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I am sad that my sister has died," or, "I feel grief for my sister," or, "Miriam rebelled against Yahweh when she rebelled against me. This means Miriam cannot continue the journey with us."

Act out the people complaining to Moses and Aaron that the area is a wilderness. The people ask Moses why Moses has brought them here when there is no water. They complain that there are not any figs, grapevines, or pomegranates. They say it was better in Egypt.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" they might answer things like: "We feel exhausted, hot, and thirsty," or, "We feel annoyed that Moses brought us here when there is no water."

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel angry that the people are complaining again," or, "I feel tired after these many years of travel!"

Moses and Aaron go to the entrance of the tent of meeting and fall face down to pray to Yahweh on behalf of the people.

Pause the drama.

Ask Moses and Aaron, "What are you feeling or thinking?" They might answer things like: "We feel angry and worried that the people made us come to Yahweh for a solution to their problems," or, "We need to worship Yahweh and plead to Yahweh on behalf of the people," or, "We hope that Yahweh will be gentle with the people after their complaining."

The glory of Yahweh appears to Moses and Aaron. Yahweh tells Moses to gather the people and get Aaron's staff from the tabernacle. He tells Moses to speak to the rock and water will come out.

Pause the drama.

Ask Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel peaceful and am surrounded by beautiful light," or, "It felt like Yahweh was surrounding us with Yahweh's power."

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "It is annoying that the people never trust me to provide for them," or, "I love my people so I will find a way to help them again."

Moses gets the staff as Yahweh instructed Moses. Then Moses and Aaron gather the assembly in front of the rock. Moses speaks angrily to the people and calls them rebels. Moses says, "Must we bring water from this rock?" Moses strikes the rock twice and water miraculously comes out of the rock for the people and their livestock to drink.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like: "We feel amazed to see the water coming out of the rock," or, "We felt ashamed when Moses was angry with us."

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel saddened that Moses did not follow my instructions but instead tried to use his own strength to make water come from the rock," or, "Moses did not follow my instructions but went his own way. Moses cannot lead the people into the promised land," or, "The person who leads my people into the promised land must trust me completely and must not follow their own way. Moses and Aaron did not trust me all the time," or, "Moses did not show that I am holy before the people."

Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron that Moses and Aaron will not lead the people into the promised land. Moses and Aaron did not believe Yahweh or honour and demonstrate Yahweh's holiness in front of the people of Israel.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Aaron, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I feel really sad that we have led the people for forty years and now Yahweh will not allow us to continue," or, "I wish I had trusted Yahweh more and obeyed Yahweh's commands more. I regret that I did not stop Moses from hitting that rock!" or, "Yahweh demands our full obedience. I failed and did not treat Yahweh as holy. It is right that Yahweh punished me," or, "I rebelled against Yahweh and against Moses. This means Yahweh will not allow me to continue. It is hard."

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" That person might answer things like, "I am really sad that I have led the people for all this time and now Yahweh will not allow me to continue," or, "I have had a special relationship with Yahweh. I trusted Yahweh all the time until now. My mistake means I cannot continue as the leader of the Israelites. I am upset and sad."

The Israelites name this area Meribah.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 20:1–13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

The congregation, or community of **Israelites**, arrives at the **wilderness** of Zin. The desert or wilderness is a very dry area. Use the same words for community, Israelites, and wilderness that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Israelites and wilderness, refer to the Master Glossary.

The people quarrel with Moses and Aaron. The people say that they should have died when their brothers or fellow Israelites died in Yahweh's presence in the wilderness. **Yahweh** is the personal name of God. Use the same word for Yahweh that you have used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information about Yahweh.

The people complain that there is no water for them or their **livestock**. In this passage the word livestock means all kinds of domestic animals—cows, sheep, and goats.

Moses and Aaron leave the assembly of Israelites and go to the **tent of meeting**, or **tabernacle**, and fall facedown. The assembly of Israelites is the entire gathering of the Israelites when they meet for official reasons. Use the same word for **assembly**, or official gathering, that you have used in previous passages. Use the same word for the tent of meeting that you used in previous passages. For more information refer to tabernacle in the Master Glossary.

The **glory** of Yahweh appears to Moses and Aaron. The glory of Yahweh only appears to a few people in the Bible. It is a special moment when Yahweh shows how beautiful, powerful, and majestic Yahweh is. Use the same word for glory that you have used previously. For more information on the word glory, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses takes the **staff** that was in the tent of meeting as Yahweh had instructed Moses. Yahweh used this staff previously to end a dispute between the tribes. It was Aaron's staff. This staff had budded and flowered and borne fruit. Use the same word for staff that you used in previous passages.

Moses and Aaron disobey Yahweh and strike the rock with the staff to command water to come out of it. Yahweh had told Moses and Aaron to speak to the rock. Moses and Aaron did not **believe** or trust Yahweh. Moses and Aaron did not show that Yahweh is **holy** to the Israelites. Use the same words or phrases for holy and believe that you used in previous passages. For more information on the words holy and belief, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Israelites called this place the waters of **Meribah**. Here the Israelites had quarrelled with Yahweh, and Yahweh had shown them Yahweh's holy power. So the Israelites named the place Meribah, which means quarrelling.

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

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 20:1-13

Audio Content

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Numbers 20:14–21

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 20:14–21 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 20:14–21 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 20:14–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, the Israelites arrived back in the area of Kadesh. The Israelites did not have any water and they complained to Moses. Moses and Aaron asked Yahweh to help. Moses did not follow Yahweh's instructions exactly, and so Yahweh told Moses and Aaron that Moses and Aaron would not be able to lead the people into the promised land.

In this passage, Moses sends messengers into the land of Edom to ask permission to pass through the land. The king of Edom refuses and threatens to come out with an army. The messengers plead again, but the Edomites refuse and send their army against them. The Israelites have to go a different way.

While the Israelites are still camping at Kadesh, Moses sends messengers to the King of Edom. Kadesh was on the edge of the land of Edom. We do not know exactly where the King of Edom is. Instead of one king, there may have been several chiefs who were called king. The messengers probably went to one of these chiefs in a small town near Kadesh.

Stop here and look again at a map of Kadesh and notice how close it is to the land of Edom. Discuss as a group: When people from your people group want to give an official message to the leaders of another people group, how do they do that? Who do you send, and what do they do? Pause this audio here.

The messengers tell the King of Edom that they are "brothers." You will remember from Genesis that the brothers Jacob and Esau separated and settled in different places. Esau settled in the land of Edom. The Israelites are Jacob's descendants, and the Edomites are Esau's descendants. So the Edomites are relatives, or brothers, of the Israelites.

Stop here and talk about your ancestors. Tell their story. Talk about how different people groups in your area are related to each other. How do they talk to each other? Here, the Israelites called the Edomites their brothers. What do related people groups in your area call each other? Pause this audio here.

The messengers remind the king of Edom how their ancestors had gone to Egypt and lived there for many years. The Egyptians were cruel to the Israelites, so they prayed to Yahweh. Yahweh heard the Israelites' cry and sent an angel or a messenger from heaven to answer their prayer. The angel helped the Israelites to leave Egypt. The messengers tell the king they are at Kadesh now, right at the border of the king's area. The messengers ask the king politely if they can pass through the king's country. The Israelites would be careful to stay away from the fields and vineyards, and the Israelites would not drink water from the wells. The Israelites would only use the King's Road to travel. The King's Road was a well-known route that was wide and flattened. People had been using this road for a long time, possibly for hundreds of years. The kings traveled in their chariots on this road. Traders with their wagons, and other travelers, also used this road.

Stop here and tell the group about a time when you have been on a long journey. How did you travel? What was the road like? How long did it take? Pause this audio here.

Edom refuses to allow the Israelites to pass through their country, and they threaten to bring swords, or an army, against the Israelites. It is the people of the Edom nation that answer the messengers rather than just the king alone.

The whole Israelite nation now pleads with Edom again and says they will pay for any water that the Israelites and their livestock, their sheep, goats, and cattle, might drink.

Stop here and tell the group a story of when you had to plead for something and whether you succeeded. Pause this audio here.

The Edomites again refuse to give the Israelites permission. The Edomites come out with many men in a strong army to attack the people of Israel.

The people of Israel go in a different direction because the people of Edom refuse to allow them to pass through Edom's country.

Stop here and tell a story about a time you were traveling and had to change your route because the way had been blocked.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 20:14–21 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: Moses sends messengers to the King of Edom. The messengers tell the King of Edom about the history of the Israelites.

In the second scene: The messengers tell the King of Edom that the Israelites are at the border of Edom. The messengers ask permission for the Israelites to pass through Edom's land. The King of Edom and his people refuse to let the Israelites pass through the land. The Edomites threaten to send an army against the Israelites.

In the third scene: The Israelite messengers plead again to the Edomites to let them pass through Edom's land. The Israelites offer to pay for any water that the Israelites might drink. Again the Edomites refuse to let the Israelites pass through, and the Edomites send out an army against the Israelites.

In the fourth scene: The Israelites turn away from Edom to go a different way.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Israelite messengers
- King of Edom
- Edomites
- Edomite army
- Israelites

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

In scene one Moses sends messengers to the King of Edom. The king might have been an official person who was in a small town near Kadesh. The messengers are sent on an official mission much like an ambassador. An ambassador is someone who passes on a message and also pleads on behalf of someone.

Stop here and discuss: Have someone tell about a time when they either sent a messenger to friends or family or received a messenger from friends or family. Then have someone tell about a messenger who was on official government business. Pay attention to the different ways the people talk about the messengers. Pause this audio here.

The messengers call themselves a brother to Edom. The messengers are referring back to their ancestor Jacob, whose brother was Esau. Esau was also called Edom, and Edom was the name of the land where Esau settled. Although the Israelites only mention one brother, they are talking about the entire Israelite people group. So the Israelites were brothers, or relatives, of the Edomites. The Israelite messengers explain that their ancestors went "down" into Egypt. The word "down" here means that they went away from Israel.

Stop here and discuss how you will talk about the Israelites and Edomites being related to each other. Pause the audio here.

The messengers explain how Yahweh had sent an angel to rescue the Israelites from the Egyptians who had made them slaves. An angel could be a messenger. When the Israelites talk about the angel leading them, they may be trying to impress the Edomites by explaining that a divine being is leading them. The Israelites are trying to explain this in a way that makes sense to the Edomites.

In scene two the story changes from the Israelites explaining their past to the Israelites asking for something. The messengers tell the King of Edom that the Israelites are in Kadesh now. The messengers want to show that they need an immediate answer from the king, because they are camped on the border of the land of Edom.

Stop here and discuss a time when you had an urgent need and you went to someone to ask them to help you. Pay attention to how you move from explaining to them the reason you need something to asking them for help. Pause this audio here.

Pay attention to the words the messengers use to ask the questions. They are very well-mannered and use polite and diplomatic words.

Stop here and do an activity: Have a member of the group make a request of another group member in a negative or rude way. Next, make the same request in a polite, respectful way. Pay attention to the differences. Pause this audio here.

The Israelite messengers tell the king of Edom that they will not turn to the left, or to the right, or go through fields or vineyards. The Israelites say that they will travel along the King's Highway and not leave the road to go into other areas of the land. The messengers are trying to show that they will not invade Edom or use any of Edom's resources. The Israelites will not drink any of Edom's water. The King's Highway was a well-known trade route that went from north to south, from Damascus to Aqaba on the eastern bank of the Jordan. Many people travelled this route using chariots and wagons. The rulers of the areas where the route passed probably repaired and maintained the road so that they could travel easily. This road was important for the economy and trade of the region.

Stop here and look again at the map of Kadesh and the possible route of the King's Highway in Edom. Pause this audio here.

Edom answered the Israelites abruptly. This implies that all the people of Edom acted together against Israel. The Edomites will attack the Israelites with their sword, or bring an army against the Israelites, if the Israelites try to enter the Edomites' land.

In scene three the messengers plead with the Edomites again. This second request is more specific. The Israelites want the Edomites to know that they will not even let their animals drink the water, and the Israelites will pay for anything they drink.

Pay attention to the way the Israelites speak to Edom. The nations are speaking to each other rather than individuals speaking to each other. The Israelites sound submissive as they only want to pass through on foot—nothing else. The Israelites are trying to say that they are only asking a small thing.

Sometimes these two nations speak as if they are a single person and sometimes as if they are a group of people. In each instance, they are referring to all the Edomites or all the Israelites, and not just one person.

Stop and discuss how you will translate the way the Israelites and the Edomites speak to each other. Then tell a story about two people groups interacting with each other. When they talk about the group as a whole, how do they discuss them—as one person or as many people? Pause the audio here.

The Edomites again refuse the Israelites, and the Edomite army goes near to the place where the Israelites are camping, just like the Edomites had threatened to do.

In scene four the Israelites turn away from Edom and accept defeat. The Israelites do not fight against Edom.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 20:14–21 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
- Israelite messengers
- King of Edom
- Edomites
- Edomite army
- 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 sends messengers to the King of Edom to ask for permission for the Israelites to pass through Edom's land. The messengers ask the king politely if the Israelites can pass through the land of Edom. The Israelites tell the king that the Israelites and Edomites are brothers, because the Israelites' ancestor Jacob was the brother of the Edomites' ancestor Esau. The Israelites remind the king how the Israelites' ancestors lived in Egypt but were treated as slaves. The Israelites explain how Yahweh sent an angel, rescued the Israelites, and brought them all out of Egypt, and now they are at Kadesh.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Israelite messengers, "What are you feeling or thinking?" They might answer things like: "We thought the Edomites would help us if they knew we were brothers," or "We thought the Edomites would help if they knew Yahweh was on our side."

The messengers explain that the Israelites will only pass through the land. The messengers tell the king that they will only travel on the King's highway—that is the wide, well-marked road where the king can ride his chariots. They reassure the people of Edom that the Israelites will not drink water or go through Edom's fields.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the messengers, "What are you feeling or thinking?" They might answer things like, "We desperately want the king to let us pass through."

Ask the person playing the King of Edom, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I feel a bit afraid that the Edomites will try to conquer us," or "I have heard Yahweh helps the Israelites, so I am afraid of them!" or "I am not sure I can trust the Israelites," or "I do not want that many people coming through our land."

The King of Edom and his people refuse to let the Israelites pass through the land, and they tell the Israelites that the Edomites will send out the army against them.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Edomites and the king, "What are you feeling or thinking?" They might answer things like, "We cannot let them into our land. The Israelites might destroy our land," or "There are too many of the Israelites. We cannot let the Israelites in," or "We are not brothers to the Israelites. Our ancestors lived a very long time ago. This does not persuade us."

Ask the people playing the Israelite messengers, "What are you feeling or thinking?" They might answer things like, "We feel disappointed that the people of Edom will not let us pass through their land," or "We feel frustrated that we cannot go through Edom. It will be a long way to go around."

The Israelite messengers plead again with the Edomites to let them pass through Edomite land. The messengers try to persuade the Edomites and reassure them again that the Israelites will stay on the main road, and that if anyone or any of the livestock drinks any of the water, the Israelites will pay for the water they drink.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the messengers, "What are you feeling or thinking?" They might answer things like: "We feel discouraged. This feels hopeless. We were very polite and tried hard to persuade the Edomites," or "We are not sure we can persuade the Edomites."

The Edomites again refuse to let the Israelites through, and the Edomites send out an army against the Israelites.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Edomites**, "What are you feeling or thinking?" They might answer things like: "We stood firm in our answer," or "We are right to carry out our threat and send an army against the Israelites," or "We have to stop the Israelites."

Ask the people playing the Israelite messengers, "What are you feeling or thinking?" They might answer things like: "We feel downcast now that we cannot go through Edom," or "We feel sad that the Edomites do not treat us like brothers and let us through," or "We feel annoyed that the Edomites think we are a threat to them," or "We are not a threat to the Edomites. Why did they need to come out with an army?"

The Israelites turn away from Edom to go a different way.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" They might answer things like: "We feel defeated," or "We feel weary. We will now have to go a much longer way around, over difficult land. We are not looking forward to that journey."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 20:14–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Moses sends messengers, or ambassadors, from Kadesh to the King of Edom. The messengers represent the Israelites in an official way, and the messengers have been sent with a message to deliver.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for messengers. 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 messengers tell the king that Edom's brother, **Israel**, suffered hardship in Egypt. Use the same description of "brother Israel" that you discussed earlier. In Egypt, the **Israelites** cried out to **Yahweh** for help. Use the same words for Israel, Israelites, and Yahweh that you have previously used. For more information on these words, refer to the Master Glossary.

The messengers explain to the king that an angel helped the Israelites to leave Egypt, and now the Israelites are camped at Kadesh. An angel is a supernatural being that is sent from heaven.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **angel**. Look up angel 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 messengers assure the king that the Israelites will not go through any vineyard, or field of grapevines, but they will only travel along the King's Highway. The King's Highway was a well-known trade route from Damascus in the north, to Aqaba in the south, to the eastern bank of Jordan. This highway was wide and flattened. This highway would have been suitable for the king's chariots to ride on.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **vineyard** and for **King's Highway**. For more information about vineyard, see the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

The people of Edom threaten to march out and attack the Israelites with the sword. This means they are threatening that the Edomite army will attack the Israelites. Use the same phrase for "attack with the sword" that you have previously used.

The Israelites again ask the Edomites for permission and say that if they or their **livestock** drink water, the Israelites will pay for it. Here, livestock refers to all the different animals that they kept—sheep, goats, and cattle. Use the same word for livestock that you have used in previous passages.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 20:14-21

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (22005525 KB)

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Numbers 20:22-29

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 20:22-29 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Moses sent messengers into the land of Edom to ask permission to pass through the land. The people of Edom refused and threatened to come out with an army. The messengers pleaded again, but the Edomites refused and sent their army against them. The Israelites were forced to turn around and go a different way.

In this passage, the story describes the Israelites moving from Kadesh to Mount Hor. Moses, Aaron, and Eleazar go up the mountain where Aaron dies and Eleazar becomes the high priest. The Israelites mourn for Aaron.

The Israelites had turned around, away from Edom. After this, they travelled on until they came to the mountain called Hor on the border of Edom. It is unclear exactly where this mountain is.

Yahweh spoke to Moses and Aaron at the mountain called Hor. You will remember that both Moses and Aaron had disobeyed Yahweh about the water at Meribah. Yahweh tells them again that Aaron will not go into the land that he is giving to the Israelites. Aaron will be gathered to his people, which means that Aaron will die there in the wilderness instead and join his ancestors who have already died.

Yahweh told Moses to take Aaron and his son Eleazar up Mount Hor, remove Aaron's garments, and put them on Eleazar. These garments were the special priestly robes that Aaron wore because he was the high priest.

You will remember these garments from the book of Exodus. When the high priest died the garments were passed on to the eldest son. Eleazar was the eldest remaining son of Aaron, so he would become the high priest.

Stop and look again at a picture of the high priest's robes. Discuss what kinds of clothing you have in your community that show that someone has authority in the community. Pause the audio here.

Moses followed Yahweh's command. He went up the mountain with Aaron and Eleazar whilst everyone watched.

Stop and tell a story of a time when someone in your community passed on responsibility and authority to another person. Pause the audio here.

Moses removed Aaron's priestly robes and put them on his son, Eleazar. Aaron stopped being high priest when Moses removed his garments. The robes symbolized the authority that Yahweh had given Aaron as the high priest. Now Yahweh was taking away that authority and giving it to Aaron's son. Then Aaron died and Moses and Eleazar went back down the mountain. The whole community of Israelites saw that Aaron was not with them and that Eleazar was wearing Aaron's robes. They knew Aaron had died. They mourned or wept for Aaron for thirty days. The Israelites normally mourned for seven days, but Aaron was an important leader and the first high priest, so the Israelites mourned longer.

Stop and remember what you have already heard earlier in Numbers about what people do when a family member dies. Normally the people who are near the dead body are unclean for 7 days. Also discuss: How do you mourn or weep for someone when they die in your culture? What do you do with their bodies? What traditions do you follow?

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 20:22-29 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 4 scenes.

In the first scene: The Israelites travelled from Kadesh to the mountain of Hor.

In the second scene: Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron that Aaron will die. He instructs them to go up the mountain with Eleazar and then take Aaron's priestly garments off and put them onto Eleazar.

In the third scene: Moses, Aaron, and Eleazar walk up Mount Hor whilst all the Israelites watch. Moses follows Yahweh's command and takes off Aaron's priestly garments and puts them on Eleazar. Aaron dies on the mountain.

In the fourth scene: Moses and Eleazar come back down the mountain without Aaron whilst the whole community watched. Then they all mourn for Aaron for thirty days.

The characters in this passage are:

- Israelites
- Moses
- Aaron
- Eleazar
- Yahweh

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

In scene one the whole congregation or community of Israel travelled on from Kadesh to Mount Hor. The actual destination of Mount Hor is not clear. The name of the mountain is important because it is mentioned four times

in this passage. We do not know where the mountain was, but we know that it was near the border of the land of Edom. The Israelite community set up their camp at the bottom of Mount Hor.

In scene two Yahweh speaks to Moses and Aaron and tells them that Aaron will be gathered to his people. In other words, Aaron will die and go to be with his ancestors, who are the ancestors of the people of Israel.

Stop and discuss: How do you talk about when an important person in your community dies, or an important ancestor of your people dies? Throughout the Old Testament, Yahweh talks about how the Israelite ancestors such as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses are gathered to their people, or to their ancestors, when they die. How will you describe this in your translation? Pause the audio here.

Yahweh explains to Moses and Aaron that Aaron cannot enter the land Yahweh promised to the Israelites because Moses and Aaron had rebelled at the waters of Meribah. This is where Moses hit the rock instead of speaking to it. Moses and Aaron did not show that Yahweh was holy so Yahweh said they could not go into the promised land.

Yahweh told Moses to take Aaron and Eleazar—Aaron's son—up Mount Hor, remove Aaron's garments, and put them on Eleazar. The garments are the priestly clothes that Aaron wore because he was the high priest.

Yahweh tells Moses again that Aaron will be gathered to his people and explains this further by saying that he will die on the mountain. Yahweh prepares Moses for losing his brother who has been with him for the whole of the wilderness journey of forty years.

We know that Aaron was 123 years old when he died.

In scene three Moses did what Yahweh commanded him to do. Moses describes how he followed Yahweh's commands by repeating that he did each action that Yahweh had told him to do. Moses took Aaron and Eleazar up Mount Hor. The name of the mountain is mentioned again here. This helps us to create a picture of the action on the mountain. They went up the mountain in the sight of the whole Israelite community. The cloud was not covering this mountain like before when Moses went up Mount Sinai to receive the laws. The people could see them all going up. We do not know if they could see everything that happened on the top of the mountain.

Moses followed Yahweh's instructions when they reached the top of the mountain. He stripped off Aaron's priestly garments and put them on Eleazar. Aaron probably still had on his undergarments, but the action of "stripping off" shows that Moses was taking away Aaron's authority when he took away the garments. Eleazar had already been dedicated to work as a priest in the tabernacle when Yahweh dedicated Aaron and his sons. Aaron was the high priest and this honour would pass on to his eldest son when he died. Eleazar was now the eldest surviving son of Aaron, as his older brothers had already died. Moses put the priestly garments of Aaron on Eleazar. This meant that Eleazar was now the high priest instead of his father. Then Aaron died on top of the mountain. We do not know what happened to Aaron's body.

In scene four the whole community of Israel saw Moses and Eleazar come down the mountain without Aaron. They saw Eleazar wearing Aaron's priestly garments. They realised that Aaron had died on top of the mountain. They were very sad and mourned for him for thirty days. This was much longer than the normal custom because he had been a special leader.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 20:22–29 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:

- Israelites
- Moses
- Aaron
- Eleazar
- 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.

All the Israelites travelled from Kadesh to the mountain of Hor. They set out the camp in the way they had done many times before.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" They might answer things like, "Glad we are moving on again," or "It is hard work packing everything away and travelling like this," or "I wonder how long we will be camping near this mountain."

Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron that Aaron will die. Yahweh gives them instructions to go up the mountain with Eleazar and then to take Aaron's priestly garments off and put them onto Eleazar.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" He might answer things like, "Sad that my brother is going to die," or "I wish we were going to enter the promised land after all this time in the wilderness."

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" They might answer things like, "I love Aaron and I am sad he had to die before arriving in the promised land."

Moses, Aaron, and Eleazar walk up Mount Hor whilst all the Israelites were watching. Moses obeys Yahweh's command and takes off Aaron's priestly garments. He puts them on Eleazar.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" He might answer things like, "I regret how we disobeyed Yahweh at Meribah. I am devastated. I will miss my brother. He helped me so much."

Ask the person playing Aaron, "What are you feeling or thinking?" He might answer things like, "Sad that I am going to die before I go into the promised land," or "I was expecting something like this to happen," or "I am glad Yahweh allowed me to see at least part of the promised land from this mountain before I died."

Ask the person playing Eleazar, "What are you feeling or thinking?" He might answer things like, "So sad and upset that my father is going to die," or "It will be an honour to serve the people now as high priest after my father."

Moses and Eleazar come back down the mountain without Aaron whilst the whole community was watching.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" They might answer things like, "Surprised that Aaron did not come down the mountain," or "Full of sadness and sorrow that Aaron has died," or "We will honour Aaron in a special way and mourn him for thirty days."

The Israelites mourn Aaron for thirty days.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 20:22–29 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage. **Yahweh** is used several times in 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.

The whole **Israelite congregation**, or **community**, left Kadesh and went to Mount Hor. Use the same words or phrases for Israelite and community that you have used in previous passages. Israelite is in the Master Glossary.

Meribah is the place where Moses and Aaron rebelled against Yahweh, or disobeyed Yahweh. Use the same place name for Meribah that you used in previous passages.

Yahweh told Moses to take Aaron and Eleazar, who was Aaron's son, and take them up Mount Hor. Moses should remove Aaron's **garments** and put them on Eleazar. The garments are the priestly clothing that Aaron wore because he was the **high priest**. These garments included the tunic, the breastplate, and the ephod.

Stop and discuss what word or phrase you will use for **garments**. Look at a picture of the priestly garments if needed. Use the same words that you used in Exodus when Yahweh gave instructions about the priestly garments. Pause the audio here.

Use the same word or phrase for high priest as you used in previous passages. For more information on priest, refer to the Master Glossary.

The people **mourned** for 30 days. They may have cried or wept loudly.

Stop and discuss what word you will use for **mourn**. Use the same word you have used previously. Pause the audio.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 20:22–29

Audio Content

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Numbers 21:1–9

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 21:1–9 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 21:1–9 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 21:1–9 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This passage comes right after the story about the death of Aaron. However, we are not sure exactly when this story happened. The battle with the King of Arad may have happened when the Israelites were on their way to Mount Hor. However, this story is the first in a series of stories that describe a number of victories the Israelites had over hostile non-Israelites.

You will remember that in an earlier passage, the Israelites sent leaders to investigate the land God was going to give them—the promised land. God said that the Israelites would wander in the wilderness for forty years. The Israelites then tried to go into the promised land on their own. The Canaanites defeated the Israelites and chased them to a place called Hormah.

This story happens in that same region. It is now about 38 years after the first time the Israelites were at Hormah. This time the outcome is different.

The story starts by telling how a Canaanite king of Arad, who lives in the Negev desert, hears that the Israelites are travelling along the road to Atharim. This Canaanite king is not the only king in the land of Canaan. This king is one of several kings who rules over this one area.

Arad was a city west of the Dead Sea in the southern part of Canaan. The actual location of Atharim is unknown.

The Canaanite king attacks the Israelites and captures some of them. The people of Israel make a strong promise, or vow, to Yahweh that if Yahweh will allow the Israelites to defeat these enemies, then the Israelites will destroy all the towns that belong to these people. The Israelites will not take any of the people, or any of the items found in the city, for themselves. This shows that Yahweh gives the Israelites the victory. The Israelites do not earn the victory themselves.

Stop here and tell a story about a time you or your people made a strong promise or vow to someone else. Pause the audio here.

Yahweh hears the Israelites' requests. Yahweh gives the Israelites the victory. The Israelites defeat the Canaanites and destroy their cities. The Israelites call this area Hormah, which means "devoted for destruction."

At some point, the people travel south around the land of Edom towards the Red Sea. We know from previous stories that the King of Edom would not allow the Israelites to travel through his land. This meant that the Israelites travelled back the way they had just come. The Israelites complain to God and Moses about the lack of good water and the lack of food. The people say there is no food, and then they say that they do not like the food, or bread, that they do have. The Israelites say that they would have been better off back in Egypt rather than dying in the wilderness.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story about a time when people in your community complained about something to an authority figure because they were tired of a problem they had for a long time. Pause the audio here.

Stop here and look at a map of the area where the Israelites have been wandering and camping. Pause the audio here.

Yahweh sends fiery or poisonous snakes or serpents to the Israelites. A snake is an animal that crawls on the ground on the snake's belly or stomach. A snake has a long, forked tongue and sharp fangs in its mouth. The name "fiery" comes from the original language, meaning "to burn." This is because of the burning sensation when a poisonous snake bites someone. The poison makes a burning feeling on and under the skin. Many Israelites died because the snakes bit them.

Stop here and look at the picture of a snake. Pause the audio here.

The Israelites realise they have done wrong against Yahweh. The people go to Moses and say, "We have sinned by speaking against you and against Yahweh." The people politely ask Moses to speak to Yahweh so Yahweh will take the snakes away. Moses prays for the Israelites. Moses asks Yahweh to take the snakes away.

Yahweh tells Moses to make a replica, or an image, of a snake. Moses has a craftsman make a snake from bronze, or possibly copper. A metalworker makes bronze by combining copper and tin. Copper is a fiery red colour, which may fit more closely with the description of the fiery snake.

Moses attaches the metal snake to a pole, or a long stick. The pole is long enough for many people to see the snake when it is lifted up. Anyone who has been bitten by a snake can look at the bronze snake and they would live. So Moses does as Yahweh commands. Moses makes a snake out of bronze and attaches it to a pole. Moses places the pole in the ground so the snake is high in the air. Anyone who has been bitten by a snake can look at, or gaze at, the bronze snake, and Yahweh heals them. These people do not die from the snake bites. A person had to obey Yahweh and choose to look at the bronze snake before Yahweh would heal them.

Stop here and look at an image of a bronze snake on a stick. Pause the audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 21:1–9 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 three scenes.

In the first scene: The Canaanite king of Arad attacks the Israelites. The Israelites ask Yahweh to give them victory if they attack the Canaanites. Yahweh gives the Israelites the victory. The Israelites destroy the Canaanites and their towns.

In the second scene: The Israelites leave Mount Hor and head south around the land of Edom. The people become frustrated and speak against Moses and God. Yahweh sends poisonous snakes that bite some of the people and they die.

In the third scene: The Israelites realise they have sinned against Yahweh and against Moses. The Israelites ask Moses to ask Yahweh to take the snakes away. Yahweh tells Moses to make a bronze snake. The bronze snake is attached to a stick. A person who is bitten by a snake can look at the bronze snake and they will not die.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- The king of Arad
- Canaanites
- Poisonous snakes
- The Israelites

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

We do not know exactly when this story starts. If possible, try not to make it sound like this story happened immediately after the previous story. The previous story happened at Mount Hor. This next story happens as the Israelites leave Mount Hor. The first part of this passage is about the battle with the Canaanite king of Arad. It is like a separate story within the stories that happened around Mount Hor. We do not know exactly where this story happened. The exact location is not important to the author. The important point is what happens rather than exactly where or when it happens.

In the first scene we see the Canaanite king of Arad in the Negev. Arad was a city in the southern region of Canaan. Negev refers to the "southern part of Canaan."

Stop here and look at a map of the region. Pause the audio here.

Stop here and discuss this as a group: How would you describe a ruler or chief of an area? How would you describe the area that they govern? Give examples of different kinds of leaders who govern different kinds of areas. Pause the audio here.

The king of Arad hears that the Israelites are approaching on the road to Atharim. We do not know the location of Atharim. Some people believe that this refers to the route that the spies took, since the name sounds similar to the Israelites' word for spies. The king attacks the Israelites and he captures some of them. The king takes them prisoners.

The Israelites make a vow, or a strong promise, to Yahweh. The Israelites say that if Yahweh gives the Israelites victory over the Canaanites, then the Israelites will completely destroy the Canaanites and their towns.

Yahweh hears the Israelites' request, and Yahweh gives the Israelites victory over their enemies. The Israelites completely destroy the Canaanite people and their towns. The Israelites do not take from the city any items for themselves. The Israelites are showing that it is Yahweh who overcame the Canaanites, and therefore the people and their cities belong to Yahweh. The Israelites destroy the Canaanites and their cities, and the Israelites do not keep any of the people or the cities for themselves.

In the second scene the people of Israel leave Mount Hor and head south. This may have happened soon after Aaron's death, but we are not sure. The Israelites go around the land of Edom towards the Red Sea. Be sure that the way you start this scene does not sound like it happened right after Yahweh gave the Israelites victory, because we are not sure when this happened.

Stop here and look at a map of where the Israelites are travelling. Think about how you will start this part of this passage and how you will show that we are not sure when it happened. Pause the audio here.

The people grow impatient. The people have become discouraged, or lost patience. The people speak to God and to Moses. When Moses describes the people's anger, Moses says that the people talk against God. Moses uses the general word for God rather than God's personal name, Yahweh. The people ask a question that does not require an answer. The people say, "Why have you brought us out of Egypt to die in the wilderness?" The people are angry at God and Moses. The people feel God and Moses should not have brought them out of Egypt. The people are also saying that they would not have died if they had stayed in Egypt.

Stop here and discuss: Tell a story about a time you showed that you did not like a situation. Talk about what you said in that situation. What question might you have asked someone to show you were not happy about the situation or event? Pause the audio.

The people greatly disliked that they did not have food and water. The people said, "There is nothing to eat here and nothing to drink. We hate this horrible manna!" The original word for food here is bread. However, when the people say that they hate the bread, the people are talking about manna. You will remember from Exodus that manna is the food that Yahweh is miraculously providing the people each morning.

Yahweh does not speak a reply to the people. Yahweh sends fiery or poisonous snakes among the people. The snakes bite many people, and those people die.

Stop here and discuss: Remember that these snakes cause people to feel like the bite is burning them. How in your language would you talk about poisonous or fiery snakes? Pause the audio here.

In the third scene the people come to Moses and confess or cry out, "We have sinned against you and against Yahweh." The people are saying that they have done something wrong—they have not trusted Moses and they have not trusted Yahweh. The people politely ask Moses to ask Yahweh to take away the snakes. So Moses prays to Yahweh to take the snakes away.

Stop here and discuss: Tell a story about a time when you or someone you know asked a leader to act on your behalf. Pay attention to how you describe the leader going to someone more important than that leader to try to help you. Pause the audio here.

Yahweh answers Moses. Yahweh tells Moses to make a snake or serpent out of bronze. Moses attaches the metal snake to a long pole and puts the pole into the ground. The people are able to see the bronze snake because it is high on the pole. Yahweh does not take away the snakes, but Yahweh provides a way for the people to not

die when the snakes bite them. The people can choose to trust Yahweh and look at the bronze snake, and Yahweh will heal them.

Moses does what Yahweh has told Moses to do. When a snake bites someone, that person can look at the bronze snake and they will not die. When the people look at the bronze snake, they are looking at it intently, or paying close attention to it. It is important to remember that this passage makes clear that it is when the Israelites obey Yahweh and look at the snake that they are healed.

Stop here and discuss: Tell a story about a time when you or someone you know has looked at something intently, or paid close attention to something. Pay attention to the words you use as you tell the story. 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

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 21:1–9 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 king of Arad
- Canaanites
- Poisonous snakes
- 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.

The Canaanite king of Arad hears that the Israelites are approaching on the road to Atharim. The Canaanite king attacks the Israelites and takes some of the people as prisoners. The Israelites make a promise, or a vow, to Yahweh saying, "If you hand these people to us, we will completely destroy all their towns." Yahweh hears the Israelites' request. Yahweh gives the Israelites victory over the Canaanites. The Israelites completely destroy the people and their towns.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "We are overwhelmed with joy! Yahweh has done this for us! Yahweh heard our cry for help! Yahweh is our

protector!" or, "We are Yahweh's people. Yahweh provides for us! We need to keep our promises to Yahweh and Yahweh blesses us."

The Israelites leave Mount Hor on a journey towards the Red Sea. The Israelites travel around the land of Edom. The people grow impatient on their journey. The people began to speak against God and against Moses saying, "Why have you brought us out of Egypt to die here in the wilderness? There is nothing to eat here and nothing to drink. We hate this horrible manna!"

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I wish I was in Egypt. I had food I liked there and plenty of clean water to drink," or, "Why does Yahweh lead us to this desolate, awful place? I preferred to live under the Pharaoh's rules," or, "What is the point of all this wandering around? We are really tired and wish we had different types of food."

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "My people are so quick to forget me," or, "My people are forever testing my patience," or, "I long for my people to look to me. I love my people, but they choose to not trust me, and they choose to disobey me."

Yahweh sends poisonous, or fiery, snakes among the people. Many Israelites are bitten and die. The Israelites say to Moses, "We have sinned by speaking against Yahweh and against you. Pray that Yahweh will take away the snakes." Moses prays for the people.

Yahweh tells Moses to make a bronze snake. Yahweh tells Moses to attach the bronze snake to a stick. Yahweh tells Moses that anyone who is bitten by a snake should look at the bronze snake and they will not die, but they will live. Moses makes a bronze snake and attaches it to a stick. Anyone who is bitten by a snake can look at the bronze snake, and that person will be healed.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I am so relieved that Yahweh knew we were sorry. Yahweh has rescued us from dying if a snake bites us," or, "Yahweh has forgiven us!"

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I find it hard to lead my people. I understand their complaints. Life is hard in the wilderness," or, "Yahweh is so patient with us. We Israelites are not good at keeping our promises to Yahweh! Yahweh always keeps Yahweh's part of our vows and promises."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 21:1–9 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

The **Canaanite** king hears the Israelites are approaching on the road through Atharim. A Canaanite is someone who comes from the land of Canaan. For more information on Canaan, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for "road through Atharim." We do not know where Atharim was. However, we do know that people often traveled this route. What word would you use for a route that people used to get from one place to another, usually by walking? You may use the word road, path, or way. Pause this audio here.

The Israelites vowed a **vow** to **Yahweh**. A vow is a promise made between two people or groups of people. In this case it was the Israelites making a solemn promise to Yahweh. For more information on vow, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for vow that you have used in previous passages. In this passage Yahweh is used throughout except when the Israelites complain against **God**, in which case the general term for God is used. Use the same words for God and Yahweh that you have in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh and God, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh gives the Israelites the victory. The Israelites completely destroy the towns and people. The place has been called Hormah ever since. The word Hormah means complete destruction. Use the same place name for Hormah that you did in the earlier story in Numbers when the Israelites were chased away from Canaan when they first tried to conquer Canaan without the help of Yahweh. That story happened 38 years before this story,

The Israelites leave Mount Hor and travel around Edom towards the Red Sea. The people grow impatient and complain, "Why have you brought us out of Egypt to die here in the wilderness?" For more information on wilderness, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same words or phrases for wilderness and for the place names that you have used in previous passages.

The Israelites say, "There is no **bread**, there is no water.... We hate this horrible bread or manna!" **Manna** is the food Yahweh miraculously provides to the Israelites as they travel about in the wilderness. The people go out each morning to collect enough manna for the day. Although this story says "bread" here, we know that when the Israelites say that they hate the bread, they are talking about the manna that they have been eating for many years. You may use the specific term for manna here or the general term for bread. If you use the term manna, translate it in the same way as you have in previous passages.

Yahweh sends fiery, or poisonous, **snakes** among the people and many are bitten and die.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **snakes**. The snakes in this passage are poisonous. If you have different words for snakes that are poisonous and snakes that are not poisonous, be careful to show that the snakes in this passage are poisonous. 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 make a **replica**, or image, of the poisonous snake out of bronze. A replica is a statue of something that looks very similar.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **replica**. 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.

So Moses makes a snake out of **bronze** and attaches it to a pole. Bronze is a man-made metal made from melting copper and tin together. Bronze is quite a hard metal, and people use it to make tools, weapons, and armour. Bronze is a brown colour. Some translations use the word copper instead of bronze. Copper is softer than bronze. Copper can be dug from the ground in some countries. Copper can be melted and poured into moulds to make items. Copper is a reddish colour. Use the same word for bronze that you have used in previous passages, and see the Master Glossary for more information about bronze.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 21:1–9

Audio Content

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Numbers 21:10–20

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 21:10–20 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 21:10–20 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 21:10–20 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, the Israelites were travelling through southern Canaan towards the Red Sea. They travelled around Edom because the Edomites did not allow them to travel through Edomite land. This passage gives the locations of the next portion of the Israelites' journey, naming the places where they camped.

The Israelites set out, continuing on the journey they had been on since leaving Egypt. The people camp at Oboth. Oboth is probably somewhere between the Gulf of Aqaba and the Dead Sea.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a long trip that you took. Tell the places where you stopped and the route you took. Pause this audio here.

The Israelites move and camp at Lye Abarim, in the wilderness. Lye Abarim means the "heaps of stones of Abarim." People would place piles of stones to mark the direction of watercourses. So this probably means that the Israelites were travelling in a direction where they could find water. Lye Abarim was in the desert just east of Moab. When the sun rose in the morning, the Israelites could stand with their backs to the morning sun and the sunlight would shine on Moab. The Israelites do not enter Moab. The Israelites travel along the eastern border. You will remember that the Moabites are descendants of Lot's eldest daughter, so they are the Israelites' distant relatives.

Stop here as a group and, if needed, look at a picture of the wilderness. Pause the audio here.

The Israelites move on and camp at the valley of Zered, or Zered Brook. The valley of Zered is a dry river valley or wadi, where water only flows as a river in the wet or rainy season. When it rains, the water can flow very quickly and deeply. The Israelites are now in Moabite land.

Stop here and look at a picture of a dry river valley as a group.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How would you describe a river valley that is dry for some of the year and flows deeply or fast at other times of the year? Pause this audio here.

The Israelites move out and camp on the far side of the Arnon River. The Arnon River is a big river that flows east to west into the Dead Sea, during the season of the year when it is raining. The Israelites camp on the other side of the river, or on the north side. The Israelites have to cross the river at a place where the river is not deep or wide. The Arnon River marks the border between Moab and the Amorites. When the Israelites cross the river, they move into the land of the Amorites.

The Israelites are getting nearer to the land Yahweh has promised them. We see in another part of the Old Testament that before this part of the journey takes place, Yahweh had told the Israelites that Yahweh would give the Israelites victory over the Amorite king, Sihon, and give the Israelites Sihon's land.

Stop here and look at a map of where the Israelites have travelled so far in this story. Look at the map as a group and trace the journey the Israelites have taken. Pause this audio here.

Moses includes two sayings in the middle of the story. The first saying has simple, ordinary language, and the second saying is from a poem or song. Poems and songs have special language that a poet arranged in a beautiful and creative way. The Israelites sang poems, which may have a rhythm or beat.

Moses verifies his account of the journey with a short saying from *The Book of the Wars of Yahweh*. We do not know much about this book, but some people believe that it was a collection of songs about the victories of Yahweh over Yahweh's enemies. People probably considered this a well-known and respected writing because Moses quotes the book to prove that Moses's description is correct.

Stop here and discuss this as a group: Share some poems or songs about well-known historical events in your community. Talk about how people use these poems to share what happened in their history. When do they use them? To whom do they sing them? Pause the audio here.

The first saying that Moses gives provides information about the locations that the Israelites just travelled through, the town of Waheb and the area called Supah. The area has ravines, which are slopes or cliffs leading

down to the valley. The slopes of the Arnon River were steep. At the bottom of the valley is a river or a dry riverbed that the Israelites will pass through, all the way to the settlement or town of Ar. There are many small rivers and streams that flow through the ravines and eventually flow into the River Arnon and go all the way to the border of Moab. This entire area of land leans into, or is next to, the border of Moab.

Stop here and look at a photo of a steep ravine. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Describe areas around rivers in your land. How are they the same or different from the Arnon River? Pause this audio here.

The Israelites travel to Beer, which means "well." People would dig a well to find a source of fresh and clean underground water. We do not know exactly where Beer is located, but it is probably north west of the upper parts of the Arnon River. When the Israelites arrived at Beer, Yahweh told Moses to assemble the people so Yahweh could give them water. Here, Moses reminds Moses's audience of what happened when the Israelites arrived at Beer.

At Beer, the Israelites sing a celebration poem or song about the well they dug. The Israelites sing to the well and ask the water to spring up—to flow with water—and to come out of the well. The Israelites encourage each other to sing to the well, which princes and nobles dug. These princes and nobles refer to the leaders, or chiefs, of the Israelites. These princes or nobles are important or honourable people who dug the well with their "scepters and staffs." A scepter is a decorated rod or long pole, and a staff is a wooden stick that people use to show authority. Because a poem sometimes has symbolic language, this could mean that either the nobles dug the well themselves, or that they authorized the digging of the well by pointing to the spot with their staff.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Sing a song from your culture that celebrates something that others have made. Pause this audio here.

The story returns to the list of destinations the Israelites travelled to and camped at. The Israelites leave the wilderness and go to Mattanah. From Mattanah to Nahaliel. From Nahaliel to Bamoth. The Israelites camp at each of these places. We do not know where these places are.

The Israelites go to the valley in Moab by the Pisgah Peak, which overlooks the desert. Pisgah Peak is a high place that overlooks the Moab plain. From the top of this peak, people can see for great distances. This area is east of the most northern part of the Dead Sea, north of the Arnon River and east of the Jordan River, probably across from the city of Jericho.

Stop here and look at the map of where the Israelites have travelled in this passage.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 21:10–20 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 three scenes.

In the first scene: The Israelites travel to Oboth, Lye Abarim, the valley of the Zered Brook, and to the far side of the Arnon River. The Israelites are travelling nearer and nearer to the land Yahweh promised them.

In the second scene: Moses quotes from a book that declares the victories Yahweh made for Yahweh's people. The Israelites travel to Beer. This is where Yahweh gave the Israelites water by enabling them to dig a well.

In the third scene: The Israelites travel through Mattanah, Nahaliel, and Bamoth. They then go to the valley in Moab by the Pisgah Peak.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- The Israelites
- Moses
- Leaders and nobles

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

This passage tells of the journey the Israelites make towards Canaan. The Israelites "set out" or "moved on" or "journeyed on." The passage lists sites where the Israelites camp.

Stop here and discuss: Tell about a time that you went on a journey through several places. Pay attention to any words or phrases you use when starting on the journey. Pay attention to any words or phrases you use when explaining the places you stayed. Also pay attention to any words or phrases you use when explaining the way you moved from one place to the next. Pause the audio.

In the first scene, the Israelites continue their journey and travel to Oboth where they camp. You will remember from earlier passages that Yahweh has given the Israelites specific instructions on how to set up their camp, with each group where they should be and with the tabernacle in the centre of their camp. The Israelites would have done this every time they moved to a new place.

The Israelites then journey from Oboth to Lye Abarim. Lye Abarim means the "ruins of Abarim" or "heaps of stones." Abarim is the name of the mountains east of the Dead Sea. Remember that in the desert, heaps of stones are used to mark the direction of a watercourse.

Stop and discuss: How will you name the place "Lye Abarim"? Pause this audio here.

The Israelites set up camp at Lye Abarim which is in the wilderness on the eastern border of Moab.

Stop and discuss: How do you describe or name directions such as north, south, east, and west in your language? How will you describe the wilderness that faces Moab towards the sunrise? Pause the audio here.

The Israelites then move on and camp at the valley of Zered, or Zered Brook. This is a dry river valley where water—a stream or river—sometimes runs. This river valley will be dry for most of the year, but it will have water in it during the rainy season. In fact, the water can flow very quickly and deeply during the wet season.

Stop here and discuss: What words or phrases would you use to describe a river valley that is dry sometimes, maybe in the summer, and then flows deeply when the rains come? Pause the audio.

The Israelites then move on and camp on the other side of the Arnon River. The Arnon River flows east to west, so the "other side" of the river means the Israelites were moving north and crossed the Arnon River to the northern side, to the territory of the Amorites. It is likely the Israelites would have crossed the river further north where it was not so wide and deep. The Arnon River is the boundary between the Moabites and the Amorites.

Stop here and look at the map of where the Israelites have travelled so far and where they will be going in this passage. Pause the audio.

In the second scene, there is a pause in the narrative as Moses quotes from *The Book of the Wars of Yahweh*, which was a well-known and trusted document. This quote verifies what Moses says, especially the places Moses has just spoken about. Moses is quoting the victory of the Israelites over this area, "the ravines of the Arnon River, and the ravines that extend as far as the border of Moab." The Israelites have just moved to the side of the Arnon River.

Stop and discuss: How will you describe *The Book of the Wars of Yahweh* so it is clear that Moses is quoting from a well-known and trusted source? Pause the audio here.

Stop here and discuss: What words or phrases would you use to describe the ravines of the Arnon River? Remember that ravines are steep valleys through which water flows in the rainy season. Pause this audio here.

Stop and discuss as a group: How will you describe that the Arnon River territory leans into or "hugs" the border of Moab? Pause this audio here.

From there the Israelites travel to Beer. Moses pauses the travel story to explain how Beer got its name. Yahweh said to Moses to assemble the people so Yahweh could give the people water. By referencing this small part of the story, the Israelites would have remembered the whole story. When Yahweh gave the Israelites water at Beer, they sang a song.

Words to songs are a type of poem. Remember that poets, people who create poems and songs, use special language and organize the words in beautiful and creative ways. Israelite poets like to repeat words or phrases. They also like to put lines together in groups of two, three, or more lines. The first line makes a basic statement. The following lines add to and complete the meaning or repeat the idea in a different way.

Stop and discuss: How do you make it clear that this passage is referencing an event that happened in the past? Is there any language or phrases you need to use? Pause the audio here.

The singers sing, "Spring up, O well." The singers are asking the well to produce the water abundantly. The singers are using their words in a creative way. The singers are singing to the well as if it were a person who can hear them. If this type of special language is not used in your culture, you can say this as a wish: for example, "May this well produce its water."

Stop and discuss: How are you going to state the people's wish that the well will produce water? Pause the audio here.

The Israelites now encourage each other to sing to the well. They say "Sing to it!" or "Sing its praises!" The first two sentences of the song that Moses quotes have similar ideas: They are joyous and celebrating, praising the fact that there is a well supplying the people with water. In the first statement, the singers encourage the well to produce the water. In the second statement, the singers encourage the Israelites to celebrate the well because it produces life-giving water.

Stop and discuss: How will you make it clear that the song is instructing the Israelites to sing and not that it is not instructing the well to sing? Pause the audio here.

The next two lines both say the same thing, but in different ways: "Sing of this well which princes dug" or "about the well that nobles, great leaders hollowed out." Princes and nobles refer to the same people. Princes and nobles are leaders, chiefs, or rulers. Princes and nobles may be called important people or honourable people. These leaders were involved in digging the well, but the poets used different words to describe the action: dig, made, open, sunk, or hollowed out. These sentences are connected because they say the same thing in slightly different ways.

In the final phrase, there is a repetition of symbols of authority that leaders carry. The leaders have scepters and staffs. Scepters and staffs are similar objects. A scepter is a decorated rod of wood or precious metal. A staff is a type of walking stick of wood or precious metal. The leaders may have dug the well with these scepters and staffs or the leaders may have pointed their staffs to show the people where to dig the well.

Stop and discuss: Think about your songs. Try to give an example of how your songs say the same things more than once, but in different ways. Pay attention to how you do this. Pause the audio here.

The end of this passage is a list of places, one after the other, where the Israelites camped. The passage ends with the Israelites stopping at Mount Pisgah, which is a place which overlooks the plains of Moab.

Stop here and discuss: How do you list places in your language? Do you list them from the starting place to the next place? How do you make it clear when the people have reached their final destination? Discuss how you state when someone has reached their final destination. 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

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 21:10-20 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
- The Israelites
- Moses
- Leaders and nobles

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 Israelites set out and camp at Oboth. The Israelites set out from Oboth and camp at Lye Abarim in the wilderness, opposite Moab. From there, the Israelites set out and camp in the Valley of Zered. From there, the Israelites set out and camp on the other side of the Arnon River. The Arnon is the border between Moab and the Amorites.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I cannot believe we have come this far. We are nearly in our land," or, "I am a little frightened. We need Yahweh to go before us and see us safely through this land."

Moses quotes from the *Book of the Wars of Yahweh*, a well-known and trusted document that details the victories of Yahweh, "Waheb in Suphah, and the valleys of the Arnon, and the slope of the valleys that extends to the seat of Ar and leans to the border of Moab." This verifies what Moses says, especially the places Moses has just spoken about.

And from there the Israelites continued to Beer. Beer is where Yahweh said to Moses, "Gather the people together, so that I may give them water." This is when Israel sang this song: "Spring up, O well! Sing to it! The well that the princes made, that the nobles of the people dug, with the scepter and with their staffs."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "This place is important to us. Yahweh will care for us here," or, "I am so excited to be here and see what I have only heard of or known about until now."

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I am happy that my people are finally starting to trust me and that they know I am bringing them to their land," or, "May they continue to trust me and remember that I never abandon them."

From the wilderness the Israelites travelled to Mattanah, to Nahaliel, to Bamoth. From Bamoth they reached the valley in the region of Moab by the top of the Pisgah that looks down on the desert.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "We can see the land Yahweh promised us," or, "We are nearly there. Yahweh, please give us courage and please continue to guide us."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 21:10–20 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

The Israelites **travel**, or set out, to Oboth and camp there. Use the same word or phrase for travel, or set out, that you used in previous passages.

The Israelites set out from Lye Abarim, in the **wilderness** on the eastern border of Moab. Use the same word or phrase for wilderness that you used in previous passages. For more information on wilderness, refer to the Master Glossary.

From there the Israelites travel to the **dry river valley**, or wadi, of Zered Brook and set up camp. Use the same word or phrase for dry river valley that you used in previous passages. Remember that a dry river valley is full of water during the season of the year when it is raining. Use the same word or phrase for set up camp that you used in previous passages.

The Book of the Wars of Yahweh speaks of "ravines, steep slopes that lead down into the river valleys of the Arnon River."

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **ravines** or **steep slopes**. You may use the same word for ravines that you do for dry river valleys. If you have already translated these words in another book of the Bible, use the same words that you have used there. Look at a picture of a ravine or river valley, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **book**. We do not know what this book looked like, only that historians wrote down the histories of battle victories, and that people knew these stories. Pause this audio here.

From there the Israelites travel to Beer, which is the well where Yahweh said to Moses, "Assemble the people, and I will give them water." The Israelites sang this song:

"Spring up, O well! Yes, sing its praises!" In this case, the water springs up, or comes up out of the ground. The Israelites are asking for the water to come up freely from the ground.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for "spring up, O well." Pause this audio here.

A **well** is an underground source of fresh water. People dig a hole to reach the water. Use the same word for well that you used in previous passages. The song continues as it says, "Sing of this well, which princes dug, which great leaders hollowed out with their **scepters** and staffs."

Stop here and look at a picture of a scepter. Discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **scepter**. 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 **staff**. Use the same word for staff that you have used in previous passages. Pause this audio here.

The Israelites leave the wilderness and go on to Mattanah, to Nahaliel, and to Bamoth. From there they go to the valley in Moab where Pisgah Peak overlooks the desert, or wasteland. Mount Pisgah overlooks this desert, which has a similar meaning in this context as wilderness. This is an area of land where no one lives and not much can grow. You may use the same word or phrase for wilderness that you used in previous passages. For more information on wilderness, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 21:10–20

Audio Content

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Numbers 21:21–26

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 21:21–26 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 21:21–26 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 21:21–26 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Moses ends with a list of the places the Israelites traveled. In this passage, Moses describes in detail some of the events mentioned in the previous passage. This event begins before the Israelites cross the Arnon River. In this passage, King Sihon's land is near the Arnon River, rather than near the Pisgah Peak. The Pisgah peak is further north than where the events of this passage occur.

The passage starts before the Israelites crossed the Arnon River and entered the land of the Amorites. The Israelites sent messengers, or ambassadors, to King Sihon. Sihon was a king, or chief, among the Amorites. He lived in the city of Heshbon and ruled over the surrounding land and villages.

The messengers ask King Sihon to allow the Israelites to travel through his land. The Israelites promised they would stay on the road and not "turn off" or wander onto any of the land. They will respect the area and pass through without taking anything from the land. The Israelites will not go through fields or vineyards to ensure they do not damage any crops in this fertile area. The Israelites also would not take or drink water from the wells. The Israelites will not take any resources from the local people while passing through the land. They promise to stay on the King's Road until they have passed through the king's territory.

You will remember that the King's Road is an ancient track or highway running north to south from Damascus to the Gulf of Aqabah through Bashan, Gilead, Ammon, Moab, and Edom. Traders often used the King's Road when transporting goods. People walked or used wagons or chariots, as well as taking animals along the King's Road. There were some fortresses along the road to ensure it was safe for travel.

Stop here and look at a map showing the area of the Amorites and a map showing the King's Road. Pause the audio here.

King Sihon would not allow Israel to pass through his land. King Sihon reacts similarly to how the Edomite king reacted earlier. King Sihon gathered his people together, mobilized his army, and attacked Israel in the wilderness. King Sihon and his people went to Jahaz and fought Israel. We do not know exactly where Jahaz is, but it may be a town in or on the edge of the wilderness, probably on the plain—an area of flat land—of Moab.

The Israelites killed King Sihon's people with their swords and took control of King Sihon's land. The Israelites took the land from the Arnon River in the south, to the Jabbok River in the north, to the border of the Ammonites

in the east. The Israelites went only to the border of the Ammonites because the border was strong and fortified. Remember that the Ammonites were descendants of Lot, so they were distant relatives of the Israelites. The Jordan River, which was on the border of Canaan, would have been on the west of the land.

So Israel captured all the towns, or cities, of the Amorites, and the Israelites settled or went to live in them. As a result of the battle between King Sihon and Israel at Jahaz, the Israelites claimed a wider area. This is the first time the Israelites settled in a place since leaving Egypt. Up until now, the Israelites have been wandering in the wilderness, only stopping to camp when Yahweh has told them to camp.

Stop here and discuss as a group: If you know it, tell a story about the founding or settling of your area. Pay attention to any words or phrases used when describing how the people went to live in an area and settled there. Pause the audio here.

The Israelites captured the city of Heshbon and its surrounding villages. Heshbon was the capital city of Sihon the king of the Amorites. Before King Sihon conquered the city, Heshbon was a Moabite city. King Sihon had taken this city before when he conquered all of his land to the Arnon River.

The Israelite poets or songwriters created a poem-song about this event.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 21:21–26 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 2 scenes.

In the first scene: The Israelites send messengers to King Sihon of the Amorites and asked to be allowed to travel through his land. King Sihon will not grant access.

In the second scene: King Sihon mobilizes his army to attack Israel at Jahaz. The Israelites defeat King Sihon and capture the towns of the Amorites. The Israelites settle in the land.

The characters in this passage are:

- Israelites
- Israelite messengers
- King Sihon
- Amorites
- And poets

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

Moses ends the previous passage with a list of the places that the Israelites traveled. In this passage, Moses describes in detail some of the events mentioned in the previous passage. This event begins before the Israelites cross the Arnon River.

During the Israelites' travels around the wilderness, they came to the land where King Sihon of the Amorites ruled. The Israelites sent messengers to King Sihon. The Israelites sent messengers to King Sihon who were acting as ambassadors or diplomats. The messengers were asking King Sihon to allow the Israelites to pass through the land. This passage just says the name of the nation of Israel, as if Israel is one person. However, all the Israelites were asking permission together as a group of people—this is an official way to talk about the whole group of Israelites. You will remember that this is similar to the previous story when the Israelites asked for permission to pass through Edom.

Stop and discuss as a group: Tell a story about messengers that either you have sent or who someone sent to you to bring news or a request. The messengers may have authority to speak on your behalf. Pay attention to any special words or phrases you use when describing different types of messengers. Pause the audio here.

Heshbon was the main city of the area. The Israelites asked to be allowed to travel through the land. The Israelites did not want to take anything from the land. They would not go through any fields or vineyards, or take any water from the wells in the area. They would be respectful and just wanted to pass straight through the land, not turning to the right or left. They would stay on the main road, the King's Road, which was a well-marked track running from north to south through the territory. There were fortresses along the road to assist with safe travel for tradespeople and anyone using the track. The Israelites were being respectful by asking to pass through the land. The Israelites did not want to stop and be a threat to the king. You will remember that the Israelites previously asked to travel on the King's Road through the land of Edom. In this passage, they are similarly asking King Sihon to pass through his land.

King Sihon refused to let the Israelites cross his territory. Instead, King Sihon gathered his army and attacked Israel in the wilderness. King Sihon fought against Israel at Jahaz.

Stop here and discuss: Tell a story about a time a leader gathered their people and went to attack or fight another group of people. Pay attention to special words or phrases you used in the story, especially when you talked about a leader gathering his army together. Pause the audio here.

But Israel defeated them. They struck and killed King Sihon's people with their weapons or with the edge of their swords. The Israelites occupied the Amorite land from the Arnon River to the Jabbok River. The Israelites only went to the border of the Ammonites because the border was strong and fortified. The Ammonites strongly defended their border.

Israel captured all the towns, or cities, of the Amorites, and the Israelites settled in them. The story makes it clear that this was an outcome of the previous battle where Israel defeated King Sihon's people.

Stop here and discuss: Tell a story about a major event that happened in your community. That event caused other major things to happen in your community. As you tell this story, pay attention to the words and phrases you use to show how one thing happened as a result of another thing. Pause the audio here.

This is the first time the Israelites settled in the towns of the Amorites, including the city of Heshbon. This means that the Israelites stayed in these towns or cities. Until that time, the Israelites were wandering in the wilderness. They moved from place to place and set up camp each time Yahweh told them to stop. Then they packed up their camp and moved on when Yahweh told them to move on. Now they moved into the permanent buildings in the towns they had conquered.

Stop here and discuss: Tell a story about a time you or someone you know stopped traveling around, and decided to stay in one place for a longer time to set up their home there. Pay attention to any words or phrases you use to show someone is "settling" in a place. Pause the audio here.

Heshbon was the capital city of King Sihon of the Amorites. Now Moses gives us some extra information about King Sihon. He tells us that some time before, King Sihon had defeated a former Moabite king and conquered Heshbon and all the Moabite land as far as the Arnon River.

Stop here and discuss: When you are telling a story and you want to give extra information about something that someone did before this story happened, how do you do that? Pause the audio here.

The Israelite poets create a poem-song about this event. The next passage includes their poem about King Sihon.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 21:21–26 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:

- Israelites
- Israelite messengers
- King Sihon
- Amorites
- And poets

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 Israelites sent messengers to King Sihon of the Amorites with this message: "Let us travel through your land. We will be careful not to go through your fields or vineyards. We will not drink the water from your wells. We will stay on the King's Road until we have passed through your territory." But Sihon would not allow the Israelites to pass through his territory. Instead, he mobilized his army and attacked Israel in the wilderness, in battle at Jahaz.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Sihon, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I do not trust the Israelites, so I will not let them through my land," or "I will chase this foreign nation away, and I will destroy them like I destroyed the people of Moab before."

Ask the person playing the messenger, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I have heard about King Sihon and I am afraid to meet him," or "I have never had to bring such an important message, I hope King Sihon is open to our request," or "We have come so far, we need to find favor with King Sihon so we can get to the land God has promised us."

But the Israelites slaughtered the Amorites with their swords and occupied their land from the Arnon River to the Jabbok River. They only went as far as the Ammonite border because the boundary with the Amorites was strong.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like, "King Sihon thought he was so powerful, yet Yahweh has saved us again," or "We chased away the other nation just like King Sihon chased away the Moabites."

So, Israel captured the towns of the Amorites and settled in them, including the city of Heshbon and all its villages. Heshbon was the capital city of King Sihon of the Amorites. King Sihon had defeated a former king of Moab and taken all his land to the Arnon River.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like, "It is so good to be able to settle here and stop wandering around," or "We can grow our own food to eat and there is fertile land here for our cattle. This is our land now."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 21:21–26 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

The Israelites, or **Israel**, sent **messengers** to King Sihon of the Amorites. Messengers can bring good news or bad news. The messengers in this story are like ambassadors because they bring a specific request from a leader. Ambassadors act on behalf of a leader, with the authority of the leader who has sent them. Use the same word or phrase for these kinds of messengers that you used in the earlier passage when the Israelites sent messengers to ask to pass through someone's land.

In this passage, the name of the nation of Israel is used in place of the term for the group of Israelites. Use the same term for Israel that you have used in previous passages, and remember that Israel is in the Master Glossary.

The Israelites ask: "Let us travel through your land. We will be careful not to go through your **vineyards**. We will stay on the **King's Road** until we have passed through your territory." For more information on vineyards, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for vineyards as you used in previous passages. Use the same word or phrase for "King's Road" as you used in a previous passage.

King Sihon refused. King Sihon mobilized his army to attack the Israelites in the **wilderness** at Jahaz. For more information on wilderness, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for wilderness as you used in a previous passage.

But the Israelites defeated King Sihon with **swords** and occupied their land. Use the same word or phrase for sword as you used in a previous passage. Remember that this is a way to say that the Israelites killed the people in the army of King Sihon.

So Israel captured all the towns of the Amorites and settled in them, including the city of Heshbon and its surrounding villages.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 21:21–26

Audio Content

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Numbers 21:27–30

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 21:27–30 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 21:27–30 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 21:27–30 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, the Israelites conquered the Amorites. Now, some of Israel's poets recite or sing a poem-song to celebrate the victory.

This victory poem-song is different from the song that Moses and the Israelites sang after the victory over the Egyptians at the Red Sea. It is possible that Amorite poets created all or part of this song. The Israelite poets could have used part of an Amorite poem and changed it slightly to retell the story of the Israelite victory.

The song includes a celebration of the previous Amorite victory over the Moabites. We do not know why the poets included this part in the song. Some people believe it is because the Moabites are also enemies of the Israelites. The Israelites could be boasting by saying that they had defeated the powerful Amorites. The Amorites were so powerful that they had previously defeated the Moabites. The Israelites are mocking the Amorites and the Moabites at the same time.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a poem or sing a song that describes or proclaims a victory. What kinds of things do you include in a celebration song? When do you sing or recite these songs or poetry? Listen carefully for the types of language you use. How do you boast or mock your enemies in the song or poem? Pause this audio here.

The poets mention several key places in the Amorite country that Israel had just conquered. You will remember from the previous passage that Heshbon is the capital city of the Amorites and probably the town where King Sihon lived. Sihon was the Amorite king who conquered the land north of the Arnon River and took it from the Moabites.

These locations mark the boundaries and key towns of the land the Israelites conquered. Ar of Moab is a small town on the far eastern side of the Arnon River, bordering Moab. Dibon is a Moabite town near the Dead Sea. We do not know the location of Nophah today. Medeba was a town on the main highway. It was south of Heshbon and east of the Dead Sea. Most people believe the heights are the high country to the north since the other places mentioned are actual locations.

Stop here and look at a map of the Amorite territory that the Israelites conquered. Take notice of the Arnon River, the city of Heshbon, Dibon, Medeba, and the Arnon Heights, or high country around Arnon. Pause this audio here.

The poets end this poem by celebrating the destruction of the Moabites and the Israelites' victory over the Amorites. The Moabites worshiped the false god Chemosh. The Moabites are sometimes called the people of Chemosh, just like the Israelites are called the people of Yahweh. The poets celebrate the large amount of land area that the Israelites have conquered.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 21:27–30 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: The poets celebrate Israel's victory over the Amorites and the destruction of Heshbon, the capital city. They tell of how King Sihon destroyed the Moabites.

In the second scene: The poets continue to tell of King Sihon's previous victory over the Moabites.

In the third scene: The poets celebrate Israel's victory over King Sihon and the Amorites.

The characters in this passage are:

- Poets
- King Sihon
- Amorites
- Moabites
- Israelites

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

Stop here and review as a group: If your team has completed the introduction to poetry, remind one another of the difference between a poem or song and a story. What are some of the special ways that poets use language? What are the most common ways that poets use language in Hebrew poems? Pause this audio here.

Just like in many other Hebrew poems, the poet creates this poem by using pairs of words and parallel or resembling phrases. There are two types of parallel phrases in this poem. In the first type, the second phrase says the same thing but in a different way. In the second type, the second phrase gives a more complete and deeper meaning.

The first scene has 3 sets of parallel phrases. The poets say the same thing in the second phrase of each set, but with different words.

In the first set of parallel phrases in the poem, the poets refer to "Heshbon" and "the city of Sihon," which are the same place. Heshbon was the capital city of King Sihon. They call the people to come and build and establish the city which has been destroyed and needs to be rebuilt and restored.

The poets then use picture language to explain why they must rebuild. The poets now explain what happened in the past. They use the image of fire and flame to describe how previously the Amorite army, the army of King Sihon, destroyed the Moabites. They said that the army was like fire that ate, devoured, or swallowed the land. The destruction went from one place to the next. The army came like fire from the city of Heshbon and moved to the town of Ar on the border with Moab, and all the way to the northern hill country.

Stop here and discuss: What different words do you have in your language for fire? How does fire act? Discuss how you will describe the destruction of the territory. Pause this audio here.

The second scene has 2 sets of parallel phrases. The poets use the second phrase in each set to help complete or deepen the meaning of the first phrase.

The first parallel phrase in the second section continues to describe how the Amorites destroyed the Moabites in the past. The poets begin with a word that is a warning and a sense of disaster or destruction. They are saying "how terrible for you" or "your destruction is certain" or "we wish bad fortune on you."

Stop here and discuss how you talk about coming destruction or how you wish bad fortune on your enemies. Pause this audio here.

The poets call the Moabites the "people of Chemosh." Remember that Chemosh is a false god. Another way to say this is "worshippers of the god Chemosh."

In the next parallel phrase, the poets use the word pairs "sons and daughters" and "fugitive, or refugee, and captive." The poets are mocking the Moabites' false god Chemosh and saying that Chemosh allowed some of the Moabites to escape, but King Sihon captured others.

Stop here and recall the mocking songs you discussed in Step 2. Discuss what words or voice tone you will use in your translation to show how the poets are mocking the Moabites in this section. Pause this audio here.

The third scene has 2 sets of parallel phrases. The poets use the second phrase to say the same thing but with different words.

In this third scene, the poets declare that the Israelites, with Yahweh's help, accomplished what the others could not. The land and people were destroyed. The poets use word pairs that mean total destruction, such as perish

or destroy or wiped out. The poets also repeat the word picture of fire to show the total destruction. The towns mentioned in these parallel phrases are located throughout the land as a way to show the complete destruction.

Stop here and discuss what different words or expressions you have in your language that show total destruction. Decide which of these you will use to translate this section. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a map of the Amorite territory the Israelites conquered, if needed. Pause this audio here.

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

Collect objects to represent the groups of people—the Israelites, the Moabites, and the Amorites—and place them in their 3 groups. Get objects representing the poets and place them with Israelites. Have an object representing King Sihon among the Amorites.

In scene one, the poets encourage the other Israelites to come and help rebuild Heshbon.

In scene two, King Sihon and his Amorite army defeat the Moabites. Show some of the Moabites escaping and becoming refugees, and some are captured by the Amorites.

In scene three, the Israelites completely defeat King Sihon and the Amorites.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 21:27–30 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:

- Poets
- King Sihon
- Amorites
- Moabites
- 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 ancient poets sang a poem-song:

Come to Heshbon and rebuild it;

Let's restore this city of King Sihon.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the poets, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Let's celebrate! We have been victorious. I feel like singing," or "Hopeful. Their cities are destroyed. Let's rebuild and occupy them."

Sihon's army came out from Heshbon like fire,

They came blazing from Sihon's city.

Like fire they destroyed the Moabite city of Ar

And destroyed the people in the hills of Arnon.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing King Sihon and the Amorites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Let's destroy our enemies, the Moabites," or "We are fierce. Our army is like a raging fire!"

How terrible it is for you, people of Moab

You are ruined, worshipers of the god Chemosh!

Chemosh has made his sons refugees,

King Sihon has captured the daughters of Chemosh.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moabites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "We are defeated. Why did Chemosh abandon us in our time of need?" or "It is terrible. I have lost my homeland," or "Distressed. Our women have been captured by the terrible King Sihon."

But now we Israelites have destroyed the Amorites,

We destroyed their towns from Heshbon in the north to Dibon in the south

We completely destroyed them

As far as Nophah and Medeba.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "We are greater than the Moabites and the Amorites," or "Yahweh is the true God. He has helped us conquer our enemies."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 21:27–30 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Moses introduces this poem with "**ballad singers** or ancient **poets** say..." Poets are people who use language in beautiful and creative ways. Sometimes poems are sung and sometimes they are simply recited. Hebrew poets also created proverbs. The original language in this passage uses a general term for poet, so if your language has more than one word for this person, use the word that has the broadest meaning.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **poet**. 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 poet, refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

"Woe to you, O Moab!" Woe to you is a way of warning people of coming doom or destruction. People also use this phrase to wish bad fortune on others. When people use this phrase, they are saying "how terrible for you" or "your destruction is certain" or "we wish bad fortune on you."

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **woe to you**. 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.

"**Chemosh** has left his sons as **refugees**, or **fugitives**, his daughters as **captives**." A refugee, or fugitive, is a person who has escaped from their homeland and is now living somewhere other than their home. They are usually leaving someplace that is not safe for them.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **refugee**. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word you have used there. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss what you will call **Chemosh**, the false god of the Moabites. For more information about false gods, see gods in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

A **captive** is a person whom someone or some people have captured in wartime. They are usually taken from their home and then either imprisoned or made to be a slave. Use the same word for captive that you have used in previous passages.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 21:27-30

Audio Content

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Numbers 21:31-35

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 21:31–35 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 21:31–35 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 21:31–35 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

You may remember the Israelites conquered the land of the Amorite king, Sihon, who had previously conquered the Moabites. Some of the Israelites had settled in the city of Heshbon and the surrounding villages. This passage tells the story of the continued journey of the Israelites as they capture more land on their way to the promised land.

Because the Israelites had conquered King Sihon, they were living in the land of the Amorites. In fact, some Israelites had settled and made their home there.

At some point, Moses sent some men to explore and spy the city of Jazer, an Amorite city near the border of the river Ammon.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a time when one group went into a land to spy how they could conquer it. Pause this audio here.

Apparently the spies came back with a positive report, because Moses sent the Israelites to capture Jazer and the villages surrounding it. The Israelites drove the people out of the villages and took the land for themselves.

Then Moses and most of the Israelites, including most of the army, turned and headed or marched north. Remember that some of the Israelites had settled in Jazer and the surrounding villages. The Israelites took the road north towards Bashan, a fertile area east of Lake Galilee. The Israelites went "up" to Bashan, which in this case means that the Israelites very intentionally set out towards Bashan.

Og, a powerful king from Bashan, and his people came out and attacked the Israelites at Edrei. Edrei is probably the capital of Bashan. It is on the southern border of Bashan.

The Israelites were probably afraid, so Yahweh reassured Moses that he does not need to fear King Og because Yahweh will defeat King Og for the people of Israel. Yahweh will give the Israelites victory over King Og, his people, and all of his land. Yahweh commands the Israelites to destroy the king and his people in the same way they conquered King Sihon of the Amorites, who ruled in Heshbon.

The Israelites killed and completely destroyed King Og, his sons, and all his people. No one was left alive. Israel occupied and took possession of the land which King Og used to rule.

Stop here and look at a map of the area the Israelites now occupy as a group.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 21:31-35 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 2 scenes.

In the first scene: The Israelites have occupied the territory of the Amorites. Moses sent men to explore Jazer. Then the Israelites capture the towns in the region and drive out the Amorites in that area.

In the second scene: The Israelites turn towards and go to Bashan. King Og and his people attack the Israelites at Edrei. Yahweh tells Moses that He will defeat King Og and his people. The Israelites kill king Og and all his people. Israel then controlled the area and lived there.

The characters in this passage are:

- The Israelites
- Moses
- Israelite spies who went to Jazer
- Amorites who lived in Jazer
- King Og
- King Og's sons and his army
- And Yahweh

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

The Israelites are camped in the land of the Amorites. Some of the Israelites have settled there, making the area their home.

In the first scene, the Israelites are settled in part of the land of the Amorites, and at some point Moses sent out men to spy and explore the area of Jazer, another area where Amorites lived. The men went to see and make plans about how they could conquer the land, and then they came back to report to Moses. Then the Israelites captured the villages and towns in the region. The passage does not actually say the Israelites captured Jazer at this point. However, we know the Israelites had control of Jazer because we learn later that they rebuilt the city. It is interesting that the word for "villages" is actually Jazer's "daughters." Jazer is a large city and is seen as the "mother city." The surrounding villages are like daughters to the main city.

Stop here and discuss: Describe your surrounding area, including the towns, villages, and different regions. You may even want to draw a map on the ground or place rocks or sticks in place of each village. Pay attention to the words you use to describe the different towns, villages, and areas in your region. Pause the audio here.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How would you explain Moses sending people to spy out or to explore a new area? Pause this audio here.

The Israelites drove out the Amorites who lived in the area of Jazer. The Israelites forced the Amorites who lived there to leave. They removed all the Amorites.

In the second scene, the Israelites turn and head north towards Bashan. The land of Bashan was an elevated area. So the Israelites did physically go up or climb up to the area. But in this passage, the meaning of "went up" is that they deliberately turned towards Bashan and took the road there.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Can you tell a story about a people who went on a journey and deliberately or intentionally set out towards the place they were going to? Pay attention to how you talk about setting out on a deliberate journey. What special words or phrases do you use? Pause this audio here.

The Israelites were traveling as an army. They were marching, which means they were walking with purpose and in a particular formation. The Israelites would have walked in time with each other. This would have looked and sounded frightening. Their footsteps could be heard like the beat of a drum.

Stop here and discuss: Talk about a group of soldiers or an army who are marching or traveling towards a battle. How do you talk about them? What words or descriptions do you use to talk about their movements? Pause the audio here.

King Og of Bashan and all of his people came out against them, or went out and met the Israelites at Edrei. They attacked the Israelites at Edrei, which is on the southern border of Bashan. King Og and his people were acting like an army, marching out to defeat the Israelites and stop them from taking the area of Bashan. Although we do not know much about King Og, other stories in the Bible describe him in the same ways as the "giants" who were in the land of Canaan many years before.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will describe King Og and his army coming to attack the Israelites. What phrases will you use to describe this action? Pause the audio here.

In the passage, Yahweh then says to Moses that he should not be afraid of King Og. Previously, Yahweh had not told Moses not to fear King Sihon. This could be because King Og may have been even more powerful than King Sihon.

It is interesting to note that the story tells us that King Og and his people attacked the Israelites at Edrei. Then Yahweh tells Moses not to be afraid of King Og, but that Yahweh has "given him, King Og, to your hand" or "handed him over to you." This means Yahweh will give the Israelites victory. Yahweh commands the Israelites to kill King Og in the same way that the Israelites conquered King Sihon of the Amorites who had lived in Heshbon. If it makes more sense for you to re-order when Yahweh speaks to Moses, you can do that. For example, you could say that Yahweh said to Moses, "Do not be afraid of him, for I will give you victory over him..." before you explain that King Og and all his people attacked Israel at Edrei.

Stop here and discuss how you will tell this part of the story. If you need to re-order any of the story, how might you do that? Pause the audio.

The Israelites struck down, or killed King Og, his sons, and all his army so there were not any people left alive. King Og's sons and all of his people were completely destroyed. We know that the Israelites completely destroyed King Og's army and any chance of King Og's descendants taking back control. The Israelites now fully controlled or possessed his land. The Israelites have been moving north, and after conquering Bashan they have control of the area from the Dead Sea to Lake Galilee.

Stop here and look at a map of the area the Israelites now occupy. Discuss as a group how you talk about a nation having full control of a territory, or "possessing" that territory. 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

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 21:31–35 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:

- The Israelites
- Moses
- Israelite spies who went to Jazer
- Amorites who lived in Jazer
- King Og
- King Og's sons and his army
- And 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 Israelites were living in the land of the Amorites. Moses sent out some men to explore and spy the Jazer area. The Israelites captured the towns and villages in the area of Jazer and drove out the Amorites who lived there.

Then the Israelites turned and headed up the road towards Bashan. King Og of Bashan and his people went out to attack the Israelites at Edrei.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "We are terrified. King Og is huge and strong and we do not know how we can defeat him," or "We were able to defeat Sihon easily, but is Yahweh going to help us defeat this king and his people?"

Ask the person playing King Og and his people, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Do they not know who I am? Who are these small and feeble people that think they can take my land and people from me?" or "Just because they conquered Sihon, they will not conquer us, let us go and drive them away."

Yahweh told Moses not to be afraid of King Og, because Yahweh would defeat King Og and all his people and his land. Yahweh told Moses to "do the same to King Og as you did to King Sihon of the Amorites."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "We have seen Yahweh save us many times, and we praise him that He will save us again," or "We trust Yahweh to go before us. We are worried, but we will trust Yahweh."

Israel killed King Og, his sons, and all his people. Not a single person survived.

Then Israel possessed the land which had belonged to King Og and his people.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 21:31-35 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

So, **Israel** lived in the land of the Amorites. In this story, the people of Israel act like one person. The nation or people group of Israel settles, or lives permanently, in the land. Use the same term for Israel that you have used in previous passages, and remember that Israel is in the Master Glossary.

Moses sent out some men to explore and **spy** the area of Jazer in order to explore how they could conquer the area.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How will you talk about the Israelites spying in the area of Jazer in order to gather information to conquer the land? Pause this audio here.

Then **Yahweh** said to Moses not to be afraid of King Og, for "I have handed him over to you, along with his people and land." Yahweh is the name God gave himself, and to the Israelites it reminds them of the special relationship they have with him. Use the same word or phrase for Yahweh as you used in previous passages. Yahweh is in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 21:31-35

Audio Content

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Numbers 22:1-21

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 22:1-21 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 22:1-21 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 22:1-21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This is a true story about the Israelite people as they traveled to the land Yahweh had promised to the Israelites. On the way, the Israelites won battles and took the land of other people groups, including the Amorites. The Amorites did not follow Yahweh, the one true God that the Israelites followed.

This story starts as the Israelites moved to a new place to set up a camp to live. The Israelites camped in a flat, fertile area on the east of the Jordan River, close to Canaan. This area was called the plains of Moab. The Moabite and Midianite people groups lived nearby.

Stop here as a group and look at a map of the area of Moab around the Israelites' camp. Point out where Israel defeated the Amorites in the last story. Also, point out the Israelites' camp, Moab and Midian. Pause this audio here.

The Moabites and Midianites did not worship Yahweh. The Moabite king, Balak, had heard that the Israelites had defeated the Amorites and took the Amorites' land. These were the same Amorites who had defeated the former king of Moab and taken the Moabite land. This means the Israelites defeated the people who had previously defeated the Moabites.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about when someone was afraid of something or someone. How do you think this person would feel if something worse or someone more powerful suddenly came? Pause this audio here.

Balak is Zippor's son and the king of Moab. In Old Testament times, many people groups would identify someone by naming their father.

Stop here and pretend to introduce another person from your group to a stranger. Ask this question: What things do you usually tell about people when introducing them to strangers? Pause this audio here.

Balak knew that Israel had defeated the Amorites. The Moabites really feared the large group of Israelites. The Moabites complained to the elders of Midian about the Israelites, comparing the large group of people to an ox that eats all the grass. An ox is a type of grazing animal that eats grass, sometimes used as a farm work animal.

Stop here and look at a picture of an ox eating grass. Then discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a time when a group of people had limited resources. How do you think these people would feel if a huge group of people moved to the area and started using the limited resources? Pause this audio here.

Balak prepares a message requesting Balaam to come help Balak in person. Balak thinks Balaam can help make it possible for Balak to defeat the Israelites. We know that Balaam is Beor's son. Balaam comes from Pethor, near the Euphrates River. Someone would have to travel over 595 kilometers, or 370 miles, to Pethor in order to give the message to Balaam.

Stop here as a group and look at a map of the Jordan River, the Euphrates River, the land of Moab, and the land of Pethor. Notice the distance between Moab and Pethor. Pause this audio here.

Balak tells his representatives this message for Balaam: "A people has come out of Egypt." Balak refers to how the Israelites left captivity in Egypt. Balak feels worried because so many Israelites have camped next to his territory. Balak wants Balaam to come and curse the Israelites who "are too powerful" for Balak. Balak does not want to bless the Israelites. Instead, Balak wants God to cause something bad to happen to the Israelites.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: If your culture has a way to curse or say something to cause harm to someone, tell a story about this. How is this the same as or different from what Balak wants Balaam to do against the Israelites? Pause this audio here.

Balak believes the Israelites have more power than Balak's army. Balak tells Balaam that the Israelites "cover the face of the earth," showing that Balak feels very frightened of the number of Israelites living nearby.

Balak has heard Balaam's reputation and believes that Balaam can effectively curse or bless people by the power of some kind of god or gods. Balak hopes that Balaam cursing the Israelites will make it possible for Balak to defeat the Israelites. So, King Balak's representatives left Moab to deliver Balak's message to Balaam. These representatives included both Moabite and Midianite elders. They took money to give to Balaam as a payment for divination—or the services of Balaam to ask God to help find out what will happen. The representatives hoped Balaam would accept the gift and, in exchange, curse the Israelites.

After the representatives arrived at Pethor, the representatives told Balak's message to Balaam, asking for help to curse the Israelites. Balaam tells the representatives that he will ask Yahweh to tell him what to do, so Balaam invites the representatives to spend the night in Pethor, perhaps in Balaam's home. The story now does not mention the Midianite elders, but only the Moabite elders. Both the Moabite and Midianite elders likely stayed with Balaam.

Balaam was not an Israelite, but from another people group. Usually, non-Israelites did not know Yahweh, the God of the Israelites. We do not know how Balaam knew Yahweh, and we do not know how God came to Balaam, but God probably came during the night. God asked Balaam, "Who are these men with you?" Balaam told God what Balak's representatives had told him. This was as if Balaam asked God for permission to fulfill Balak's request to curse the Israelites. But God commanded Balaam not to go with the elders and not to curse the Israelites. God had blessed the Israelites since the time of their ancestor, Abraham. God had blessed the Israelites, so Balaam could not curse the Israelites. When God blesses someone, God is doing, or promising to do, something good for that person or group of people. God protects the people God has blessed, and these people are able to have a good relationship with God.

Then Balaam told the representatives to return to their country. Balaam tells the Moabite and Midianite elders that God had refused to allow Balaam to go with them back to their country. Balaam does not tell the representatives what God told Balaam about not cursing the Israelites or that God had already blessed the Israelites. The representatives traveled back to Moab and told Balak that Balaam rejected Balak's offer for Balaam to come to Moab. The representatives did not say that Yahweh refused to let Balaam come to Moab.

After these representatives told Balak about Balaam's refusal, Balak sent another, larger group of officials or princes, to send a new message to Balaam. These officials had higher positions than the first group of representatives. We think that these officials were only Moabites.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you describe officials in your culture who have different levels of authority. Pause this audio here.

Just like the first group of representatives, this second group of officials traveled to tell Balak's message to Balaam. Although the story does not say this, this group of representatives had to travel the same long distance from Moab to Pethor as the first group of representatives.

Then the representatives told Balak's message to Balaam. The representatives said, "This is what Balak, the son of Zippor, says." In the message, Balak gave a polite but urgent request. Balak requested Balaam to not let any reason prevent Balaam from coming to help Balak. Balak then promised to give Balaam great honor and rewards, likely riches. Balak even said that Balak will do whatever Balaam asks Balak to do.

Balaam responded in a way that the representatives probably did not expect. Balaam said that, even if Balak gave his palace full of silver and gold, Balaam cannot "do anything small or great to go beyond the command of Yahweh my God." Balaam uses two names for God, "Yahweh," the name of Israel's God, and the general term for God. Balaam knows he cannot do anything at all that goes against Yahweh God's command.

Stop here and tell a story about a time when you knew you could not do something against an authority. Tell how you felt. Pause this audio here.

Balaam then invites the officials to stay with Balaam, just like the first set of representatives did. Balaam gives the reason: "So that I can find out what else Yahweh will tell me." Balaam hopes that Yahweh might tell Balaam something more or different that night.

Balaam hopes to hear from Yahweh during the night. Balaam plans to report this back to the representatives in the morning. That night, God told Balaam that God will now allow Balaam to go with the representatives. God also commanded Balaam that Balaam must only say and do what God says Balaam can say and do. In that culture, people see the words of cursing and blessing as causing the real actions that happen afterward. God has the power to curse or bless. Balaam can only curse or bless through God's power. God is telling Balaam that God does not want Balaam to curse or bless unless God tells Balaam to curse or bless.

In the morning, Balaam put a riding saddle on his donkey. A "saddle" is a seat placed on the back of an animal so that a person can ride the animal. Then Balaam rode his donkey to travel with the Moabite officials to go to King Balak.

Stop here and, as a group, look at a picture of a saddle, a donkey, and a person riding on a donkey with a saddle. Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 22:1–21 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 8 scenes.

In the first scene: The Moabite people feared the large group of Israelites who now live nearby.

In the second scene: King Balak sends representatives to ask Balaam to curse the Israelites.

In the third scene: The representatives travel to Balaam in Pethor, and Balaam invites the representatives to stay the night. Balaam hopes to hear from Yahweh that night.

In the fourth scene: God comes to Balaam that night and tells Balaam not to go with the representatives or to curse the Israelites.

In the fifth scene: The next morning, Balaam tells the representatives to go back to their country, and the representatives return to report to King Balak in Moab.

In the sixth scene: King Balak sends representatives to beg for Balaam's help again. Balaam invites the representatives to stay with Balaam. Balaam hopes to find out more from God.

In the seventh scene: God comes to Balaam at night. God now allows Balaam to go with the representatives to Moab. God commands Balaam to only do what God tells Balaam to do.

In the eighth scene: In the morning, Balaam starts to travel with the representatives.

The characters in this passage are:

- The Israelites
- King Balak
- The Moabites
- The first group of representatives—Moabite and Midianite elders
- Balaam
- Yahweh
- And more representatives or elders with a higher position.

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

Scene one of this story starts when the Israelites or sons of Israel moved and set up camp across the Jordan River from Jericho. Scene one continues showing that something important will happen in the story. A man named Balak, Zippor's son, "saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites."

Stop here and review the map, if needed. Then discuss this question as a group: Think of some people who are good storytellers. What ways can people listening to the storyteller know that something important will soon happen in the story? Pause this audio here.

For now, the storyteller only says, "Balak." We do not know the reason the storyteller does not tell us yet that Balak is a king.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How and when do storytellers in your language give important information about characters in the story? For example, is the information at the beginning, middle, or end of the story? You may want to tell a story where you introduce many new characters. Pay attention to how you introduce each new character in a story. Pause this audio here.

The story continues and tells us that the Moabites really feared the Israelites. The repetition about the Moabites feeling scared really emphasizes the Moabites' fear.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What are some ways that you can emphasize something in your language? How could you emphasize the Moabites' fear in your language? Pause this audio here.

Scene one continues with the Moabites complaining to the Midian elders that the horde, or large group of Israelites, would use up all the land's resources. The Moabites compared this to an ox eating up lots of grass. This helps the listener to imagine the Israelites using everything in the land so that there's nothing left for the Moabites.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a time when someone felt afraid of a large group of people. What could you say in your language to describe this large group? Pause this audio here.

In scene two, we officially hear in the story for the first time that Balak is the king of Moab. Balak uses his authority to send representatives to request help from Balaam, Beor's son. Balaam lives in his native land of Pethor, near the Euphrates River. Balak is asking Balaam to travel from Pethor to Balak in Moab. Someone would have to travel over 595 kilometers, or 370 miles, one way from the plains of Moab to Pethor. This trip likely took a minimum of 20 days one way, or 40 days total.

King Balak says the message that he wants his representatives to say to Balaam. King Balak starts his message with words that show what he is about to say is important, and he wants Balaam to listen closely. Then Balak identifies the Israelites as the people who had left Egypt. Balak then uses words again to really emphasize the importance of his next statement. Balak tells Balaam that there are many Israelites living near Balak. King Balak's message continues with an urgent yet polite request asking Balaam to come to Balak.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Think about a time when you or someone you know wanted to request something from someone important. How did you say your request to the important person? Pause this audio here.

King Balak recognizes that Balaam has the ability to curse people. Balak hopes that Balaam's curse will weaken the Israelites enough for Balak to force the Israelites to leave the land. Balak tells Balaam, "For I know that whoever you bless is blessed, and whoever you curse is cursed."

In scene three, the elders of Moab and the elders of Midian left, or departed, from Moab. These elders took with them the fees for divination. The representatives arrived where Balaam was. Then, the representatives delivered Balak's message to Balaam by saying the message out loud.

Balaam responded to the representatives and invited the representatives to stay the night. Balaam promised to tell the representatives what Yahweh said the next day. The representatives stayed overnight. Here, the story identifies the representatives as "elders" or "leaders" of Moab. The Midianite elders likely also stayed the night with Balaam.

In scene four, God comes to Balaam asking, "Who are these men with you?" God is asking Balaam about the representatives that Balak sent. God knew the answer to the question but still asked Balaam.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Share some examples or stories if someone in your language can ask a question when they already know the answer. Pause this audio here.

Balaam responds to God by retelling Balak's request to Balaam. The scene continues with God telling Balaam not to go with the representatives or to curse the Israelites. Then God reminds Balaam that God had blessed the Israelites.

In scene five, Balaam got up in the morning and told Balak's representatives to go back to Moab without Balaam. Balaam said this was because, "Yahweh refused to let me go with you." The representatives return to Moab and tell Balak, "Balaam refused to come with us."

In scene six, Balak sends different men who had higher ranking and higher respect than the first group of representatives. This new group of representatives also traveled from Moab to Pethor to meet Balaam. The representatives told Balak's message as though Balak spoke directly to Balaam. Balak politely but urgently requests Balaam come help Balak no matter what. Balak promises to give Balaam honor and rewards, likely riches. Balak tells Balaam that Balaam could choose the fees Balaam wanted for the service of cursing the Israelites. Now Balaam says something unexpected. The storyteller shows us that Balaam is about to surprise us!

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How can you show that something surprising is about to happen in your language? Pause this audio here.

Balaam continues by saying that no matter how many riches Balak gives Balaam, Balaam cannot do differently than what Yahweh says. Balaam then politely invites the representatives to stay with Balaam that night, just like the first representatives did. Balaam hopes to find out that night what else Yahweh will say.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story in which someone either gives or receives something valuable. How does the storyteller show that the gifts are valuable? Pause this audio here.

In scene seven, God comes to Balaam that night and tells Balaam to go to Moab with the representatives. God cautions Balaam to do only what God tells Balaam to do.

In scene eight, Balaam wakes up in the morning and prepares to travel with the representatives. Balaam puts a riding saddle on his donkey and starts going with the representatives to Moab.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 22:1–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 8 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- The Israelites
- King Balak
- The Moabites
- The first group of representatives—Moabite and Midianite elders
- Balaam
- Yahweh
- And more representatives or elders with a higher position.

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 Israelites traveled from where they had stayed in the last story. Then the Israelites set up camp in the plains of Moab across the Jordan River from the city of Jericho.

Now Balak, Zippor's son, "saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Balak, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I'm worried. I'm the king. It is my responsibility to care for the people in my country," or "I need to do something to protect our country from the Israelites."

So, Moab felt very afraid because so many Israelites camped nearby where the Moabites lived. Moab was in great dread of the sons of Israel.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person/group playing the Moabites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "We are panicked. The Israelites defeated the Amorites. We are afraid the Israelites will fight and defeat us, too," or "We could lose our homes and our family members. We might even die."

The Moabites complained to the Midian elders about the Israelites. The Moabites said, "Now this large group of Israelites will eat up all that is around us like the ox eats up the grass of the field!"

Pause the drama.

Ask the person or group playing the Midianites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "We're scared, we could lose everything, too," or "We should help the Moabites and that will protect us as well."

Balak was king of Moab. Because of this, Balak sent representatives to call for Balaam, Beor's son, to come help. Balaam lives in Balaam's homeland, Pethor, near the Euphrates River. King Balak says the message that Balak wants the representatives to say to Balaam: "Listen! A people came out of Egypt. These people have covered the surface of the land, and they are living across from my land. Now, therefore, come and put a curse on these people because the Israelites have more power than me. Perhaps I will be able to defeat them and drive them out of the land." Balak tells Balaam, "I know that whoever you bless is blessed; whoever you curse is cursed."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing King Balak, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I think Balaam may be our last hope," or "I must convince Balaam to help us."

Then the representatives, elders from both Moab and Midian, traveled from Moab to where Balaam lived in Pethor. The representatives carried a fee to give Balaam for Balaam's divination services. After the representatives arrived in Pethor, the representatives told Balaam the message from Balak.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person or group playing the representatives, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "We have a big responsibility to our people and our country's leaders," or "This long journey is important for the well-being of our countries."

Balaam responded to the representatives. Balaam invites the representatives to stay with Balaam during the night. Balaam promised to tell the representatives what Yahweh says the next day. The representatives stayed the night with Balaam.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Balaam, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I hope Yahweh will give me a message about what I should do," or "I need to ask for God's guidance and power."

Ask the person or group playing the representatives, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "We're hopeful that Balaam can help us," or "We're tired from the long journey."

Then God came to Balaam. God asked Balaam, "Who are these men with you?"

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing God, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I want to hold Balaam accountable," or "I need to remind Balaam that I am the One with the true power," or "I want to give Balaam the opportunity to explain the situation."

Ask the person playing Balaam, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Scared but also glad that God came to me."

Balaam retells Balak's request. Balaam tells God that Balak, Zippor's son, king of Moab, "sent to me." Balak told Balaam, "Behold, a people that has come out of Egypt covers the face of the land. Now come and put a curse on them for me. Perhaps then I will be able to fight them and drive them away."

But God told Balaam not to go with the representatives. God also commanded Balaam not to curse the Israelites. Then God said that the people "have been blessed."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Balaam, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Balak wants me to curse the Israelites and will pay me to do it," or "I am afraid to ask God directly for permission to curse the Israelites, so I will just explain Balak's request," or "I know I am under God's power," or "Should I follow God or should I follow Balak?"

Ask the person playing God, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Balaam is asking permission to curse the people I have already blessed," or "I do not want Balaam to curse the people I have blessed," or "I will not allow Balaam to curse the Israelites like Balak wants Balaam to do," or "Balaam hopes to gain wealth by cursing the Israelites."

Balaam got up in the morning and went to Balak's representatives. Then Balaam said, "Go back to your land, because Yahweh has refused to let me go with you."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person or group playing the representatives, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Oh, no! Now we have to tell King Balak that Balaam will not help us," or "What will we do to protect our country now?" or "This will be a very long, stressful trip back home."

Ask the person playing Balaam, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I know I must follow what God says," or "I am frustrated that I cannot accept Balak's request and receive pay for this."

The representatives returned to Moab. In Moab the representatives told Balak, "Balaam refused to come with us." Then Balak sent more representatives with higher positions to Balaam.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Balak, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Perhaps Balaam wants more fees," or "I need to show more respect and honor to Balaam so that Balaam will accept my request," or "I feel even more anxious that we might not receive the help we need."

This second group of representatives traveled from Moab to Pethor. The representatives said to Balaam, "This is what Balak son of Zipor says, 'I beg you, let nothing keep you from coming to me.'" Balak's message continues, "'for I will indeed honor you richly and do whatever you tell me.'" Balak continues to plead to Balaam, "'Please come, then, and put a curse on these people for me.'"

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Balaam, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Balak really wants me to come to curse the Israelites," or "Wow, if I cursed the Israelites, the Moabites would respect me and give me lots of wealth," or "I still do not have the power to curse the Israelites because God will not allow this."

Ask the person or group playing the representatives, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "We're responsible to King Balak. The safety of our people depends on us delivering this message," or "King Balak is so desperate for help that Balak will let Balaam name whatever price Balaam wants," or "We're more confident that Balaam will accept Balak's request to come help us," or "Balaam surely can't refuse this offer."

But Balaam answered the representatives, "Even if Balak gave me all the silver and gold in his palace, I could not do anything small or great to go beyond the command of Yahweh my God." Then Balaam invites the representatives to stay with Balaam that night. Balaam also says that Balaam will find out or know what else Yahweh will say to Balaam.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Balaam, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I would love to accept all the money, but I can't go against God," or "Balak will not like this answer. I wonder what Balak will do next," or "Maybe God will change His mind."

Ask the person or group playing the representatives, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "We're shocked that Balaam did not accept Balak's offer," or "We're terrified to tell King Balak this answer," or "We hope that Balak will change his mind."

That night, God came to Balaam. God said to Balaam, "Since these men have come to summon you, go with them, but do only what I tell you" to do. Balaam wakes up in the morning. Balaam rides his donkey and starts to travel with the representatives to Moab.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing God, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I will give Balaam an opportunity to obey my commands," or "Balaam chose to obey me in actions, so I will allow Balaam to go to Moab. I want Balaam to also obey me with his heart."

Ask the person playing Balaam, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Yes! God might allow me to do what Balak wants, and then I can take the fees," or "Perhaps I can find a way to go against God so that I can accept the fees."

Ask the person or group playing the representatives, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Good, Balaam is coming with us," or "King Balak will be happy to see Balaam arrive in Moab," or "Now we have some hope for our people to survive."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 22:1–21 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

"The sons of Israel" refers to the **Israelites**. Use the same description of the Israelites as you have been using. If needed, refer to the Master Glossary for more information about the Israelites.

In the message, Balak asked Balaam to come to Moab to help the Moabites. Balak's message explained Balak's concern about the Israelites who came out of Egypt and now live near Balak, taking up a lot of the land. Balak asked Balaam to "curse this people for me." Balak explained that the Israelites had more power than Balak's country. Balak hopes that, once the Israelites have received a curse, Balak's army can defeat the Israelites and force the Israelites away from the Moabite land. Balak tells Balaam, "For I know that whoever you **bless** is blessed and whoever you **curse** is cursed." Note that a curse is different from a spell or witchcraft.

Use the same words for bless and curse that you have used in previous passages. If needed, refer to the Master Glossary for full definitions of bless and curse.

Balak's representatives brought the fee for **divination** because they believed that Balaam was skilled at divination and could do this service for them. When people used divination, they were usually trying to read the special signs that would help them to predict the future. People might ask God to help them, or they might try magic. God usually disapproves of divination and magic, because God is the one who decides who should know what information.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word you will use for **divination**. If you have translated divination in another book of the Bible, use the same word here as you have used there. If needed, refer to the Master Glossary for a full definition of divination. Pause this audio here.

This story uses the general word for **God** except when Balaam uses the personal name for God, **Yahweh**. Balaam also calls God "Yahweh my God." Yahweh is God's proper name, the Israelites' personal name for God. Use the same general word for God and the same name for Yahweh as you used in previous passages. For more information on God and Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 22:1–21

Audio Content

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Numbers 22:22–40

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 22:22–40 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 22:22–40 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 22:22–40 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous story, Balak promised to give Balaam honor and riches if Balaam came to curse the Israelites. God allowed Balaam to go with Balak's representatives. God told Balaam to only do what God said Balaam could do. Balaam started traveling by riding a donkey from Pethor to go with Balak's representatives to Moab. This trip probably took at least 20 days.

Stop here and look at a map of the journey from Pethor to Moab as a group. Look at a picture or drawing of someone riding a donkey, if needed. Pause this audio here.

At the start of this true story, God felt angry at Balaam. God probably felt angry at Balaam because Balaam opposed God. So the angel of Yahweh came as Yahweh's representative to oppose Balaam. The angel of Yahweh stood waiting in the road, ready to kill Balaam with a sword. A sword is a very long, wide knife that people commonly used as a weapon in battle. Balaam rode on his female donkey to go to Moab. Two of Balaam's male servants traveled with Balaam, probably walking behind Balaam.

Stop here and look at a picture or drawing of a sword, if needed. Discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about someone who went against God. What happened to this person? Pause this audio here.

Balaam did not see the angel of Yahweh. When Balaam's donkey saw the angel of Yahweh in the road ready to kill Balaam with a sword, the donkey moved off the road, away from the angel of Yahweh. The donkey went into an open field. Balaam did not know that the donkey tried to avoid the angel of Yahweh who wanted to kill Balaam. Balaam hit the donkey, probably with the staff men usually carried with them, so that the donkey returned to travel on the road again.

Balaam continued to ride his donkey to Moab. On the way, Balaam went through a grape farm or "vineyard." Walls lined each side of the narrow path through the vineyard. People often built stone walls around vineyards in order to protect the vineyard. The angel of Yahweh stood to block this path, ready to kill Balaam. Again, Balaam did not see the angel of Yahweh. Again, Balaam's donkey tried to avoid the angel of Yahweh. This time, the donkey squeezed so close to the wall that the donkey smashed Balaam's foot against the wall. Balaam hit the donkey again so that the donkey continued to travel to Moab.

Stop here and look at a picture of a road going through a vineyard with walls on each side. Pause this audio here.

Then the angel of Yahweh moved further down the road on the way to Moab. The angel of Yahweh stood in an even more narrow place, ready to kill Balaam. Again, Balaam did not see the angel of Yahweh. Again, Balaam's donkey tried to avoid the angel of Yahweh. However, the narrow path made it impossible for the donkey to move to the right or to the left. So, the donkey lay down on the road while Balaam still rode on the donkey's back. Balaam felt very angry at the donkey. Balaam hit the donkey with a staff.

Stop here and, if needed, look at a drawing of a donkey laying down in a road while a person still rides on the donkey's back. Discuss this question: How do people treat a work animal that is not obeying? Pause this audio here.

Then Yahweh gave the donkey the ability to speak to Balaam. The donkey asked Balaam, "What did I do to you to make you beat me three times?"

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story from your culture that has a talking animal in it. How does Balaam's donkey talking compare to the talking animal in your story? Pause this audio here.

Balaam responded to the donkey, "You made me look stupid in front of other people! If I had a sword with me, I would have already killed you."

The donkey reminded Balaam that the donkey had served Balaam well for as long as Balaam had the donkey. The donkey asked Balaam, "Have I ever treated you like this before?"

Balaam said, "No."

At that time Yahweh made sure Balaam could see that the angel of Yahweh stood in the road, ready to kill Balaam with a sword. Balaam bowed face down on the ground in front of the angel of Yahweh.

The angel of Yahweh scolded Balaam for beating Balaam's donkey three times. The angel of Yahweh explained to Balaam that Yahweh came to oppose Balaam because Balaam chose a way that opposed Yahweh. Also, the angel of Yahweh helped Balaam see that the donkey saved Balaam's life. The angel of Yahweh said to Balaam, "If the donkey had not moved away from me these three times, I would have definitely killed you, but I would have let the donkey live."

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a time when an undeserving person benefited because someone else did something good. How did the undeserving person feel? Pause this audio here.

Balaam said to the angel of Yahweh, "I have sinned because I did not realize you were standing in the road to oppose me." Balaam knew that God had told Balaam to only do what God had told Balaam to do. Balaam "sinned," or disobeyed God, by planning to do something else than what God said to do. Balaam told the angel of Yahweh that, if Yahweh thought Balaam was doing something bad, or evil, by going to Moab, Balaam would return to Pethor.

The angel of Yahweh allowed Balaam to continue to go with Balak's representatives to Moab. The angel of Yahweh reminded Balaam to only say what Yahweh allows Balaam to say. So Balaam continued to go with Balak's representatives to Moab. Balak learned that Balaam was coming. So Balak went out to meet Balaam at the Moabite town on the Arnon border, just inside of Balak's territory. In that culture, a king showed great honor and gave protection to a guest by meeting the guest at the border of the king's land. Still, Balak scolded Balaam. Balak reminds Balaam that Balak urgently called for Balaam, but Balaam did not come right away. Balak asked Balaam, "Did you think that I'm not able to reward you?" This was Balak's way of saying that Balaam had offended Balak by not trusting that Balaam had enough money to reward Balaam.

Balaam told Balak that he did come now. Balaam reminded Balak that Balaam could not say whatever Balaam wanted to say. Balaam said, "I can only speak what God says I can say."

Then Balaam went with Balak to a place in Moab called Kiriath Huzoth, northeast of the Dead Sea. There Balak ceremonially killed cattle and sheep as a sacrifice to Moabite gods. Balak also gave part of the sacrificed meat as a gift to Balaam and the representatives who had brought Balaam to Moab. Balak wanted to use this gift to get Balaam to do what Balak wanted Balaam to do.

Stop here and look at a picture of cattle and sheep, if needed. Look at a map of Kiriath Huzoth in Moab.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 22:22–40 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 8 scenes.

In the first scene: Balaam rides a donkey to Moab with Balak's representatives. Yahweh feels angry towards Balaam because Balaam wants to go against Yahweh.

In the second scene: The angel of Yahweh prepares to kill Balaam with a sword. Balaam's donkey sees the angel of Yahweh and moves off the road. Balaam does not see the angel of Yahweh, so Balaam hits the donkey until the donkey gets back on the road to travel to Moab.

In the third scene: The angel of Yahweh prepares to kill Balaam again by standing in a narrow path with walls on each side. When Balaam's donkey avoids the angel of Yahweh, the donkey smashes Balaam's foot against the wall. Balaam hits the donkey to travel again.

In the fourth scene: The angel of Yahweh again prepares to kill Balaam by standing in an even more narrow place. Since the donkey could not get away, the donkey lay down under Balaam. Balaam hits the donkey with a staff.

In the fifth scene: Yahweh gives the donkey the ability to speak like a person. Balaam and the donkey talk about why Balaam hit the donkey.

In the sixth scene: Yahweh shows Balaam the angel of Yahweh ready to kill Balaam. Balaam bows to the angel of Yahweh. The angel of Yahweh reminds Balaam to obey. Yahweh lets Balaam go to Moab.

In the seventh scene: Balak goes to Balaam as soon as Balaam enters the country of Moab. Balak questions why Balaam did not come immediately in response to Balak's urgent request. Balaam responds that Balaam has now come. Balaam reminds Balak that Balaam can only say what God allows Balaam to say.

In the eighth scene: Balak takes Balaam to a place called Kiriath Huzoth. There Balak sacrifices cattle and sheep as a gift to Balaam and the representatives who brought Balaam to Moab.

The characters in this passage are:

- The angel of Yahweh
- Balaam
- Balaam's two servants
- The donkey
- Balak
- And Balak's representatives, who traveled from Pethor to Moab with Balaam.

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

In scene one, the storyteller emphasizes God's anger by starting the story with saying God felt angry at Balaam. We know that Balaam continued going to Moab, riding on his female donkey. Two of Balaam's male servants traveled with Balaam. Though the story does not mention Balak's representatives here, we know from the previous story that Balaam traveled with these representatives. The storyteller does not say this directly, but we know that God knew Balaam's thoughts. God feels angry with Balaam because God knew Balaam wanted to go against or oppose God. Since Balaam wanted to oppose God, Yahweh planned to stop Balaam. The angel of Yahweh represented Yahweh and came with a sword to kill Balaam. The angel of Yahweh stood waiting in the road for Balaam to come.

In scene two, Balaam's donkey saw the angel of Yahweh in the road ready to kill Balaam with a sword. So, the donkey moved away into an open field. Balaam did not see the angel of Yahweh. So, Balaam angrily hit the donkey, probably with a staff, so that the donkey returned to travel on the road.

In scene three on the way to Moab, Balaam rode his donkey down a road that went through a vineyard. A vineyard is a place where farmers grow grapes. This part of the road had walls on each side to separate the road from the vineyard. We know that Yahweh is still angry with Balaam because the angel of Yahweh prepared again to kill Balaam with a sword. The angel of Yahweh stood to block this road. Again, Balaam did not see the angel of Yahweh. Again, Balaam's donkey tried to avoid the angel of Yahweh. This time the donkey squeezed very close to one of the walls. In fact, the donkey accidentally smashed Balaam's foot against the wall. Angry again, Balaam hit the donkey again so that the donkey continued to travel to Moab.

In scene four, the angel of Yahweh moved to an even more narrow place on the way to Moab, ready to kill Balaam. Again, Balaam did not see the angel of Yahweh. Again, Balaam's donkey tried to avoid the angel of Yahweh. However, the narrow path made it impossible for the donkey to move in any direction. In fact, Balaam's donkey could not turn to the right or to the left. So the donkey lay down on the road with Balaam still on the donkey's back. Balaam felt furious at the donkey. Balaam hit the donkey with a staff.

In scene five, Yahweh "opened the donkey's mouth," which means that Yahweh gave the donkey the ability to speak to Balaam. The donkey asked Balaam, "What did I do to you to make you beat me three times?" Balaam responded that the donkey made Balaam look like a fool in front of others. Balaam told the donkey that Balaam would have already killed the donkey if Balaam had a sword. The donkey asked a question that the donkey did not expect Balaam to answer. The donkey asked, "Am I not your own donkey, which you have always ridden, to this day?" The donkey used this question to remind Balaam that the donkey had served Balaam well for as

long as Balaam had the donkey. Then the donkey asked Balaam, "Have I ever treated you like this before?" Balaam responded, "No."

In scene six, Yahweh "opened Balaam's eyes." This means that Yahweh made sure Balaam could see that the angel of Yahweh stood in the road, ready to kill Balaam with a sword. Balaam quickly bowed down by putting his face down on the ground in front of the angel of Yahweh. Balaam showed respect to the angel of Yahweh by bowing down very low to the ground while the angel of Yahweh still stood. Balaam also showed some humility and, likely, fear by bowing down.

Stop here and discuss: Tell a story and listen for the words you say when you talk about suddenly understanding or seeing something. How do you talk about realizing something new that you hadn't realized before? Pause this audio here.

The angel of Yahweh scolded Balaam by asking, "Why did you hit your donkey three times?" The angel of Yahweh knew that Balaam hit the donkey because Balaam felt angry. The angel of Yahweh did not expect Balaam to answer the question. The angel of Yahweh wanted Balaam to know that Balaam did a bad thing by beating the donkey.

Then the angel of Yahweh used a word to show Balaam that Balaam needed to pay attention. The angel of Yahweh explained to Balaam that Yahweh came to oppose Balaam because Balaam chose a "way that is steep," which means a way that opposed Yahweh. Also, the angel of Yahweh helped Balaam see that the donkey saved Balaam's life. The angel of Yahweh told Balaam that, if the donkey had not moved away those three times, the angel of Yahweh would have already killed Balaam. The angel of Yahweh planned to let the donkey live.

Balaam confessed to the angel of Yahweh, "I have sinned because I did not realize you were standing in the road to oppose me." Balaam realized that the donkey saved Balaam's life. Balaam knew Balaam did wrong by hitting the donkey. Balaam probably also now knows that God can understand Balaam's thoughts.

Balaam then said that, if Yahweh thought Balaam going to Moab was bad, or "evil," Balaam was willing to return to Pethor. But the angel of Yahweh allowed Balaam to continue to go with Balak's representatives to Moab. The angel of Yahweh reminded Balaam to only say what Yahweh allows Balaam to say. This shows the true reason why God felt angry at Balaam. God knew that, earlier in the story, Balaam had not wanted to fully follow or obey God. God allowed Balaam to go to Moab but was reminding Balaam to keep the right intentions. Balaam continued with Balak's representatives to Moab.

In scene seven, someone told Balak that Balaam is coming. Probably someone went ahead to tell Balak about Balaam's arrival. So, Balak goes to meet Balaam as Balaam first arrived in Moab. Balak scolds Balaam for not coming right away when Balak called urgently for Balaam. Balak asked Balaam several questions. Balak wants to make a point. Balak doesn't expect Balaam to answer these questions. Balak asked, "Did I not send you an urgent summons? Why didn't you come to me? Did you think that I'm not able to reward you?" Balak is asking Balaam these questions to imply that Balaam's delay to respond to Balak's urgent request might be because Balaam doubted Balak could really reward Balaam. This is also Balak's way of telling Balaam that Balak can reward Balaam and plans to reward Balaam.

Balaam told Balak that Balaam did come now. Balaam reminded Balak that Balaam cannot say whatever Balaam wants to say. Balaam said, "I can only speak what God puts in my mouth." This means that Balaam can only say what God says Balaam can say.

In scene eight, Balaam went with Balak to a place in Moab called Kiriath Huzoth. The Moabite word "Kiriath" means "town" or "city." Balak likely took Balaam to Huzoth, northeast of the Dead Sea, since the mountainous area overlooked the Israelite camp in the plains of Moab.

There Balak killed cattle and sheep as a sacrifice or offering, probably to give to Moabite gods. Balak also gave part of the sacrificed meat as a gift to Balaam and the representatives who had brought Balaam to Moab. Balak wanted to use this gift to get Balaam to do what Balak wanted Balaam to do.

Stop here to review a map of Huzoth in Moab, 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

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 22:22–40 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has 8 scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- The angel of Yahweh
- Balaam
- Balaam's two servants
- The donkey
- Balak
- And Balak's representatives, who traveled from Pethor to Moab with Balaam.

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.

Balaam travels to Moab on a donkey, and two servants go along with Balaam. Yahweh feels angry at Balaam for going.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I'm angry because I know Balaam intends to go against Me," or "I told Balaam to only do and say what I said Balaam could do. But I know Balaam wants to disobey me. The reason is that Balaam can receive the rewards and honor that King Balak offered to Balaam," or "I blessed the Israelites and now Balaam wants to curse the Israelites. I will not allow Balaam to do this."

Representing Yahweh, the angel of Yahweh prepares to kill Balaam with a sword. Balaam's donkey sees this and moves away. Balaam does not see the angel of Yahweh, and so Balaam hits the donkey. The donkey returns to the road to continue traveling to Moab. The angel of Yahweh did not kill Balaam.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the donkey, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Oh, no! We must get away from here!" or "I feel afraid of the angel of Yahweh. I do not want to die," or "I care about Balaam. I do not want Balaam to die."

The angel of Yahweh moved to a narrower place in the road, ready to kill Balaam there. This spot in the road went through a vineyard with walls on each side. Since the donkey had very little space to move, the donkey walked very close to one of the walls. The donkey accidentally smashed Balaam's foot against the wall. Balaam hit the donkey so that the donkey started to travel to Moab again.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the angel of Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "The donkey really cares for Balaam. I will spare Balaam's life for now," or "I will not kill the donkey," or "Balaam still plans to disobey me. I will stop Balaam from cursing the Israelites."

Once again, the angel of Yahweh did not kill Balaam yet. The angel of Yahweh moved to an even narrower place in the road, ready to kill Balaam. With no place to escape, the donkey lay down under Balaam. Balaam very angrily hits the donkey with a staff.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Balaam, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I am angry the donkey will not do what it is supposed to do," or "The donkey has hurt and embarrassed me. I have the right to feel very angry."

This time the donkey could not and did not continue to travel. Yahweh gave the donkey the ability to speak. Balaam and the donkey talk about why Balaam beat the donkey. Balaam tells the donkey that, if Balaam had a sword, he would have killed the donkey. The donkey reminds Balaam that the donkey has faithfully obeyed Balaam the whole time Balaam has had the donkey. Balaam admits that the donkey has never acted against Balaam before.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the donkey, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I did not deserve for Balaam to hit me. I protected Balaam," or "I have always faithfully obeyed Balaam, but Balaam has now hit me three times."

Ask the person playing Balaam, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "This animal did not obey me, so I have the right to kill the donkey," or "The donkey is right. The donkey has always obeyed me. I don't understand why the donkey is acting like this now."

Next, Yahweh shows Balaam the angel of Yahweh. The angel of Yahweh is ready to kill Balaam. Balaam bows to the angel of Yahweh. Balaam says that Balaam sinned. Balaam is willing to stop going to Moab if Yahweh wants Balaam to stop. The angel of Yahweh allows Balaam to go to Moab. The angel of Yahweh reminds Balaam to only do what Yahweh says to do.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Balaam, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I'm so scared. I am about to die," or "I'll do anything so that I can live," or "I know I am not faithfully obeying Yahweh," or "I know now that I must do only what Yahweh says to do," or "I'm so grateful that the angel of Yahweh did not kill me."

Balak goes to Balaam as soon as Balaam enters the country of Moab. Balak questions why Balaam did not come immediately in response to Balak's urgent request. Balaam responds that Balaam has now come. Balaam reminds Balak that Balaam can only say what God allows Balaam to say.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Balak, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I'm angry because Balaam did not respect my request," or "I'm so stressed about the huge group of Israelites nearby. Balaam can help me, but Balaam took a long time to come. We need to do something now to defeat the Israelites."

Balak takes Balaam to a place called Kiriath Huzoth. There Balak sacrifices cattle and sheep as a gift to Balaam and the representatives who brought Balaam to Moab.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Balaam, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Balak still expects me to curse the Israelites, but I know Yahweh will not allow that. Balak will be angry with me," or

"Wow! Balak has already given me good meat as a gift. I have to obey God, but I wish I could receive more gifts like this."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 22:22–40 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

This story uses the general word for **God** at the very beginning when God felt angry at Balaam for going to Moab, and at the very end when Balaam talks to Balak about God. The rest of the story uses the personal name for God, **Yahweh**. Use the same words for God and Yahweh as you used in previous passages. For more information on God and Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

The donkey tried to avoid the **angel of Yahweh**. The angel of Yahweh is a special angel who speaks with so much authority, that it is as if God himself is speaking. It could even be that this angel is God himself, but appearing to people in a way that they can see Him—and survive it!

Stop here and discuss as a group what you will say for **angel of Yahweh** in your translation. Use the same words for angel of Yahweh that you have used in previous books of the Bible. Refer to the Master Glossary for a full definition of angel of Yahweh, or angel of the Lord. Pause this audio here.

Balaam rode his donkey through a **vineyard**, which was an area where people grew grapevines so that they could use the grapes to eat and to make wine. Use the same word for vineyard as you have used in previous passages, and remember that vineyard is in the Master Glossary.

Balaam **bows** low and tells the angel of Yahweh, "I have **sinned**." Use the same word for sin that you have used in previous passages. If needed, refer to the Master Glossary for a full definition of sin.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word you will use for **bow**, or bending down to the ground to show respect. If you have used this word in previous books of the Bible, use the same word here. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information about bow. Pause this audio here.

Balaam tells the angel of Yahweh that, if Yahweh thought Balaam going to Moab was bad, or **evil**, Balaam was willing to return to Pethor. Use the same word for evil that you have used in previous passages. If needed, refer to the Master Glossary for a full definition of evil.

Balak makes a **sacrifice** of cattle and sheep in Kiriath Huzoth. Use the same word for sacrifice that you have used in previous passages. If needed, refer to the Master Glossary for a full definition of sacrifice.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 22:22–40

Audio Content

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Numbers 22:41–23:6

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 22:41–23:6 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 22:41–23:6 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 22:41-23:6 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Balaam travels to meet with King Balak but encounters the angel of Yahweh along the journey. The angel was waiting to kill Balaam, but Balaam's donkey saved Balaam's life by stopping in the road and refusing to move. The angel reminds Balaam to only say what Yahweh allows him to say. The angel allows Balaam to continue on his way, and Balaam meets with Balak. Balak makes sacrifices to the Moabite gods.

This story begins the next morning when King Balak takes Balaam up to Bamoth Baal. This was a high place up on a hill where people made sacrifices to the god Baal. From this high place, they could see only part of the Israelite camp because there were so many people. Balak brought Balaam here so that he could see the Israelites and curse them, because he wished that bad things would happen to the Israelites. People believed that seeing the people you wanted to curse made the curse more effective.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story of when a person wanted to curse his enemies. What things did the person do hoping that it would make the curse more effective? Pause this audio here.

Balaam tells King Balak to build seven altars at that location, because the Moabites considered it a sacred spot. Balak probably used stones or other materials already available on the hill. Balaam also told Balak to provide seven bulls, which were mature male cattle, and seven rams, which were adult male sheep. Israel used bulls and rams for their most important sacrifices, and it is possible that Moabites did the same thing.

Stop here and look at pictures of a stone altar, a bull, and a ram, if needed. Pause this audio here.

The number seven is a special number in many of the cultures of this area. It is also an important number in the Bible as a symbol of completeness or fullness. Seven is an important number in the story of Balaam. In the next passages, Balaam will make a total of seven prophecies or messages about the future of Israel.

Balak does what Balaam told him to do, building the altar and providing the animals for sacrifice. Balaam and Balak offer a bull and a ram as burnt offerings on each altar. Balaam tells Balak to stand beside his offering. This meant more than just standing around and waiting. Balaam was telling Balak to stand guard over the offerings, which was a common practice. Balaam says he is going away to see if Yahweh will meet with him. We do not know where Balaam was going, but perhaps he was going away from that location and off by himself. Balaam tells Balak that he will tell Balak whatever Yahweh tells him.

Balaam goes to a bare height or a place on the hill where there were no trees. People believed that high places like this put them closer to the gods. God meets Balaam there, and Balaam tells God how he made sacrifices on seven different altars. Balaam is not telling God what he did, but Balaam is asking God to respond to Balaam's sacrifice.

Yahweh puts a word or message in Balaam's mouth. Yahweh tells Balaam exactly what he is to say to King Balak. Balaam returns to King Balak and finds him, along with the princes of Moab, standing guard beside the burnt offerings. You will remember from an earlier passage that the princes of Moab were officials or important leaders of the Moabites.

Stop here and tell a story about a person who gives a message to someone and tells them to deliver the exact message to a third person. Pay attention to the expressions they used to describe the message and the instructions for delivering it.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 22:41-23:6 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 4 scenes.

In the first scene: King Balak takes Balaam up to Bamoth Baal, a high place used for sacrifices. They look down and see part of the Israelite camp.

In the second scene: Balaam tells Balak to make seven altars and provide seven bulls and rams for sacrifices. Balak and Balaam make burnt offerings of one bull and one ram on each altar. Balaam tells Balak to stand guard.

In the third scene: Balaam goes by himself to another place to meet God. Balaam tells God what he has done. Yahweh puts a message in Balaam's mouth and sends him back to Balak.

In the fourth scene: Balaam returns and finds Balak and the princes of Moab standing at the altars where the sacrifices were made.

The characters in this passage are:

- King Balak
- Balaam
- Princes of Moab
- Israelites
- And Yahweh

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

The first scene takes place the morning after Balaam meets King Balak. Balak takes Balaam up to a place called Bamoth Baal. Because of the great number of Israelites, they could only see some of the Israelites, or the edge of the Israelite camp. In the original language, the "Bamoth" is a high place where sacrifices are made, and "Baal" is the name of a pagan god. You could translate the name of this place as "a high place where sacrifices are made to Baal."

Stop here and discuss as a group how you are going to translate this place's name. Will you use the actual place name or a translation of the place's name? Pause this audio here.

In the second scene, Balaam tells Balak to build seven altars and provide seven bulls and seven rams. Balak does what Balaam has asked. They then sacrifice one bull and one ram on each altar. Balaam tells Balak to stand beside the burnt offerings while he goes away to see if Yahweh will respond to him. Standing, in this instance, is more than waiting for Balaam to return. The practice of standing by a sacrifice was a common act. Balaam was telling Balak to position himself near the sacrifices and watch over them.

Stop here and discuss how you will translate the idea of "standing" so that it means more than waiting around. Tell a story of a time when you told someone to stand by and keep watch over something. Pay attention to the words that you use. Pause this audio here.

Balaam tells Balak that he is going off to another place to see if Yahweh might come and meet with him. There is no guarantee that Yahweh will meet Balaam. It is possible that Balaam hopes Yahweh will respond to the sacrifices Balaam and Balak made. Balaam promises that if Yahweh meets him, he will tell Balak everything that Yahweh says.

In the third scene, Balaam goes by himself to meet God. We do not know how far away or where he traveled. We simply know that it is a bare height, a hill or mountain that has no trees or other plants. It is possible that Balaam went to a location higher than he was before. God meets with Balaam there. In this instance, the general word for God is used rather than His personal name.

Balaam tells God Balaam has made sacrifices on seven altars. Balaam is not saying this because God does not know about it. Balaam is telling God that Balaam has performed rituals and is asking God for a response. Yahweh responds and "puts a word in Balaam's mouth." This is a picture with words that shows that Yahweh

gave Balaam a message. You could also translate this as "Yahweh told Balaam exactly what to say" or "Yahweh gave Balaam a message that he had to proclaim." Yahweh told Balaam to return to Balak with the message.

Stop here and discuss how your team will translate the phrase "Yahweh put a word in Balaam's mouth." Pause this audio here.

In the fourth scene, Balaam returns and finds Balak and the princes of Moab standing at the altars where the sacrifices were made.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 22:41–23:6 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:

- King Balak
- Balaam
- Princes of Moab
- Israelites
- And 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 next morning, King Balak takes Balaam up to Bamoth Baal, a high place used for sacrifices. They look down and see part of the Israelite camp.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing King Balak, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I am hopeful that Balaam will curse the Israelites now that he can see some of them," or "I am encouraged. This is a sacred place for our people. It might give Balaam extra power," or "I am worried. There are so many Israelites. I hope Balaam can do something about them."

Balaam tells Balak to make seven altars and provide seven bulls and rams for sacrifices. Balak does what Balaam has asked him. Balak and Balaam make burnt offerings of one bull and one ram on each altar. Balaam tells Balak, "Stand watch while I go away. I hope that Yahweh will come and meet with me. I will tell you everything Yahweh says and shows me."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Balaam, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "This is not going to be easy. Balak will have to prove that he is serious by making good sacrifices," or "Seven altars should be good. It is a special number. Hopefully, Yahweh will see that we are respectful and serious."

Ask the person playing Balak, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Anxious. I hope Balaam does what I need him to do," or "Dutiful. Of course, I will stand guard over the sacrifices. It is my responsibility."

Balaam goes to a high place where there are no trees. God meets Balaam there. Balaam tells God, "I have made seven altars and sacrificed a bull and ram on each one." Yahweh puts a message in Balaam's mouth and says, "Go back to Balak and tell him what I have said."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I know what you have been doing. You cannot manipulate me with your rituals," or "I have a response for you and King Balak, but it will not be what you are expecting."

Balaam returns and finds Balak and the princes of Moab standing at the altars where the sacrifices were made.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing King Balak, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I feel impatient. Hurry and tell me what Yahweh said." or "Can you hurry up and curse these people? How long do I need to wait? I've done all the proper rituals."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 22:41–23:6 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Balaam and Balak could see some of the people of **Israel** or **Israelites**. Use the same word or phrase for the people of Israel or Israelites as you used in previous passages. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on Israel and Israelites.

Balak built seven **altars**. Balaam and Balak **sacrificed** a bull and a ram on each altar as a **burnt offering**. Use the same words for altar, sacrifice, and burnt offering as you used in previous passages. For more information on altar, sacrifice, and burnt offering, refer to the Master Glossary.

Balaam told Balak, "Perhaps **Yahweh** will come to meet with me." Yahweh is the personal name of God. Use the same word for Yahweh as you have used in previous passages. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information.

Balaam went to the top of a bare hill, and **God** met with him. This is the general word for God and not his personal name. Use the same word for God as you have used in previous passages. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 22:41-23:6

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (12242745 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Numbers 23:7-12

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 23:7-12 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 23:7-12 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 23:7–12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Balak and Balaam offer sacrifices on seven altars. Balaam then meets with God and God puts a message in Balaam's mouth. Balaam returns to Balak with the message.

This passage is the message that Yahweh gave to Balaam. Like many prophets, Balaam gave his speech using special poetic language. The message was similar to a prophecy, but Balaam was not a messenger of Yahweh. So, Moses uses a general word for wise sayings like proverbs or parables to describe Balaam's message.

Stop here and tell a story about a messenger who came from outside the community and presented a message. Pay attention to how the storyteller describes the message. How is this message different from messages that come from the community? Pause this audio here.

Balaam begins his speech by saying who he is and why he spoke this message. This seems to be a common formula or pattern for introducing this type of speech. Balaam will use this same pattern in all his future messages.

Stop here and discuss: How do messengers in your culture begin their message? How do they introduce themselves and the purpose of their message? Pause this audio here.

Balaam says King Balak has called him from Aram, in the eastern mountains. You will remember from a previous passage that Balaam is from Pethor, which was probably near the Euphrates River in the northern part of modern-day Syria. This is located over 965 kilometers from Moab.

Stop here and look at a map showing Moab, the Jordan River, the Euphrates River, the land of Moab, and the land of Pethor, if needed. Pause this audio here.

In his message, Balaam refers to the Israelites by two names: Jacob and Israel. You will remember that Jacob was an ancestor of the Israelites. He was the grandson of Abraham. Yahweh changed Jacob's name to Israel. From that point, people called the descendants of Jacob by Israel's name.

People knew that Balaam was a powerful man whose blessings and curses were effective.

Balaam recognizes he cannot curse someone unless God also curses them. Balaam cannot reverse God's blessing to Israel. Because God has blessed them, Balaam is unable to curse Israel.

Balaam says he can see him, Israel, from his location high on the mountain or hill. Balaam agrees Israel is a special people, not like any other. Balaam is recognizing that Yahweh has chosen or set apart Israel from all the other nations. They alone are Yahweh's chosen people.

Balaam describes the people of Israel as "dust." There are two possible reasons that Balaam calls them dust. The first reason could be that when the Israelites traveled through the wilderness, they stirred up the dry ground and created a huge cloud of dust. The second reason could refer to Yahweh's promise to Abram that his offspring would be like the dust that no one could count.

Stop here and do this activity: Pick up a handful of dust or soil. Count the number of grains of dust. How many grains of dust did you have in your hand? How did you feel counting the dust? Pause this audio here.

Balaam finishes his message with a wish to be like the righteous, those who obey God. Though this is Balaam's wish, we will learn in later passages that Balaam does not live the life of a righteous person.

After Balaam gives his first message, King Balak is very angry. He has offered Balaam a lot of money to curse the Israelites. Balak expected Balaam to speak the curses that Balak was paying him for. Balak thinks that he can manipulate or control the gods as long as he has the right person, Balaam, perform the right rituals. Balaam says he can only speak what God tells Balaam to speak. Balak learns that Yahweh rules over everything and no one can control him.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 23:7–12 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: Balaam tells how King Balak has called Balaam to curse Israel.

In the second scene: Balaam sees the great number of Israelites. They are a special nation. Balaam desires to be like them.

The characters in this passage are:

- Balaam
- King Balak
- Princes of Moab
- Israelites
- And Yahweh

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

Stop here and review as a group: If your team has completed the introduction to poetry, remind one another of the special ways that poets use language. What are the most common ways that poets use language in Hebrew poems? Pause this audio here.

At the beginning of this passage, Balaam has gone back to where Balak and the princes of Moab are standing, next to their burnt offerings. Balaam announces the message Yahweh has given him. Balaam gives the message in a poetic style. This is typical of these kinds of messages. Though Yahweh gave Balaam the message, Balaam was not a special messenger of Yahweh. So, Moses uses a general word for wise sayings like proverbs or parables to describe Balaam's message.

Stop here and discuss how you will translate the word describing the type of message that Balaam gave. Pause this audio here.

Just like in many other Hebrew poems, the poet creates this poem by using pairs of words and also parallel or companion phrases. Balaam organizes this message using seven parallel or companion sets of phrases and divides them into two sections. Each section has three parallel or matching themes: first, the location, then information about Israel, and finally, Balaam's reaction.

The first scene has three sets of parallel or companion phrases. First, Balaam speaks of his location in Aram, in the eastern mountains where Balak, the king of Moab, called him. Balaam says the same thing but with different pairs of words. Balak is the King of Moab and Aram is located in the eastern mountains.

Next, Balaam mentions Israel and the reason Balak has called him. Again, he uses phrases that mean the same thing. Jacob and Israel are the same and refer to the descendants of Jacob, the Israelites. Balak wants Balaam to curse and denounce or announce the destruction of Israel. He wants Balaam to wish evil against the Israelites. In the original language, the second word Balaam uses is stronger and refers to evil wishes that people speak with anger.

Stop here and discuss how you will express that Balak not only wants to curse the Israelites but that Balak is also filled with anger toward them. Pause this audio here.

In the third set of phrases, Balaam responds using questions that he does not expect Balak to answer. Balaam asks, "How can I curse those whom God has not cursed? How can I condemn those whom Yahweh has not condemned?" Balaam says he cannot wish evil on someone whom God or Yahweh has not spoken evil against. Balaam speaks of God first using the general word for God and then by Yahweh, God's personal name. He uses the same words for wishing evil that he used in the previous phrases.

The second scene has four sets of parallel or companion phrases. Balaam repeats the same themes of the location, then information about Israel, and finally, Balaam's reaction.

In the first set of phrases, Balaam says that from his current location on top of the high rocks or the mountain, he can see him, Israel. Balaam refers to the nation of Israel as if they were one person.

In the second and third sets of phrases, Balaam talks about Israel. In the second set of phrases, Balaam uses picture or symbolic language to describe Israel's special status. Balaam says that Israel is alone and does not see itself like other nations. Yahweh has set them apart from the other nations and has given them the special status as Yahweh's chosen people.

In the third set of phrases, Balaam asks a question that he does not expect to be answered. He says Israel is too numerous to be counted. He describes them like dust and that not even one-fourth or a portion of them can be counted.

Stop here and discuss: What special language or word pictures do you use in your culture to describe something that is difficult to count? Discuss how you will describe the "counting of dust" in your translation. Pause this audio here.

In the final set of phrases in this message, Balaam says he wishes to be like the Israelites. He says that when he dies, or at the end of his life, he wants to be righteous, in a right relationship with God, just like the Israelites.

After Balaam gives the message, Balak is very angry. Balak asks a question that he does not expect Balaam to answer. Balak asks, "What have you done to me?" He is saying that Balaam has not done what Balak had called for him to do. Balaam has done the opposite of what Balak asked. Balaam uses a question to remind Balak that Balaam can only speak the message that Yahweh has given him. Balaam asks Balak, "Must I not be careful to speak what Yahweh has put in my mouth?"

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 23:7-12 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:

- Balaam
- King Balak
- Princes of Moab
- Israelites
- And 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.

When Balaam returned to King Balak, he spoke this message:

"Balak, the King of Moab, called me from Aram in the eastern mountains.

He said, 'Come and curse the descendants of Jacob, come speak evil things against Israel!'"

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Balak, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I am afraid of the Israelites. I need to get Balaam to come here. His curses always work," or "I will do whatever is needed to get rid of my hated enemies. It will be expensive to bring Balaam this far, but I will pay."

"But how can I curse those whom God has not cursed?

How can I speak evil against those whom Yahweh has not spoken evil of?"

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Balaam, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I feel helpless. I cannot go against Yahweh," or "My power is limited. Yahweh has blessed Israel, there is nothing I can do against them."

"I see Israel from the top of the cliff, I see them from the hilltop.

They are a special people, all by themselves,

They are not like other nations!

They are like the dust that cannot be counted;

Who can even count a portion of them?"

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Yahweh has made us into a great nation just like he promised our ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob," or "We are special. Yahweh has chosen us above all other nations."

"I hope to die like these righteous people, may the end of my life be like theirs."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Balaam, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I feel envious. I hope my descendants can be a great nation like this one," or "I wish that my relationship with Yahweh was good, just like the Israelites."

Balak was very angry with Balaam and said, "What have you done to me? I brought you here to curse my enemies, but you have blessed them instead."

Balaam replied, "Didn't I tell you that I can only speak what Yahweh has put in my mouth?"

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Balak, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Very angry. Why is Balaam not doing what I have paid him to do? He is doing the opposite," or "Confused. What can I do to get rid of my enemies?"

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 23:7-12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Balaam gives his **message**. Though this was a type of prophecy, Moses uses a different word in the original language since Balaam was not a prophet of Yahweh. Moses uses a general word for wise sayings like proverbs or parables to describe Balaam's message. People spoke this type of message in a poetic style.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **message**. 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.

Balak asks Balaam to **curse Israel** or Jacob for him. Use the same words for curse and Israel that you have used in previous passages. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on curse and Israel.

Balaam says that he cannot curse someone whom **God** or **Yahweh** has not cursed. Balaam uses both the general word for God and also Yahweh, God's personal name. Use the same words for God and Yahweh that you have used in previous passages. For more information on God and Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

Balaam says that Israel does not consider itself the same as other **nations**. Use the same word for nation that you have used in previous passages. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on nation.

Balaam wishes to die at the end of his life like a **righteous** person. A righteous person obeys God and is in a right relationship with him.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **righteous**. Look up righteousness 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.

Balak is angry with Balaam because he does not curse them, but instead **blesses** them. Use the same word for bless that you have used in previous passages. For more information on bless, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 23:7–12

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (13687080 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Numbers 23:13–26

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 23:13–26 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 23:13–26 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 23:13–26 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Balaam gives Balak the message that Yahweh had given to Balaam. Balaam says that he cannot curse someone Yahweh has not cursed. Balak is very angry that Balaam blesses Israel instead of cursing them.

In this passage, Balak takes Balaam to another location where he can see another portion of the Israelites. Balak hopes that Balaam will curse Israel from this place. Balak leads Balaam to a place on the top of Mount Pisgah called the field or plateau of Zophin. Mount Pisgah is a mountain in the Abarim mountain range. From the top of this mountain, someone can see the plains of Moab to the northeast and the Dead Sea to the west. Some believe that Pisgah is another name for Mount Nebo. In the original language, a "Zophin" is an observation or lookout place. It is unclear whether this was the name of the actual place or a type of location.

Stop here and look at a map that shows the Abarim Mountains, Mount Pisgah, the Plains of Moab and the Dead Sea. Pause this audio here.

When he arrives at the new location, Balak repeats the same process that he did at Bamoth Baal. He builds seven altars and sacrifices a bull and a ram on each altar. Again, Balaam tells Balak to stand beside the burnt offering while Balaam goes away to meet Yahweh. Once again, Yahweh gives Balaam a message and instructs him to return to Balak. When Balaam arrives back, he finds Balak and the princes of Moab standing guard beside the burnt offering just as in the previous passage. Balak is eager and anxious to know what happened this time. As Balaam returns, Balak asks, "What did Yahweh say?"

Stop here and tell a story of a time when you were eagerly waiting for information or a message. What did you do or say when you saw someone who had the information you needed? Pause this audio here.

Balaam begins his message. As in the previous message, Moses uses a general word for wise sayings like proverbs or parables to describe Balaam's message. He begins by telling Balak to pay close attention. Balaam does this by saying "rise up" or "stand up," even though Balak is already standing. He tells Balak to "give ear to me," which is a picture with words telling Balak to listen closely to what Balaam is about to say.

Stop here and discuss the various ways that people in your culture get someone's attention and show them that they need to listen carefully. How does this change according to the person you are speaking to? Which of these ways is more polite and formal? Which is more informal? Pause this audio here.

Balaam tells Balak that God is not like human beings. God does not lie and does not change His mind or go back on a decision He has made. God always keeps His promises. Even though Balaam is a powerful man whose blessings and curses are effective, he is unable to go against the plans of God. God's blessing is so powerful and cannot be reversed, even by an expert like Balaam.

Yahweh, the God of the Israelites, is present with His people. The people shout, declaring that Yahweh is their king. This shout is similar to a victorious battle cry.

Stop here and discuss how people announce that an important person is present. Pause this audio here.

The Israelites shout in victory because God has brought them out of Egypt. They compare God to the horns of the wild ox. This refers to an extinct ancestor of modern cattle. People talked about how large, fierce, and powerful these oxen were. People began to use the ox horn as a symbol of power and strength.

Stop here and look at a picture of a modern wild ox. This animal is similar to the ox mentioned here. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss: What are symbols of power and strength in your culture? Pause this audio here.

Balaam said there was no enchantment and no divination or magic that could be used against Jacob or Israel. People used enchantment and divination to discover information about the future and to influence people or events. Enchantment refers to interpreting various signs and omens. Divination is the foretelling of the future. People do these things through the use of magic or witchcraft. God is against the use of magic and divination. He will not allow people to use magic or divination against Israel. Israelites do not need to use these things because God speaks directly to them.

Stop here and discuss: In your culture, what things do people use to try to predict the future? What do people in your community think about such activities? Pause this audio here.

Next, Balaam compares Israel to a lion and a lioness that are hunting. Lions are very powerful wild cats that many people consider the king of animals because of their strong and majestic appearance. They are fierce hunters. Balaam says that lions do not rest until they have completely devoured, or eaten, the animal that it has hunted and killed.

Stop here and show a picture of a lion and a lioness, if needed. Discuss: What animals or other symbols do you connect with strength in your culture? Pause this audio here.

After Balaam finishes the message that Yahweh gave him, Balak tells Balaam that he should not bless or curse Israel. Balak was saying that it was better for Balaam to remain silent than bless his enemies. Balaam reminds Balak that he had already told Balak that he must do what Yahweh tells him to do.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 23:13–26 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 6 scenes.

In the first scene: Balak leads Balaam to the top of Pisgah, where Balak performs the same sacrifices as in the previous passage.

In the second scene: Balaam goes away to meet with Yahweh. Yahweh gives Balaam another message for Balak.

In the third scene: Balaam returns, and Balak asks, "What message has Yahweh given?"

In the fourth scene: Balaam gives the message from Yahweh. He says that God is not like a human who changes his mind. God has given a command to bless Israel that cannot be reversed.

In the fifth scene: Balaam continues the message, stating that Yahweh is the King of Israel. No one can use magic against them. Israel is like a powerful lion who will destroy its prey.

In the sixth scene: Balak tells Balaam to neither curse nor bless Israel. Balaam says that he must do what Yahweh tells him.

The characters in this passage are:

- Balak
- Balaam
- Yahweh
- Moabite princes
- And Israel

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

Moses begins this passage in a way that shows that a new event is happening.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you are going to begin this passage. What words or phrases do you use in your language to show that a new event is starting? Pause this audio here.

In the first scene, Balak tells Balaam to come with him to another place. In the original language, Balak uses a word to show the urgency of his request. He is desperate for Balaam to go with him to a new place where Balaam might be willing to do as Balak has requested.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How will you translate Balak's request so that people will understand that he is desperate and in a hurry for Balaam to come and help him? Pause this audio here.

We do not know when this next event happens. It may be the same day, or it could be on another day. Balak leads Balaam to a place on the top of Mount Pisgah called the field or plateau of Zophin. In the original language, a "Zophin" is an observation or lookout place. Other ways people can refer to this place are "the Lookouts' Field," "Lookout Plateau," "the Field of the Watchers," "an observation post," or "a place for spying." Balak builds seven altars, just as he had done in the previous location. He makes the same sacrifices of a ram and bull on each altar.

Stop here and look at a photo of a plateau. Then, discuss as a group how you are going to translate this place's name. Will you use the actual place name, a translation of the place's name, or refer to it by its purpose? Pause this audio here.

In the second scene, Balaam tells Balak to stand guard again while Balaam goes to meet with Yahweh. Though most translations include the name of Yahweh here, in the original language, Balaam simply states that he will "go there for a meeting." Balak and Balaam understood that the meeting would be with Yahweh. Balaam did not know if Yahweh would meet him again. He was going away to wait for Yahweh to meet with him.

In the third scene, Balaam goes back to Balak. Balaam finds Balak and the princes of Moab standing guard over the sacrifices, just as they did in the previous place. This time, Balak shows his eagerness to find out what Yahweh said and asks, "What did Yahweh say?"

Balaam gives the message from Yahweh. Just like the previous message, Balaam uses poetry. Balaam organizes this message using eleven parallel or companion sets of phrases and divides them into two sections. Each section has three parallel or matching themes: first, God, second, not cursing Israel, and finally, blessing Israel.

In the fourth scene, Balaam starts the message by telling Balak to pay attention, to listen. In this first pair of phrases, Balaam tells Balak to "rise up" even though he is already standing. He tells Balak to "give ear." He uses this special and creative language that tells Balak to listen carefully. Balaam refers to Balak by his name and as the son of Zippor. Balaam is preparing Balak to receive the next message from Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you are going to translate the special, creative language that Balaam used to get Balak's attention. Pause this audio here.

Next, Balaam compares God and humans using two phrases that have the same meaning. Balaam uses the general word for God here. Though Balaam uses the word "man," he is referring to people or human beings. God is not a mere human, nor is he the son of a human. God does not lie and does not go back on his promises or change his mind. Balaam then emphasizes this by using two questions that he expects people to answer "No!" Balaam asks "Has God ever spoken and failed to act? Has he ever promised and not carried it through?" Through these questions, Balaam is saying that God always does what He says He will do.

In the final pair of phrases in this section, Balaam says that God has commanded him to bless Israel. God has blessed Israel, and Balaam cannot reverse the blessing. Balaam starts this pair of phrases with a word that shows he wants to stress or emphasize his point. Balaam wants Balak to listen and understand the point he is making.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you are going to show through your translation that Balaam is stressing this statement so that Balak will listen closely. Pause this audio here.

In the fifth scene, Balaam gives the second part of the message. He returns to discussing the character of God. First, God does not have any trouble, misfortune, or difficulties in his plan for Israel, the descendants of Jacob. As in previous messages, Balaam is referring to all of the Israelites as if they were one person. In the second pair of phrases, Balaam states that Yahweh is the God of Israel. He then completes the idea by adding that Israel announces with shouts that Yahweh is their king.

In the next pair of phrases, Balaam states the reason God is the king of Israel. God delivered them from Egypt. Balaam compares the power of God with the horns of a wild ox, a symbol of strength.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you are going to translate the comparison of the power of God with the horns of a wild ox. Pause this audio here.

In the next set of phrases, Balaam says the same thing in two ways. He says that no curse or magic will touch or have power over Israel, the descendants of Jacob. Then, Balaam uses two phrases to comment on this idea. Because of God's protection, people will say that God has done wonderful things for Israel.

Balaam begins the final ideas of the message with a word that shows awe and surprise. He is saying something like, "Just look at these people!" Balaam is in awe and wonder of them. Balaam then compares them to a lion and a lioness who are hunting. They will not rest until they finish hunting, and they devour their prey.

In the sixth scene, Balak is unhappy when Balaam finishes the message. Balak shouts in frustration, "If you are not going to curse them, at least do not bless them!" Balak would prefer that Balaam say nothing rather than bless his enemies. Balaam asks a question to which Balak already knows the answer: "Didn't I tell you that I must do what Yahweh tells me?"

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 23:13–26 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:

- Balak
- Balaam
- Yahweh
- Moabite princes
- And 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.

Act out Balak taking Balaam to Zophin, the Lookouts' Field at the top of Mount Pisgah. They can see a portion of the Israelite camp from this place.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Balak, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Maybe this is the wrong place. I'll take him somewhere better, where he can only see part of the Israelites," or "I need to get Balaam to curse them. Things are getting desperate. The Israelites need to be stopped before they destroy me and my people."

Balak builds seven altars and sacrifices a ram and bull on each altar. Balaam tells Balak to stand guard over the sacrifices while he goes off to a meeting. Yahweh gives a message to Balaam and tells him to go back to Balak and speak the message. Balaam returns and finds Balak and the princes of Moab standing guard over the sacrifices. Balak asks, "What did Yahweh say?"

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Balaam, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I don't know if Yahweh will meet me again. I'll go over here and see if Yahweh will come to me again," or "I know Balak did all these rituals again. He thinks he can manipulate Yahweh in the way he tries to manipulate his gods. He's going to find out that Yahweh is not like them," or "I hope Balak doesn't get angry with me. I don't think he will like the message that Yahweh has given."

Balaam gives the message from Yahweh. Balaam says:

"Stand up and listen carefully, Balak, son of Zippor.

God is not like humans. He does not lie or change his mind.

If He says something, He will do it. If He speaks, He will make it happen.

Listen, God commanded me to bless. He has blessed and I cannot reverse that."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Balak, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I am frustrated. Of course I'm listening. I asked you to tell me what Yahweh said," or "Surprised. Yahweh is not like the gods I'm used to dealing with."

Ask the person playing Balaam, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I am frustrated. Balak said he wants to hear, but he does not listen very well. He only wants me to say things that he agrees with," or "I feel helpless. I can only do what God tells me to do. I can't do what Balak wants just because he offered me lots of money."

"God does not have any plans to bring trouble or difficulties to Jacob's descendants, Israel.

Yahweh, their God, is with them. The Israelites shout out that Yahweh is their king.

God brings them out of Egypt. He is strong like the horns of a wild ox.

No curse will touch them. No magic will have power against them.

People will say about the descendants of Jacob,

'Look what wonderful things God does for Israel.'

Just take a look at these people!

They are majestic, like a lion or a lioness who gets up to hunt.

They will not rest until they totally devour their prey!"

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I am excited. Yahweh is our king. He is mighty and gives us victory over our enemies," or "I am happy Yahweh has freed our people from Egypt."

Ask the person playing Balaam, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I am amazed. These people are great and powerful. Why can't Balak see that nothing can harm them because God protects them?"

King Balak shouts, "If you are not going to curse them, at least do not bless them!" Balaam replies, "Didn't I tell you that I must do what Yahweh tells me?"

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Balaam, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I told you but wouldn't listen. We are wasting our time trying to go against God and his purposes."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 23:13–26 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Balak told Balaam to come with him to another place. He would be able to see some of the Israelites from there. He told Balaam to **curse** the Israelites from there. Use the same word for curse that you have used in previous passages. For more information on curse, refer to the Master Glossary.

Balak built seven **altars** and sacrificed a ram and a bull on each altar as a **burnt offering**. Use the same words for ram, bull, altar, and burnt offering that you have used in previous passages. Remember that you can find altar and burnt offering in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh met with Balaam and gave him a message. Yahweh is the personal name for **God**. Both God and Yahweh are used in this passage. Make sure that you translate these names in the same way that you have in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh and God, refer to the Master Glossary.

Balaam came back and found Balak and the **princes of Moab**. Use the same words or phrase for princes of Moab that you have used in previous passages.

Balaam gave his **message**. Moses uses a general word for wise sayings like proverbs or parables to describe Balaam's message. People spoke this type of message in a poetic style. Remember to use the same word for message that you used in the previous passages.

Balaam said that God had given him a command to **bless** the Israelites. Use the same word for bless that you have used in previous passages. For more information about bless, refer to the Master Glossary.

Balaam said that God had not seen any trouble or difficulties for **Israel**, the descendants of Jacob. Balaam is referring to the Israelites as if they are one person, just like he has done in his previous messages. Use the same word for Israel that you have used in previous passages. Remember that you can find more information about Israel in the Master Glossary.

Balaam said that no one can speak an **enchantment** or curse against Jacob. An enchantment is a magic spell that someone makes by casting charms or saying special words.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **enchantment**. 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.

Balaam said that no **divination** or sorcery can come against Israel. Divination usually refers to the things people will do to discern the future that cannot be perceived by normal means. Sometimes magic is involved in divination, but magic is separate. In general, God disapproves of magic and divination. Use the same word for divination that you have used in previous passages. For more information on divination, refer to the Master Glossary.

Balaam said that God is strong, like the **horns** of a wild ox. Horns grow from the head of some hooved animals such as cattle, sheep, goats, or antelopes. They are bone-like and pointed and usually grow in pairs. These animals use their horns to fight or protect themselves.

Stop here and look at pictures of animals with horns: a wild ox, a ram, and an oryx antelope.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 23:13-26

Audio Content

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Numbers 23:27–24:13

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 23:27–24:13 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 23:27–24:13 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 23:27–24:13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Balak takes Balaam to the top of Pisgah, hoping that Balaam will curse Israel from there. Balaam gets a message from Yahweh and delivers it to Balak. Balaam says that God is not like humans. He does not lie or change his mind. Balaam gives a message of blessing on Israel. Balak is very angry. Balaam said that he could only say what Yahweh tells him to say.

Once again, Balak takes Balaam to a new location. He thinks that maybe God will allow Balaam to curse Israel from the new location. Balak still thinks that the problem is the location. He thinks that God might change his mind if Balak chooses the correct location.

This time, Balak took Balaam to the top of Peor, a mountain that overlooks the wilderness, or desert. The mountain was probably located about 20 kilometers east of the northern end of the Dead Sea.

Stop here and look as a group at a map that includes Mount Pisgah and Mount Peor. Pause this audio here.

Again, Balaam tells Balak to build seven altars and prepare seven bulls and seven rams. Balak built the altars and offered a sacrifice of a bull and a ram on each altar, just as he did in the previous locations. However, Balaam's response this time was different. By now, Balaam realized that Yahweh was determined to bless Israel instead of curse them. Balaam did not go away to look for an omen or do divination, as he probably did the

previous times. Instead, Balaam lifted his eyes, or looked out toward the wilderness where he could see the entire camp of Israel. Balaam could see each of the twelve tribes in their camps. You will remember from Exodus that Yahweh had designated where each tribe of Israel should make their camp around the tabernacle.

The Spirit of God came on Balaam, and he spoke his message. Instead of God putting the message in Balaam's mouth, God's Spirit came on Balaam and inspired him to speak. Now, Balaam was behaving like a prophet of God whom God would speak through.

God is speaking through Balaam. Once again, Balaam uses poetic language in his speech. Though this is Balaam's third message, this is the first time that Balaam uses his own name. In this message, Balaam refers to his message as an oracle, a prophecy, or words of a prophet of God.

Balaam describes himself using picture language. He says that he is a "man whose eye is opened" and "falls down with his eyes uncovered." Balaam is saying that he now has a clear understanding of what is happening. Balaam can hear God's words. He sees a vision from the Almighty God. God shows Balaam something that others cannot see. God gives visions to people when they are awake.

Stop here and discuss as a group: What are the different expressions in your language to show that someone clearly understands something that they did not understand before? Pause this audio here.

Balaam states that he is falling down or bows down with his eyes uncovered. Many believe that Balaam fell or bowed down because of the power of God's Spirit that came on Balaam. God gives Balaam a vision, and Balaam is able to understand clearly God's plan for Israel.

Balaam then uses word pictures to describe the beauty and prosperity of where the Israelites live. Balaam talks about their tents and their camp, but he is referring to the place where they live rather than the actual tents and camp. Balaam compares them to a place that has plenty of water and is very fertile. Many types of beautiful plants and trees can grow there: palm trees that produce dates, gardens that produce fruits and vegetables, and other helpful plants like aloes and cedar trees. The aloe was probably the eaglewood or agarwood tree, which is a sweet-smelling and expensive tree that people use for decoration. The cedar tree is a strong tree and sweet-smelling. People used the cedar tree to build strong, beautiful buildings. Balaam uses these trees to create a beautiful image. He is not describing the location, since these types of trees do not usually grow in the same areas. Balaam uses beautiful words to describe the prosperity that will come to the Israelites.

Stop here and look at a photo of a date palm, an aloe or eaglewood tree, and a cedar tree. Pause this audio here.

Balaam also uses the image of water to describe the abundance and prosperity of Israel. Water is a symbol of life since people need water to survive and the land needs water to produce food. Balaam describes a land with plenty of water sources. "Water buckets" may refer to the practice of irrigating or watering crops, a technique that the Israelites would have learned from the Egyptians. It is unclear whether "seed" refers to Israelites planting seeds in their gardens or to the future generations of Israelites. Since Balaam is speaking with creative language, both ideas are possible. Balaam is describing the abundance that will come to the Israelites.

Stop here and show a photo of water buckets that people used for irrigation and a picture of people irrigating a field. Pause this audio here.

Balaam says that a king will come to Israel who will be greater than Agag. Agag is the title that people gave to the Amalekite king. You will remember from the stories in the book of Exodus that the Amalekites were enemies of the Israelites.

As in his previous message, Balaam mentions that God delivered the Israelites from Egypt. The Israelites consider when God rescued them from Egypt to be the most important event in the history of their nation. Again, Balaam compares God's strength when he delivered Israel to the horns of the wild ox, just as in Balaam's previous message.

In the next few lines of the message, it is unclear if Balaam is speaking about God or Israel. Balaam may have done this purposely, since God is the one who gives Israel power and protects them. God acts for Israel. Israel acts with the power of God. Israel will eat up or destroy the nations that are Israel's enemies. Balaam uses two different word pictures to describe this. Like a ferocious animal, they will crush the bones of their enemies. Like a mighty warrior, they will defeat their enemies with arrows. Most people believe that when Balaam refers to

the lion, he is talking about Israel. You will remember in the last message that Balaam used this same comparison for Israel.

You will recognize the final line of Balaam's message because it is similar to Isaac's blessing of Jacob in Genesis: "Blessed are those who bless you, and cursed are those who curse you."

Balak responds to Balaam's message with strong anger. Balak clapped his hands together in an expression of anger. Balak doesn't understand what Balaam has really said. Balak is angry because he hired a famous and skilled diviner to curse his enemies, but Balaam has not cursed Israel. Balak believes that Balaam has broken the contract with him. Balaam was either unwilling or unable to accomplish the task.

Stop here and discuss: In your culture, how do you know when someone is angry? What actions do they make to show that they are angry? Pause this audio here.

Balak tells Balaam to go back home. He says that he was willing to pay Balaam a lot of money, but Yahweh kept him from receiving it. Balaam responds by telling Balak the same thing that he told Balak's princes when they called him to come. He told Balak that no amount of money could make him go against the command of Yahweh.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 23:27–24:13 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 five scenes.

In the first scene: Balak takes Balaam to the top of Mount Peor. Balak builds seven altars and makes sacrifices on them.

In the second scene: Balaam looks toward the wilderness and the Israelite camp. The Spirit of God comes on Balaam and Balaam speaks a message.

In the third scene: Balaam begins his message. Balaam says that his eyes are open to what God is doing. He describes the prosperity of Israel and describes it as a fertile land with beautiful trees.

In the fourth scene: In the second part of Balaam's message, Balaam speaks about how God delivered, or rescued, Israel from Egypt. Balaam says that God and Israel will totally defeat their enemies.

In the fifth scene: Balak is very angry with Balaam. He tells Balaam that Yahweh has kept Balaam from receiving wealth and honor. Balaam reminds Balak that he would not speak against the word of Yahweh for any amount of money.

The characters in this passage are:

- Balak
- Balaam
- Israel
- Yahweh
- And Moabite princes, though they are not mentioned

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

This passage begins in the same way as the previous passage. The original language uses a word to show that a new event is beginning. If you used a special word or phrase to begin the last passage, you may want to use the same word or phrase here as well.

In the first scene, Balak tells Balaam to come with him to yet another place. The Moabite princes probably traveled with them, even though the passage does not say this. Again, Balak uses a word that shows the urgency of his request. His words are even stronger than the last time. He is desperate for Balaam to go with him to a new place. He hopes that the new place will be pleasing to God and that God will allow Balaam to curse the Israelites. Balak takes Balaam to the top of Mount Peor. Balak once again builds seven altars and sacrifices a young bull and a ram on each altar.

Stop here and look at a map that includes Mount Pisgah and Mount Peor, if needed. Pause this audio here.

In the second scene, Balaam does not go away to have a meeting with God. This time, Balaam turns his face toward the wilderness. He lifts his eyes or looks out at the entire camp of Israel. Balaam was able to see the camps of each tribe of Israel.

Stop here and look as a group at a diagram of the 12 tribes camp arrangement. Pause this audio here.

While Balaam looked out at the tribes of Israel, the Spirit of God came on him, or took control of him. God's Spirit was now controlling Balaam's words, just like God would do for a Hebrew prophet.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How are you going to translate the phrase "the Spirit of God came on him"? Pause this audio here.

In the third scene, Balaam begins his message. Again, his message is in a poetic form. Balaam speaks his message in 12 parallel or companion sets of phrases. The entire message is in two sections or parts.

Stop if needed and review the main characteristics of Hebrew poetry. Remind each other of your team's decision about translating poetic passages: Are you following the Hebrew poetic format, or are you translating the ideas but using your culture's poetic format? Pause this audio here.

Balaam starts this message differently from the previous messages. In the introduction, Balaam mentions his own name for the first time. In the original language, Balaam uses a word for message that is primarily for messages that are Yahweh's words spoken by a prophet of God. By using this word, Balaam is stating that the message directly comes from Yahweh. Some possible ways to translate this word are "oracle," "prophecy," "divine or holy speech," and "proclamation."

Stop here and discuss as a group how your team will translate the word for the message of Balaam. Pause this audio here.

After giving his name, Balaam continues the introduction with pairs of phrases in a reverse or "X" structure. Balaam calls himself the man whose eye is opened and the one who has fallen down with his eyes uncovered. He separates these phrases with parallel or companion phrases, stating how his eyes are open because he hears God's words and sees a vision from Almighty God.

In the first section of the message, Balaam emphasizes the prosperity of Israel. In the original language, Balaam uses a word that calls out in surprise or pleasure at the beauty of Israel's dwelling places.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Have members of your group tell about the time that they saw something that was surprisingly beautiful. Pay attention to the words they use to express their surprise. Discuss how you will translate Balaam's surprise at the beauty he saw. Pause this audio here.

Balaam uses comparisons to describe the beauty of Israel's dwelling place or land. He gives four companion phrases that compare the land's beauty to places that have plenty of water and beautiful trees and plants. Balaam then describes the prosperity of the land by comparing it to a place where people water the land and all the seeds produce fruit so that the people have everything they need.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How will you translate the names of the trees Balaam mentions in this word picture? If needed, look again at the photos of a date palm, an aloe or eaglewood tree, and a cedar tree. Pause this audio here.

Balaam ends this section by saying the king of Israel will be more powerful than Agag, the great king of their enemies, the Amalekites.

In the fourth scene, Balaam starts the next section of his message by repeating something from the previous message. He talks about how God brought Israel out of Egypt. In the original language, Balaam does not use a

connecting word, which suggests that this is a new section of the message rather than a continuation of the first part.

Balaam speaks in a way that is unclear whether he is talking about God or Israel. Balaam may be doing this on purpose since God is the one who gives power to Israel and protects them. If, in your language, you must make it clear who is doing the action, then most scholars agree that God is the one who destroys the enemies of Israel.

Balaam then begins using creative or picture language that is very intense—it makes people imagine a scene with a lot of color and action. Balaam says that he—either God or Israel—will "eat up the nations" and "break their bones." Balaam is comparing God or Israel to a ferocious animal destroying its prey. Balaam is saying that God or Israel will totally destroy the nations that are Israel's enemies. Balaam then switches to war language, saying that God or Israel will destroy their enemies with arrows.

Stop here and look at a photo of arrows. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How do people in your culture respond to intense descriptions with a lot of color and action? How will you translate this section? Will you keep the same images, or is there a more appropriate word picture that is more acceptable? Pause this audio here.

Next, Balaam compares Israel to a lion, as he did in the previous message. Balaam asks a question that he does not expect to be answered: who would dare wake him—Israel, the lion. The answer is that no one would disturb the lion.

Stop here and show a photo of a lion, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Balaam ends his message with a blessing that is like the blessing Isaac gave to Jacob, except the phrases are in the opposite order. Balaam says, "Blessed are those who bless you, and cursed are those who curse you." When Isaac blessed Jacob, he said, "Everyone who curses you is cursed, and everyone who blesses you is blessed."

Balak is furious with Balaam. He shouts at Balaam and angrily claps his hands together to show his anger.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How will you translate "claps his hands" so that people will understand that this is an expression of anger? Based on your previous discussion about anger in your culture, if people in your culture do not understand "clapping in anger," it is possible that you may choose to use one of those gestures rather than clapping. Pause this audio here.

Balak tells Balaam to go home because instead of cursing Israel, he has blessed them three times. Balak says that he had promised to honor Balaam with riches, but Yahweh has kept Balaam from getting the reward. Balaam reminds Balak of what he told Balak's messengers. Balaam will speak what Yahweh tells him to speak regardless of the money Balak offers.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 23:27–24:13 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:

- Balak
- Balaam
- Israel
- Yahweh
- And Moabite princes, though they are not 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 the first scene, Balak says to Balaam, "Come now, I will take you to another place. Maybe it will be pleasing to God, and he will allow you to curse the Israelites from there." Balak takes Balaam to the top of Peor. Balaam tells Balak, "Build me seven altars and prepare seven bulls and seven rams." Balaam did this and sacrificed a bull and a ram on each altar.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Balak, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I am frustrated. I need to get Balaam to do what I called him to do. Maybe this is the wrong place," or "I am anxious. This man has wasted a lot of time. We need to do something about these people."

Ask the person playing Balaam, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I am annoyed. Why doesn't Balak realize that the place is not the problem?" or "I am submissive. I'll go along with him again. Maybe he will understand if we go through this again."

In the second scene, Balaam realizes that Yahweh is determined to bless Israel. Balaam does not go away to try divination like in the other times. Balaam looks toward the wilderness and sees the camp of Israel. Balaam can see where each tribe is camping. The Spirit of God comes on Balaam, and Balaam begins to speak a message.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Balaam, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I already know what Yahweh will say. There is no need to go away and try some magic," or "I am overwhelmed. What is happening? I've never felt such power before. Yahweh is controlling me."

In the third scene, Balaam says:

"This is the prophecy of Balaam, son of Beor,
The prophecy of a man who can see clearly,
The prophecy of the man who hears the words of God
Who sees a vision from the Almighty God,
Causing him to fall down with eyes that are uncovered.
O Jacob, your tents are beautiful! Your camp is lovely, O Israel!
Like many palm trees that extend far, Like gardens by a river,

Like sweet-smelling aloes that Yahweh has planted, Like strong cedar trees along the waters.

Water will flow steadily from your irrigation buckets, The seeds you plant will have plenty of water.

Your king will be greater than Agag, the Amalekite; His kingdom will be highly praised!"

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Excited about the future that Yahweh has for us," or "Eager to experience all of this beauty and abundance. It will be much better than living in this wilderness," or "Honored that Yahweh would bless us and make us greater than our enemies."

Ask the person playing Balak, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I am discouraged. Nothing is working the way I want it to. Why is Balaam blessing them and not cursing them?" or "I am furious. This is the opposite of what I asked Balaam to do."

In the fourth scene, Balaam continues his message:

"God brings Israel out of Egypt. He is strong like the horns of a wild ox.

He shall devour the nations, his enemies, and break their bones in pieces

He shall pierce them through with arrows.

Like a lion and a lioness, Israel is crouched and lays down; No one dares to disturb him.

Those who bless Israel are blessed and those who curse Israel are cursed."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I am satisfied. Balaam understands that he cannot go against me," or "I feel protective. I will take care of my chosen people," or "I am faithful. I will honor the promises I have made to my servants Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."

In the fifth scene, Balak claps his hands in anger and shouts at Balaam. "I called you to curse my enemies, but you have blessed them three times! Go back home! I promised you riches, but Yahweh has prevented you from getting your reward!"

Balaam replies, "You know I told your messengers that even if you gave me your palace filled with gold and silver, I have no power to go against Yahweh. I can only say what Yahweh says!"

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 23:27–24:13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Balak tells Balaam to come with him to another place. He tells Balaam that perhaps **God** will allow Balaam to **curse** them, meaning the Israelites from there. Use the same words for God and curse that you have used in previous passages. For more information on God and curse, refer to the Master Glossary.

They go to the top of Peor, which overlooks the **desert**, or **wilderness**. Balaam tells Balak to build seven **altars** and offer a bull and a ram on each altar like he did before. Use the same words for desert or wilderness and altar that you have used in previous passages. If you use the words for burnt offering and sacrifice, use the same words that you used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information on these words.

Balaam realized **Yahweh** was determined to **bless Israel**. Yahweh is the personal name of God. Sometimes, Balaam uses God's personal name, Yahweh, and at other times, he uses the general word for God. Use the same words for Yahweh, bless, and Israel that you have used previously. For more information on Yahweh, bless, and Israel, refer to the Master Glossary.

Balaam did not use **divination** or look for omens, special signs to tell the future, like he did on the previous occasions. Use the same word for divination that you have used in previous passages. For more information on divination, refer to the Master Glossary.

The **Spirit of God** came on Balaam, and Balaam began to speak a **message**. The Spirit of God is the power that comes from God. He is sometimes referred to as the Holy Spirit in the Bible. When the Spirit of God comes on a person, that person receives a special power or ability. Use the same word for message that you have used in previous passages about Balaam.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **Spirit of God**. Look up Holy Spirit in the Master Glossary for more information, but remember that in this passage, the Spirit is called the Spirit of God. 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.

Balaam begins his message by calling the message an **oracle** or **prophecy**. This is a different word in the original language than what was used in the previous messages. Balaam uses a word that is primarily for messages that are Yahweh's words spoken by a prophet of God. By using this word, Balaam is stating that the message directly comes from Yahweh. Some possible ways to translate this word are "oracle," "prophecy," "divine or holy speech," and "proclamation."

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **oracle** or **prophecy**. Look up prophecy 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.

He hears the words of God and sees a **vision** from the Almighty. God gives a person a vision while they are awake. They see and hear things from God that other people do not see or hear. Use the same word for vision as you have used previously. For more information on vision, refer to the Master Glossary.

In the original language, **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 **Almighty**. 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.

Balaam says that the king of Israel will be greater than Agag and his **kingdom** will be exalted or praised. A kingdom is the territory or people that a king rules.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **kingdom**. Look up kingdom and king 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.

Balaam said that God is strong, like the **horns of a wild ox**. Use the same phrase for "horns of the wild ox" that you used in the previous passage.

Stop here and look at pictures of animals with horns: a wild ox, a ram, and an oryx antelope, if needed.

Balaam said that God or Israel "will eat up or devour the **nations** who oppose him." A nation is a group of people who live in the same country and have the same ruler. Use the same word for nation that you have used previously. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 23:27–24:13

Audio Content

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Numbers 24:14–19

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 24:14–19 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 24:14–19 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 24:14–19 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Balak took Balaam to the top of Peor. The Spirit of God came on Balaam, and Balaam gave his third message, a prophecy from Yahweh. Balak was extremely angry that Balaam had blessed Israel three times instead of cursing them. Balak tells Balaam to return home. Balak will not give him the reward he promised. In this next passage, Balaam gives the first of four rather short final messages to Balak.

Balaam tells Balak that he is going home, back to his people. However, Balaam says that he wants Balak to know what the Israelites will do to Balak's people sometime in the coming days, or the future. Balaam tells Balak to "come," but he is not asking Balak to go anywhere. He is telling Balak to listen because he wants to tell Balak something before Balaam leaves.

Stop here and tell of a time when you were about to leave, but you had one more important thing to do or say. The rest of the group should listen carefully to how the speaker transitions from taking their leave to talking about the important thing. Pause this audio here.

Balaam gives his next message. He gives the same introduction that he gave in the previous message, with one addition. In the middle of the introduction, Balaam says that he has knowledge of the Most High. Balaam is recognizing that Yahweh is higher or greater than all other gods. In his previous messages, Balaam spoke of the past and present with just a hint of the future. In this message, Balaam speaks only of the future. Balaam recognizes that this knowledge of the future can only come from the Most High God.

After the introduction, Balaam sees someone in the distant future. Balaam sees him but not at the present time and place. Balaam is seeing far into the future. Balaam calls this person a star and a scepter. People in this time and culture recognize the star and the scepter as symbols of a king. A scepter is a decorated rod or long pole that people in authority carry as a symbol of their authority and power. Balaam is saying that he sees Israel's future king. Some scholars believe these to be prophecies of either a great king or possibly the Promised Savior.

Stop here and look at a picture of a scepter, then discuss: What are your culture's symbols of authority and power? Pause this audio here.

Balaam says that this king will crush or destroy the head or the leaders of Moab. He will break down or destroy the sons of Sheth. It is unclear who the sons of Sheth are. Some believe they are nomads living in the area or ancient inhabitants of Moab.

Balaam says that Israel will take possession of Edom and the Seir mountains. Israel will be victorious. The country of Edom was located between the Dead Sea and the Gulf of Aqaba, to the south of Moab. You will remember from an earlier passage that Israel asked for permission to pass through Edom, but the King of Edom refused to let them. The King of Edom came with his army to prevent Israel from passing through. Seir is the chief mountain range in the land of Edom.

Stop here and look at a map of Moab, Edom, and the Seir mountains. Pause this audio here.

Balaam ends this message by saying that a king or ruler will come from the descendants of Jacob, who will rule and destroy those who escape from the cities of Edom.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 24:14–19 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 four scenes.

In the first scene: Balaam tells Balak that he is going back to his homeland, but first, he wants to tell Balak what the Israelites will do to the Moabites sometime in the future.

In the second scene: Balaam begins his message just like the last one but adds that he has knowledge from the Most High God.

In the third scene: Balaam has a vision of someone in the distant future. He describes this person using symbols of royalty. This leader will crush the leaders of Moab.

In the fourth scene: Israel will destroy its enemies, the Edomites, and take possession of their land, Edom. The ruler-descendent of Jacob will rule over them and destroy anyone who escapes from the cities of Edom.

The characters in this passage are:

- Balaam
- Balak
- Yahweh
- Israelites
- The future ruler of Israel
- Moabites
- Sons of Sheth
- Edomites

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

At the end of the previous passage, Balak told Balaam to go home because he did not do what Balak asked of him. Balaam reminded Balak that Balaam had warned Balak and his officials that Balaam would only be able to say or do what Yahweh tells him.

In the first scene of this passage, Balaam begins by using a phrase to let Balak know that he has something to say before he goes to his people, before he returns to his homeland. In some languages, "going to my people" is symbolic language for dying. Balaam is not about to die but is actually going back to the land where his people live.

Stop here and discuss what word or phrase you will use to show that Balaam has something that he needs to say before leaving. You may want to recall the words or phrases you discovered during your discussion in the last step. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss: If in your language, "going to my people" is symbolic language for dying, how will you translate this phrase so that people understand that Balaam is not dying but is going back to his homeland? Pause this audio here.

Balaam tells Balak to "come." Balaam is not asking Balak to change locations or to move closer to him. He is instructing Balak to listen carefully. Balaam is taking the lead instead of Balak in this event. Balaam says that he wants to tell or advise and warn Balak what the Israelite people will do to his people in the future.

Stop here and discuss: What word or phrase will you use to show that Balaam wants Balak to listen to what he is about to say? Pause this audio here.

Balaam gives the first of four final messages. Unlike other messages, Balaam performs no preparations, like the sacrifices made before the previous messages. Balaam directly speaks his message. Again, Balaam gives his message in a poetic form.

In the second scene, Balaam gives the same introduction in this prophetic message as he did in the last one, with one addition. In the middle of the introduction, Balaam includes that he has knowledge from the Most High, or Elyon in the original language. In the Bible, people often called Yahweh "God Most High," or El-Elyon in the original language. Here, Balaam simply says "the Most High." Here, Balaam recognizes that God has more power and authority and is more important than any other being. God is higher than Balaam, Balak, or any of the Moabite gods.

Stop here and discuss how you will translate the name "Most High God." Pause this audio here.

Like in his previous vision, Balaam says that he is seeing a vision of the Almighty, or El-Shaddai. You will remember that when a person has a vision, they see things that other people cannot see. This is similar to a dream, but the person is awake. Balaam calls himself the man whose eye is opened and the one who has fallen down with his eyes uncovered. You should translate what Balaam says in his introduction in the same way that you translated it in the previous passage.

Balaam uses the reverse or X parallel structure for the themes of the remainder of the prophecy or oracle. First, he talks about Israel and its future great king. Then Balaam predicts that Israel will destroy Moab and Edom. Finally, Balaam returns to speaking about Israel and the future king.

Stop here and review the reverse or X parallel structure from module 3 of the Introduction to Poetry, if needed. Pause this audio here.

In the third scene, Balaam says he sees someone in the future. Balaam says this in two ways, using pairs of words that have the same meaning. Balaam "sees him" and "beholds him." Balaam says that this is in the future by using the words "not now" and "not near." Balaam then describes the person using phrases with similar meanings. Balaam calls the person he sees a star and a scepter, which lets people know that this person is a king. Balaam says the star comes from Jacob, and the scepter rises out of Israel. As in Balaam's other messages, Jacob and Israel both refer to the Israelites, descendants of Jacob.

Stop here and discuss how you will describe this future king for people in your culture. If you choose to keep these symbols, how will you translate them so people will know that he is a king? Some possible ways to describe this are: "a king will rise like a star," or "one of Jacob's descendants will become a special leader," and "one of Israel's descendants will hold the ruler's staff," or "someone from Israel will become king." Pause this audio here.

In the next set of parallel or companion phrases, Balaam says that this future leader will crush the foreheads or skulls of Moab and the sons of Sheth. Balaam is using special symbolic language. By saying that he will crush the heads or skulls, Balaam is saying that the future king of Israel will destroy the leaders, the head people of Moab and Sheth. Though it is not clear who the sons of Sheth are, many people believe that they were nomadic people living in the areas in and around Moab.

Stop here and discuss how you will describe Israel destroying Moab and its leaders. Pause this audio here.

In the fourth scene, Balaam continues with the theme of future destruction. Balaam uses three companion phrases to describe how Israel will destroy Edom. The first two phrases have similar meanings, and the third phrase deepens or completes the idea. Edom is the territory south of Moab, and Seir is the main mountain range of Edom. Balaam said that someone will conquer Edom and take possession of the Seir Mountains. Balaam completes the idea by saying that Israel is the one who will be victorious.

Stop here and look at a map of Moab, Edom, and the Seir mountains, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Balaam now returns to speaking about the future king of Israel. Balaam says that one from Jacob, the future king, will have complete authority. He will destroy the city or those who try to escape from the city.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 24:14–19 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:

- Balaam
- Balak
- Yahweh
- Israelites
- The future ruler of Israel
- Moabites
- Sons of Sheth
- Edomites

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 previous passage, Balak told Balaam to go home since he refused to curse the Israelites.

In the first scene, Balaam says to Balak, "I am going back home to my people, but first, I want you to know what the Israelites will do to your people, the Moabites."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Balaam, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Frustrated. I've told Balak that I could only do what Yahweh tells me. I warned him, so why is he so angry with me?" or "Empowered. God has given special insight into what he is doing. I should at least share this with Balak."

Ask the person playing Balak, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Angry. I just wish Balaam would go home, like I told him. He's already wasted a lot of my time," or "Nervous. I haven't liked anything Balaam has said before. I'm not sure if I want to hear more."

In the second scene, Balaam starts his message saying:

"This is the prophecy of Balaam, son of Beor,

The prophecy of a man who can see clearly,

The prophecy of the man who hears the words of God

And has knowledge from the Most High,
 Who sees a vision from the Almighty God,
 Causing him to fall down with eyes that are uncovered."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I am happy that Balaam finally understands. Real knowledge comes from me and not from casting spells," or "I am Almighty. I can speak through and give knowledge to someone who is not from Israel or an official prophet."

"I see someone, but not now

I am watching him, but in the future:

A king will rise like a star from among Jacob's descendants,
 A descendant of Israel will hold the ruler's staff.

He will crush the heads of Moabites and the peoples living in the surrounding places."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "We are so happy that we will have a strong king to lead us," or "Grateful that we will have victory over our enemies."

Ask the person playing the Moabites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like "Afraid. We had such strong leaders, but this leader of Israel is more powerful than they are."

In the fourth scene, Balaam finishes by saying:

"He will conquer the land of Edom and his enemies in the Seir mountains.

Israel will be victorious.

The one from Jacob will rule with authority

He will destroy the cities and those trying to escape."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Edomites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Regretful that we were not kind to Israel and let them pass through our land years ago," or "Fearful. There is nowhere that we can escape and be safe from destruction."

Ask the person playing the future ruler of Israel, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I will lead Israel with authority, and we will conquer the enemies of God's people."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 24:14–19 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Balaam tells Balak that before he goes home, he is going to tell Balak what this people, the **Israelites**, will do to his people in the future. Balaam does not call the Israelites by name. If you decide to use the name "Israelites," use the same word for Israelites that you have used in other passages. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information about Israelites.

Balaam delivers his **message**. Moses uses a general word for wise sayings like proverbs or parables to describe Balaam's message. Use the same word for message that you have used in previous passages about Balaam.

Balaam introduces his message in the same way as his last message. Balaam calls his message an **oracle** or **prophecy**. Use the same word for oracle or prophecy that you used in the previous passage. For more information about prophecy, refer to the Master Glossary.

Balaam says, "he hears the words of **God**." This is the general word for God. Use the same word for God that you have used in previous passages. Refer to God in the Master Glossary for more information.

Balaam makes one addition to his introduction. In the middle of the introduction, he says he has knowledge from the **Most High** or **Elyon**. In the Bible, people often called Yahweh "God Most High," or El-Elyon in the original language. Here, Balaam simply says "the Most High." Here, Balaam recognizes that God has more power and authority and is more important than any other being.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **Most High** or **Elyon**. Look up El-Elyon 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.

Balaam says that he sees a **vision** from the **Almighty**, or **El-Shaddai**. Use the same word for vision and Almighty that you used in the previous passage. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information about vision and El-Shaddai.

Balaam sees a **scepter** rise out of **Israel**. A scepter is a decorated rod or long pole that people in authority carry as a symbol of their authority and power. Use the same words for scepter and Israel that you have used in previous passages. Israel is in the Master Glossary.

Stop here and look at a picture of a scepter, if needed.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 24:14-19

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (15069818 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Numbers 24:20–25

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 24:20–25 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 24:20–25 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 24:20–25 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Balaam gave Balak the first of four final messages before he returns to his homeland. Balaam tells Balak that a king will come from among the Israelites. He will lead them, and they will destroy the Moabites and the Edomites. Now, Balaam gives three very short messages about the future of other people groups in the area.

After he completes the first message, Balaam immediately begins his next message. These next messages seem to continue from the idea in the previous message that Israel will be victorious over its enemies. Remember that Balaam is having a vision of future events.

Balaam turns and looks toward Amalek or the Amalekite people. Amalek was the ancestor of the Amalekite people. The people get their name from him. You will remember that the Amalekites were the first people to wage war against the Israelites when they left Egypt. This story is found in Exodus 17:8–16.

Stop here and look at a map of the Amalekite land as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and do this activity: Have one group member give three separate messages to three different people in your group. Pay attention to the words and actions the speaker uses when he changes from one person to the next. Pause this audio here.

Balaam says that Amalek was first among the nations. Balaam is not saying they are the very first nation in history or the greatest. Balaam could be saying that the Amalekites are a leading nation, but he is probably referring to the fact that the Amalekites were the first nation to wage war against the Israelites. Balaam says that the Amalekites will end in total destruction.

Balaam then looks toward the Kenites. The Kenites were one of the tribes who lived in Canaan, but we know little about them. They were probably descendants of Cain and lived in the mountainous area near the Amalekites and the Midianites. Balaam gives a message to or about the Kenites.

Balaam says that the Kenites live in a secure place, like a bird's nest in the rocks. A nest is a structure birds make to lay their eggs and raise their young. A bird can make a nest from many different materials like twigs, grasses, mud, or other materials available to the bird. Birds build their nests in hard-to-reach places like high in a tree or on a cliff to protect their babies from harm.

Stop here and look at a picture of a bird's nest as a group. Pause this audio here.

Balaam says that even though the place where they live appears safe, the Kenites will be destroyed. Asshur will capture the Kenites and burn or destroy their land. Some have mistaken Asshur for the Assyrians. However, Asshur is probably a people group from northern Arabia with whom the Kenites have warred. This tribe of Asshur were nomads living in the Negev region, a land that joined both the Kenites and the Amalekites.

Stop here and look at a map that includes the area of the Negev and the land of the Amalekites and Kenites as a group. Pause this audio here.

Balaam has one final message. He begins with a question that he does not expect anyone to answer: "Oh, who can survive when God does this or unless God wills it?" The answer is that no one will survive. Balaam then says that ships will come from Kittim. The name Kittim refers to the town of Kition on the eastern coast of Cyprus. People often use the name Kittim to refer to any people living along the sea or peoples who use ships.

Stop here and look at a map that includes Cyprus, the Mediterranean Sea, the Negev, and the Promised Land, or Canaan. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of a ship that sailed on the Mediterranean Sea during this time. Pause this audio here.

Balaam says that the people who come on the ships will oppress and conquer Asshur and Eber. These invaders will destroy Asshur and Eber. This is the same Asshur who conquered the Kenites. We do not know who Eber is. Balaam finishes his message by saying that someone will eventually destroy these invaders from Kittim.

After Balaam finished this last message, he got ready and went back to his place. It is uncertain if Balaam goes directly back to Pethor or if he goes to a location where he had been temporarily staying. Balak also left.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 24:20–25 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 four scenes.

In the first scene: Balaam looks toward the Amalekites and gives a message. He says that the Amalekites will be totally destroyed.

In the second scene: Balaam then looks toward the Kenites and gives a message. He says that the people of Asshur will destroy the Kenite land and take them captive.

In the third scene: Balaam gives one final message. He says that people will come from Kittim on ships and destroy the people of Asshur and Eber. Someone will eventually destroy Kittim as well.

In the fourth scene: Balaam leaves and goes home. Balak also leaves and goes on his way.

The characters in this passage are:

- Balaam
- Balak
- God
- Israel, though they are not mentioned
- Amalekites
- Kenites
- Asshur or the Asshurites
- Kittim or the Kittites
- Eber

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

In the previous passage, Balaam gave the first of four final messages. In this passage Balaam continues with the final three messages. Balaam speaks each message one after the other with no preparations or responses. Again, Balaam gives his messages in a poetic form.

In the first scene, Balaam looks toward the Amalekite territory and gives a very short message of only two parallel or companion phrases that give opposite or contrasting information. Balaam uses the words "first" or beginning and "end" or last to show the contrast.

Balaam says that Amalek was first among the nations. Balaam is not saying they are the very first nation or the greatest nation. Balaam could be saying that the Amalekites are a leading nation, but he is probably referring to the fact that the Amalekites were the first nation to wage war against the Israelites. Balaam says that though the Amalekites were the first nation to oppose Israel, they will end and someone will destroy them.

Stop here and look at a map of the Amalekite land, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss: How will you translate the idea that Amalekites were not the very first nation but that they were the first nation to go to war with Israel? Pause this audio here.

In the second scene, Balaam looks toward the Kenite territory and gives his message.

Stop here and look at a map that includes the area of the Negev and the land of the Amalekites and Kenites, if needed. Pause this audio here.

This message has two sets of opposite companion phrases organized in a reverse or X-structure. Balaam says that the Kenites' home is enduring or secure. He says the opposite when he says that Asshur will take them captive. The Kenite home is not very secure.

Balaam chooses his words in this message by playing games with the sounds and meanings of the words in the original language. In the original language, the words nest and Kenite have similar sounds, so Balaam chooses to refer to the Kenite home as a nest. Balaam says that though their nest, or home, is set in a rock, someone will burn or destroy it. Balaam says, "Cain will be burned." Again, Balaam plays with words since the name Cain can also mean metalworker. Metalworkers use fire and the fire can often burn them.

Stop here and discuss: What are some ways that people play with words in your language? How are word games used in your language? Pause this audio here.

In the third scene, Balaam begins his final message. He starts the message by asking a question that he does not expect anyone to answer because the answer is obvious. Balaam asks, "Oh, who can survive when God does this or unless God wills it?" The answer is that no one will survive. Balaam starts the question with an expression in the original language, which is a concerned cry that sees the coming destruction.

Balaam follows the question with three companion phrases. Ships come from Kittim, on the coast of Cyprus. They will afflict or oppress the people of Asshur and Eber. The ships are not doing the destroying, but it is the invading army that is traveling on the ships.

Stop here and look at a map that includes Cyprus, the Mediterranean Sea, the Negev, and the Promised Land, or Canaan, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss how you will translate this idea so that people will understand that the ships are not doing the destruction but that people who come in the ships are the ones destroying the people of Asshur and Eber. Pause this audio here.

Balaam ends the message by saying that the ones who destroy Asshur and Eber will also be destroyed one day. Balaam finishes his message, gets up, and goes back to his place. Balak also leaves, going to his place.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 24:20–25 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:

- Balaam
- Balak
- God
- Israel, though they are not mentioned
- Amalekites
- Kenites
- Asshur or the Asshurites
- Kittim or the Kittites
- Eber

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 previous passage, Balaam gave the first of four final messages. In this passage, Balaam continues with the final three messages.

Balaam looked toward the people of Amalek and gave this message:

Amalek was the first nation to oppose Israel,

But its future ends with complete destruction.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Amalekites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Maybe we shouldn't have gone to war with the Israelites. Now their God is going to make sure we are destroyed," or
- "We beat them in battle before. What makes Balaam think that we can't beat them again? We are a strong people."

Then Balaam looked toward the Kenites and gave this message:

You live in a secure place,

It is like a nest on a high rock

But the people of Asshur will come and burn your homes and take you away as captives.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Kenites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I am worried. I thought we lived in a safe place," or
- "Why do the people of Asshur hate us? They are always fighting with us. I don't want to be their prisoner."

Then Balaam spoke this message:

Oh, no one will survive when God does this.

Invaders will come on ships from Kittim, or Cyprus.

They will conquer Asshur and Eber

But the people of Kittim will one day also be destroyed.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Balaam, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "These people are doomed. Once God has made up his mind, there is no way for them to survive," or
- "I am overwhelmed. Yahweh is speaking through me. His message is just coming out of my mouth."

Ask the person playing the people of Asshur, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Why did the Kitties come from so far to fight with us? We have never bothered them," or
- "We are helpless against these people. At least Balaam said the Kitties will be destroyed one day."

When Balaam finished his messages, he got up and went back to his place. Balak also left and went on his way.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Balak, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I wish I had never asked Balaam to come here. He didn't do anything I asked him to do," or
- "Why did Balaam have to curse everyone? Why didn't he bless them like he did the Israelites?" or
- "I might as well go home, too. I need to figure out what we are going to do about the Israelites. They are too powerful."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 24:20–25 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Balaam looked at the Amalekite people and gave a **message**. Use the same word for message that you have used in previous passages about Balaam.

Balaam said that Amalek was the first **nation**. Use the same word for nation that you have used in previous passages. For more information on nation, refer to the Master Glossary.

Balaam said that the home of the Kenites was like a **nest** set in the rocks. A nest is a structure birds make to lay their eggs and raise their young. A bird can make a nest from many different materials like twigs, grasses, mud, or other materials available to the bird. Birds build their nests in hard-to-reach places like high in a tree or on a cliff to protect their offspring from harm.

Stop here and look at a picture of a nest, if needed. Then, discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **nest**. 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 his final message, Balaam says, "Oh, no one can survive when **God** does this." Balaam uses the general name for God in this statement. Use the same word for God that you have used in previous passages. Refer to God in the Master Glossary for more information.

Balaam says that **ships** will come from Kittim or Cyprus. People used ships to travel on the sea, powered either by people rowing or by using the power of the wind to move the ship from place to place. Ships varied in size. More than 300 people could travel on a large ship that sailed on the Mediterranean Sea.

Stop here and look at a picture of a ship, if needed. Then, discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **ship**. 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

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.

Numbers 24:20–25

Audio Content

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Numbers 25:1–9

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 25:1–9 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 25:1–9 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause the audio here.

Then, 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?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 25:1–9 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Before this story, Balak paid Balaam to curse Israel. However, God changed the cursing into a blessing for Israel near Peor. In this story, the Israelites have been wandering in the wilderness for almost 40 years after refusing to enter the Promised Land the first time. Most of the original Israelites from Egypt have died. Now the Israelites are camped in the plains of Shittim near the Jordan River. In this story, some Israelites choose to disobey God and openly break his spiritual laws.

This story begins with the Israelites soon after Balaam and Balak in the last story leave each other and go home. Balaam has just blessed Israel. The Israelites are camped in Shittim. Shittim is another word for Acacia Grove. Acacia is the only tree that grows in the wilderness where the Israelites are. You may remember that the Israelites used the acacia tree wood to build the Ark of the Covenant.

Stop here and look at a map of Shittim as a group: Notice the location of Shittim. It is northwest of Mount Peor. Mount Peor is where the Moabite king in the previous story tried to have Balaam curse the Israelites. Shittim is on the edge of the Plains of Moab, which is a flat, dry desert area next to the mountains. West of the Plains of Moab is the Jordan River. The Jordan River is the boundary Israelites must cross to enter the Promised Land. Israelites were camped in the desert or wilderness facing the Promised Land next to mountains on one side and a river on the other side. How do you think living in the desert like this affected the way the Israelites behaved? Pause this audio here.

Two people groups lived nearby: the Midianites and Moabites. Normally, Midianites and Moabites lived separately, but here they lived near each other. Midianites and Moabites probably had intermarried and were more like one people group in the Plains of Moab.

Some of the Israelites interacted with the Moabites and Midianites. The Moabite women invited the Israelites to worship their false god Baal with them. Baal is sometimes called Baal of Peor to show the city or region that worships the false god. The Israelites were in this region, Peor, where the people worshiped Baal as their god. Baal was the highest of the false gods the Moabites and Midianites worshiped. Some of the Israelites "played the harlot" with these women, which means the Israelites both worshiped Baal and had sexual relations with the women as part of the worship to Baal. Some Israelite people even bowed down to Baal and also ate food sacrificed to Baal as part of worship to Baal. This was all against God's law. When people worshiped Baal, they

worshiped fertility so that plants would grow, animals would have babies, and people would have children. Yahweh was angry at all of Israel because the people of Israel had not kept themselves separate, or pure, by only worshiping and obeying Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss this as a group: How do people in your culture show they are set apart or pure for God? Try this demonstration. Get a bowl, get a container of clean and clear water, get a container of dirt or mud. Pour some of the clean clear water in the bowl. Is it pure? Is it good enough to drink or offer as a gift to someone? Add some of the dirt or mud to the bowl of clean water. Is the water still clean? Is it still pure? Is the water with the dirt acceptable as a gift to drink? Can you add clean water to dirty water to make dirty water pure? Is it better to keep the clean water separate from the dirty water? Pause the audio here.

Stop here and discuss as a group: The people of Israel performed many ways of worshiping Baal and being unfaithful to God. Discuss how people in your culture show that they worship God. How would God feel if he saw his people worshiping another false god? What would the true worshipers do if they saw someone who claimed to love Yahweh go and worship a false god? Pause the audio here.

While the Israelites were sinning with the Moabites, Moses and the Israelite leaders were in the camp. Moses and the leaders were probably near the tent of meeting, or tabernacle, in the center of camp.

Yahweh commanded Moses to execute, or kill, the leaders of the people who worshiped false gods and were not pure. We do not know how Moses was to kill the leaders, but Yahweh told Moses to hang the dead bodies of the leaders during the day for the Israelite nation to clearly see. Yahweh says in other stories that people should cover dead Israelite bodies. However, Yahweh wanted to expose these bodies in the presence of Yahweh because exposed dead bodies were shameful. Yahweh's anger was like a fierce or a burning heat. Yahweh would turn his anger away from the Israelite nation after Moses hung the bodies of the disobedient leaders.

Moses ordered the judges who helped make decisions for the people to help execute, or kill, the leaders of false god worship. Moses and the judges of the people have the authority to give even the death penalty. We do not know if these were the same judges Moses had appointed several years before to help him settle disputes. Moses commanded every judge to kill the leaders under their authority that had worshiped Baal of Peor. Yahweh also started a plague, or a spreading disease, in Israel to punish the people for their sin.

Moses and other Israelite religious leaders were at the entrance to the tent of meeting. The tent of meeting was the place of worship of Yahweh. Almost all the Israelites were near the tent of meeting and weeping in sorrow, probably about the plague and the executions. Just then, an Israelite man brought a Midianite woman into the Israelite camp to meet his brothers. The man passed in front of Moses and the leaders to go to his tent with the woman. Moses and the other Israelite leaders saw the man and the Midianite woman walk through camp.

Stop the audio here and discuss this as a group: How do people in your culture express sorrow or regret for sin? How does a group show sorrow for sin when a group sins? Think about the man walking with the Midianite woman. How are his actions different from the rest of the Israelites? How does he feel about his behavior or sin? How does he feel about the Israelites around him? If this were to happen in your culture, what would happen to the man? Pause the audio here.

Phinehas is the grandson of Aaron. Aaron is the high priest of Israel and is the brother of Moses. Phineas was with Moses and the Israelites and was crying about the sin and the people dying because of the sin. Phineas saw the Israelite man and Midianite woman walking through the camp. Phineas immediately grabbed a spear, a weapon with a long metal tip and sharp edge. This metal spear was probably the height of a man. Phineas followed the man and the Midianite woman. Phineas may have had a spear nearby because he worked as a guard for the tabernacle.

Stop here and look at a photo of a similar spear from Biblical times. Discuss how this weapon was used. People used spears in man-to-man battle. Discuss how people in your community would use a weapon like this. Why do you think Phineas chose to use a spear in this story? Pause the audio here.

Phineas followed the Israelite man and the Midianite woman into the tent of the man. He followed the man and woman into a private room inside the tent of the man. Phineas executed the Midianite woman and man by thrusting the spear through the man and into the belly of the woman. When Phineas executed the Israelite man and the Midianite woman, Yahweh stopped the plague that was killing the Israelites. Of the Israelites, 24,000 died from the plague. A plague is usually a disease or some hardship which results in many deaths.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 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 2 scenes.

In the first scene: While Israel is camping in Shittim, some of the men are physically and spiritually unfaithful to Yahweh by having sexual relations with Moabite women and sacrificing to the Moabite gods. Yahweh is angry. Yahweh tells Moses to execute the Israelites, mostly men, who were doing the worship of Baal and the sexual sin it involved. Moses commands the judges to execute the Israelite men who were doing this. Yahweh put a plague on Israel as punishment for the sin.

In the second scene: Many Israelites were gathered in front of the tabernacle with Moses and the other leaders. They were weeping with regret over the sin and the executions. An Israelite man brings a Midianite woman through the camp in front of Moses, leaders, and other Israelites. The Israelite man brought the Midianite woman into a private room in the tent of the man. Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron, the high priest and brother of Moses, immediately stood up, grabbed a spear and followed the man and woman into the tent. Phinehas killed the man and woman and the plague stopped.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Phinehas
- Israelite man
- Midianite woman
- And Israelite people.

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

This story begins right after God forces the Israelite enemies to bless the Israelites in the last story. God has their enemy bless the Israelites because they worship Yahweh. Suddenly, this story begins with some Israelites being unfaithful to Yahweh and worshiping the false god, Baal. In this story, many Israelite men choose to have sexual relationships with Moabite and Midianite women and follow their gods.

Stop and look at the map and discuss: Notice the location of Shittim, or Valley of Acacia Trees. The Israelites were camped in Shittim. They are near towns. Moabites and Midianites live in the towns. The Israelites are not isolated or alone. Pause the audio here.

As this story begins, some Israelite men started worshiping Baal with the Moabite women. This story emphasizes how the Israelites were shockingly unfaithful to God. Some Israelites ate sacrifices of animals and grain that the people were giving to Baal. Some Israelites bowed down to Baal. Some Israelites had sexual relations with the Moabite women as a way to worship Baal. All these kinds of worship to false gods were acts of unfaithfulness to Yahweh. Baal was the false god of fertility. Baal worshipers had sex as part of worship, trying to make plants grow and make more children in their families. Moabites and Midianites had sex with temple prostitutes in their Baal worship. Moses uses special language to talk about what the Israelites were doing. First he says that the Israelite men began to play the harlot, or have sexual relations, with the daughters of Moab. The daughters of Moab would be Moabite women. Moses says that this made the Israelites yoked to Baal, like people yoke two cows together with a yoke, or harness. The stronger animal is the leader animal. The weaker, or younger, animal follows in the yoke. In the passage, the Israelites left Yahweh and yoked with Baal. As a result, Israelites let Baal lead them like a stronger animal leads a weaker animal. Israelites were no longer connected, or yoked, to Yahweh. Israelites had abandoned Yahweh who loved them.

Moses says that Yahweh "burned with anger," which means that Yahweh was so angry that his anger was like a hot fire.

Stop here and look at a picture of two cows yoked together with a yoke. Discuss as a group: Think about a time you joined a group to which you had a strong connection. Tell that story. Pay attention to how the person talked about the deep bonding or connection between you and the group. Pause the audio here.

It seems that at some point, Yahweh sent a plague, or deadly disease, to kill the Israelite people. We do not know when this happened, but it seems to have happened around the same time that Yahweh spoke to Moses. Yahweh often spoke to Moses at the tabernacle, or tent of meeting, in the center of the Israelite camp. Yahweh commanded Moses to execute, or kill in full daylight, the Israelite leaders who had sinned. By doing this, all the Israelite people would see the consequence of the sin. After they were dead, Yahweh would stop being furious, or very, very angry, at Israel and he would stop the deadly plague. It is unclear how Yahweh wanted Moses to execute the Israelites who had sinned. However, it is clear that Moses was to execute these men in public and in full daylight. Moses was then to expose the bodies so that the rest of the Israelites could see the punishment. Moses obeyed and told the judges to execute all the men who were worshiping Baal. Each judge was required to execute the men who under each judge's control.

Two things happen next. First the judges prepared to execute the men, and second, Moses and the other leaders gathered together at the entrance to the tent of meeting to mourn about the problem. We do not know if the judges had already executed any of the men.

Scene two starts immediately after Yahweh gives the instructions. The Israelite man brought the Midianite woman into the Israelite camp. We know it is immediate because the people are still at the tabernacle continually mourning, people are dying from the plague, and Yahweh has ordered executions. The Israelite man brought the Midianite woman to meet the men in his family. The Israelite man walked with the woman in front of the weeping Israelites, the tent of meeting, Moses, and other leaders. The Israelite man took the woman into his tent and then into a private room inside his tent.

Stop here and look at a diagram of the Israelite camp: From earlier stories, we know the Israelites camped in a specific pattern. Israelites always camped with the tent of meeting, or tabernacle, in the center of camp. The twelve tribes of Israel camped around the tabernacle according to each tribe name. Notice there is no way to the front of the tabernacle except to start on the outside of camp and walk through the center of camp. The Israelite man and Midianite woman did not walk around the outside edge of camp to sneak quietly into the tent of the man. The Israelite man and Midianite woman boldly walked through the center of camp, in front of Moses, in front of Yahweh, and in front of the mourning Israelites. Why do you think they did this? Pause the audio here.

Phinehas saw the Israelite man walk with the Midianite woman through the camp to the personal tent of the Israelite man. Phinehas was a Levite and the grandson of Aaron the high priest of Israel. Phinehas was the nephew of Moses. We know from other stories Phinehas was a guard at the tent of meeting, like the other Levites. Phinehas rose immediately when he saw the Israelite man and the Midianite woman in the camp. Phinehas did not hesitate, but he picked up a spear. Phinehas followed the Israelite man and Midianite woman into the tent and into the private room inside the tent. Phinehas thrust the spear through the man and into the belly of the woman and executed both with one thrust of the spear. A spear pole is long enough to pierce two adults at the same time. This was not illegal murder. Phinehas executed them because of their open sin against Yahweh.

Immediately, Yahweh honored the execution of the Israelite man and Midianite woman and stopped the plague that had been punishing the Israelite people for their sin of unfaithfulness against Yahweh. The plague stopped after the man and woman died. Twenty-four thousand people died in the plague for their sin against Yahweh. Although the plague is not clearly mentioned until the end of the passage, we know that the plague started earlier because it would have taken some time for 24,000 people to die. We do not know what kind of plague this was.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 25:1–9 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
- Phinehas
- Israelite man
- Midianite woman
- And Israelite 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.

As scene one begins, the Israelites were unfaithful to Yahweh even though the Israelites are camped only a few miles from the Jordan River and the Promised Land.

While in the Valley of Acacia, Shittim, some of the Israelites started being unfaithful to Yahweh. Some Israelites, mostly men, were worshiping Baal the false god of fertility. Israelites probably had sex with temple prostitutes as part of false god worship. Yahweh was angry with Israel because many of the people of Israel had aligned or joined with Baal and were no longer faithful to Yahweh.

Pause the drama.

Ask the actor playing Yahweh, "How do you feel about the unfaithful acts of Israel?" You may hear answers like, "I loved them so much, but the Israelites did not show love to me." Or "I was so sad. How could they be so unfaithful after I had blessed them?" Or "I was so angry. The Israelites were now joined, connected with my enemy."

Ask the Israelite people, "Why do you socialize and worship with the Midianite and Moabite women?" You may hear answers like, "I like the excitement. Camp life is so boring." Or "It is fun. The women pay attention to me." Or "I do not see a problem. I can worship Yahweh and other gods like the Midianite people." Or "I am tired of wandering in the desert. The Midianite people are not that bad. I like them."

Yahweh commands Moses to execute the leaders who are worshiping Baal. The execution should be done in full daylight, in front of Yahweh, and the dead bodies are to be exposed for the Israelite people to see. After the executions are completed, Yahweh will stop being angry at Israel. Moses commands the judges to complete the executions.

Pause the drama.

Ask the actor playing Moses, "How do you feel about executing Israelites since the Israelites are family, not outsiders?" You may hear answers like, "I was shocked by God's swift, strong command." Or "I was not shocked because God does not tolerate unfaithfulness." Or "I was sad but willing to obey."

Scene two starts as soon as Moses gives the command for the executions. Moses, Israelite leaders, and Israelites are gathered in front of the tabernacle in the center of the camp. Israelites are crying with sadness for the people dying from the plague. People are sad because of the sin against Yahweh.

Pause the drama.

Ask each of the actors what they are seeing, hearing, and smelling. You may hear answers like the following. Moses may say, "I hear my people screaming. They are so sad. The Israelites committed such terrible sin." You may hear the Israelites say, "The smell of blood is so strong. So many men were joined with Baal." Or "The smell of death from the plague is choking me." Or "I see so many dead family and friends. I am sad, scared, and alone."

Ask each actor how they feel knowing they are so close to the Promised Land. You might hear things like, "I am so sad and worried. What will happen now? People are dying." Or "I am confused."

The Israelite man escorted a Midianite woman, in front of Moses, in front of the tabernacle, in the middle of camp. The Israelite man escorted the woman into his tent and into the private room inside his tent.

Pause the drama.

Ask the actor playing the Israelite man what he was thinking and feeling. You may hear answers like, "Look at me! God did not kill me! I am too important to kill. I can do what I want to do!" Or "I do not care who sees what I do. I do not have to follow the law of God."

Ask the actor playing the Midianite woman what she was thinking and feeling. You may hear answers like, "I did it! I defeated the Israelites. Now their God, Yahweh, is broken. Look at all the dead in the camp. My god is better." Or "I do not care if people know I have sex with men who are not my husband. I do not hide what I do. I am not ashamed." Or "I am too important. The Israelite leaders cannot harm me. I can go and do whatever I want to do. I do not have to follow laws."

Phinehas watched the Israelite man and Midianite woman enter the camp and approach the area in front of the tabernacle, the tent of meeting. He watched the Israelite man and Midianite woman walk through the center of camp and enter the tent of the man. Phinehas immediately stood up and grabbed a spear. Phinehas followed the Israelite man and Midianite woman into the tent and into the private room inside the tent. Phinehas thrust the spear through the man and into the belly of the woman. Phinehas killed both the man and woman with a single thrust. Yahweh's anger stopped with the execution of the Israelite man and the Midianite woman. The plague stopped with 24,000 Israelites dead.

Pause the drama.

Ask the actor playing Phineas what he was thinking when he observed the Israelite man sinning with the Midianite woman. You may hear answers like, "I was burning with righteous anger. Yahweh was punishing our people for unfaithful worship of Baal. Worship of Baal started with the Midianite and Moabite women. I was angry my Israelite countryman would bring a Midianite woman into camp." Or "I was furious the sin was not hidden but paraded in front of Moses and all the Israelites mourning." Or "I was determined to stop the sinning that had caused my Yahweh to be angry with Israel. I knew the man and woman must be executed like the other Baal worshipers."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 25:1–9 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

In the previous passage, Yahweh used the enemy of **Israel**, Balaam, to bless Israel on nearby Mount Peor. As soon as this blessing ends, this story begins with Israel camped in Shittim, or the Valley of Acacia Trees. Use the same word for Israel that you have used in previous passages, and remember that Israel is in the Master Glossary.

The **Moabite** and **Midianite** people both live in the area. Moabites are descendants of the children born from Lot, the nephew of Abraham, when he was made drunk by his daughter. Midianites are the children of Abraham by his concubine, Keturah. Both the Moabite and Midianite people have been kind and cruel to the Israelites in previous passages.

The Israelites are sinning with Moabite women. Israelites **played the harlot** with Moabite women. "Played the harlot" is special language explaining the Israelites were unfaithful to Yahweh with worship by having sexual relations with the women. The Israelite people, mostly men, may have intermarried Moabite women. However, it was well known that worshiping the false god **Baal** involved sex with temple prostitutes. The false god Baal was falsely believed to help with fertility for growing crops, for getting more cattle, and for having more children. Use the same word for Baal that you have used in previous passages, and remember that Baal is in the Master Glossary.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will describe the Israelites **playing the harlot** with Moabite women. Pause the audio here.

False god worship involved **bowing**, or lowering the head, to show honor and reverence to Baal. False god worship involved the **sacrifice** of animals and other foods and drinks to Baal. Use the same word for sacrifice and bow that you have used in previous passages. For more information on sacrifices and bow, refer to the Master Glossary.

In this passage, some Israelites **yoked, joined, or aligned**, with Baal. This means to be joined or yoked together like cattle. The Israelites were not faithful to **Yahweh**, or the law of Yahweh, and Yahweh became very angry. Yahweh is the name for God used in the passage. Translate Yahweh in the same way you have in previous passages, and for more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary. Although the word for **worship** is not in this passage, you may choose to look up worship in the Master Glossary for more information.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will show true worship of Yahweh. How was the usual worship of Yahweh being tainted, or dirtied, and used for false god worship? How will you interpret the Israelites had become joined to two gods, the one true God, Yahweh, and the false god, Baal? Pause the audio here.

An **Israelite** man brought a Midianite woman into camp in front of Moses, leaders, and all the weeping community, or congregation of Israelites that was in front of the **tent of meeting**. The tent of meeting and tabernacle are the same thing. Use the same term for tent of meeting and Israelites here as you have used in previous passages, and refer to tabernacle and Israelites in the Master Glossary for more information about these words. Use the same term for the community, or gathering, of Israelites as you have used in previous passages.

Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron the **priest**, saw the Israelite man and Midianite woman. Use the same word for priest that you have used in previous passages, and remember that priest is in the Master Glossary.

The moment Phinehas saw the man and woman, he stood up and grabbed a **spear**. A spear is a weapon with a metal tip with two edges on the blade. It is mounted on a pole at least as tall as a man. The pole fits comfortably in a man's hand. People would thrust or forcefully push the spear into the body of another person in order to kill them.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will describe a spear in your translation. See the photo of the spear again if needed. How will you make it clear it is a large weapon? Pause the audio here.

Phinehas followed the Israelite man into the tent of the man and into the **inner room of the tent**. The inner room could have been a room for sleeping or private worship. The inner room was a very private room.

The **plague** stopped when Phinehas killed the man and woman. We do not know what kind of plague this was, but it was probably a deadly and contagious disease. Use the same word for plague that you have used in previous passages.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 25:1–9

Audio Content

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Numbers 25:10-18

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 25:10–18 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 25:10–18 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause the audio here.

Then, 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?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 25:10–18 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Before this story, the Israelites had been unfaithful to Yahweh. Some Israelites had connected themselves to a false god and worshiped it with Moabite women. Yahweh ordered Moses to execute the leaders who were worshiping the false god, and Yahweh sent a plague that killed many Israelites. At the same time, an Israelite man brought a Moabite woman into the camp. Phinehas, the grandson of the high priest Aaron, saw the man and woman. Phinehas followed the man and woman into the tent of the man and killed them. Yahweh stopped the plague when the man and woman died.

This story occurs in the same Israelite camp as the previous story, near Shittim. In this story, the plague has just stopped after 24,000 people died. Immediately, Yahweh spoke to Moses. Yahweh recognized that Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron the high priest, was full of zeal or jealousy for Yahweh's honor in the same way that Yahweh was. Phinehas, like Yahweh, really wanted the Israelites to honor Yahweh and stay pure. Phinehas, like Yahweh, became angry when they followed other gods. Yahweh was full of wrath, or extreme anger because his people had worshiped false gods. Since Phinehas had a similar zeal or strong desire for keeping Israel pure for Yahweh, Yahweh did not destroy Israel with his zeal. Yahweh makes a covenant promise for Phinehas because of what Phinehas has done.

Phinehas had made atonement for Israel by restoring a broken relationship with Yahweh after the people sinned against Yahweh. Because of this, Yahweh gave Phinehas a covenant of peace, or a promise of friendship and blessing. Yahweh showed that he would keep this covenant of peace when he promised Phinehas and his descendants a covenant of lasting priesthood. An everlasting covenant required a sacrifice. For this covenant, Yahweh accepted the death of the Israelite man and the Midianite woman as the sacrifice.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Priests and religious leaders are very important to the Israelites and to us today. Discuss the importance of the special role God gave Phinehas and his descendants to be priests in Israel. Think about your religious leaders. How do you choose religious leaders? How does God help you choose them? Pause this audio here.

The story now tells us the names of the Israelite man and the Midianite woman whom Phinehas killed. The Israelite man is Zimri, the son of Salu. Zimri was of the Simeon tribe, one of the 12 sons of Jacob. The father of Zimri, Salu, was a leader in the Simeon tribe.

The name of the Midianite woman was Kozbi. She was the daughter of Zur. Zur was either a Midianite chief or one of the five local Midianite kings. Both Zimri and Kozbi were adult children of powerful leaders.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: There is a small story here about fathers and their sons. Think about Phinehas. He had followed his father and grandfather in worshiping Yahweh with the zeal, or jealousy, of Yahweh. Yahweh rewarded Phinehas and the children of Phinehas. Think about Zimri who was also a child of a powerful leader but chose not to make decisions to follow Yahweh. Discuss how fathers influence their sons to follow or not follow God well. Tell a story about a father in your culture who influenced his son either to do good or to do evil. Pause this audio here.

Immediately after Yahweh makes a covenant promise with Phinehas, Yahweh speaks to Moses. Yahweh tells Moses to treat the Midianites harshly, like enemies. Israel is to strike harshly and even kill the Midianites because the Midianites were harsh to Israel. Midianites had tricked and deceived Israelites when they convinced them to worship false gods, and when Kozbi sinned against Yahweh with Zimri. Yahweh reminded Moses that Kozbi was killed when the plague came as a result of the sin against Yahweh.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 25:10–18 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 1 scene.

In the first scene: This story occurs near Shittim in the Israelite camp. This is the same camp from the previous story. In this story, the plague has just stopped and 24,000 people died. Immediately, Yahweh spoke to Moses. Yahweh recognized Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron the high priest, was full of zeal like Yahweh. Yahweh makes a covenant promise with Phinehas. Yahweh speaks to Moses again and Yahweh tells Moses to treat Midianites harshly, like enemies.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- And Phinehas

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

This story occurs near Shittim in the Israelite camp. It is northwest of Mount Peor. Shittim is on the edge of the Plains of Moab, which is a flat, dry desert area next to the mountains. West of the Plains of Moab is the Jordan River. The Jordan River is the boundary Israelites must cross to enter the Promised Land, so the Israelites are very near the Promised Land.

This story happens right after Phinehas has killed the Israelite man and Midianite woman and the plague stopped that had killed 24,000 people. Yahweh speaks to Moses. Yahweh recognizes that Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron the high priest, was full of zeal like Yahweh. Phinehas was passionate, or full of righteous zeal, about keeping Israel pure for Yahweh by obeying Yahweh and not worshiping any other false gods. Yahweh was full of wrath, or extreme anger to righteously defend the honor of Yahweh. Yahweh says Phinehas had a zeal that was similar to the zeal of Yahweh. Since Phinehas had a similar zeal for keeping Israel pure for Yahweh, Yahweh did not destroy Israel with the zeal of Yahweh. Yahweh instead makes a covenant promise for Phinehas because Phinehas used his zeal for Yahweh to protect the honor of Yahweh and keep Israel pure.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: There are many strong emotions in this passage. The Israelites are weeping in sadness of 24,000 dead Israelites. Phinehas is zealous to defend Yahweh and the purity of the Israelites' relationship with Yahweh. Yahweh was zealous and was full of wrath, or strong anger. Yahweh in

this passage is showing emotions. Discuss as a group how will you show the emotions of both Phinehas and Yahweh as you discuss both their zeal or passion, and anger. Pause this audio here.

When Phinehas had killed the man and woman, he had restored the Israelites' relationship with Yahweh, or made atonement for the Israelites. Because of that, Yahweh makes a covenant of peace with Phinehas. This covenant of peace was that Phinehas and his descendants would always be priests for Yahweh. The covenant of peace shows that Phinehas and his descendants, as priests, would always have the job of atoning for the Israelites, or bringing peace and completeness to their relationship with Yahweh.

Moses now gives more background information about the man and the woman whom Phinehas killed. The story now reveals the names of the Israelite man and the Midianite woman. The Israelite man is Zimri, the son of Salu. Zimri was of the Simeon tribe, one of the 12 sons of Jacob. The father of Zimri, Salu, was a leader in the Simeon tribe.

The name of the Midianite woman was Kozbi. She was the daughter of Zur. Zur was either a Midianite chief or one of the five local Midianite kings. Both Zimri and Kozbi were adult children of powerful leaders.

Immediately after Yahweh makes a covenant promise with Phinehas, Yahweh speaks to Moses. Yahweh tells Moses to treat the Midianites harshly, like enemies. Israel is to strike harshly and kill the Midianites because the Midianites were harsh to Israel and treated them like enemies. The Midianites had tricked and deceived the Israelites by convincing them to worship false gods in Peor. Then the Midianites had continued to deceive them when the Midianites seemed to convince Zimri that he could bring an important Midianite woman, Kozbi, into the Israelite camp and defile the camp by having sexual relations with her. Yahweh reminded Moses that Kozbi died when the plague came as a result of the Israelite worship of false gods at Peor.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: The action in this story moves quickly and uses a lot of strong emotion words. The events in this story seem to happen quickly, one thing right after another thing. Discuss a time in your community when things happened fast and almost at the same time. How did it feel to share the story about it? What kind of tone and emotion do you use in your voice when you tell a story with a lot of action and strong emotion? Pause this audio here.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 25:10–18 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
- And Phinehas

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 occurs near Shittim in the Israelite camp. In this story, the plague has just stopped and 24,000 people died. Phinehas has just killed the man and woman who sinned against Yahweh together in the Israelite camp. Immediately, Yahweh spoke to Moses. Yahweh recognized that Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron the high priest, was full of zeal for Yahweh. Phinehas was zealous about keeping Israel pure for Yahweh by obeying Yahweh and not worshiping any other false gods. Yahweh was full of wrath to defend the honor of Yahweh. Yahweh said Phinehas had a zeal like the zeal of Yahweh. Since Phinehas had a similar zeal for keeping Israel pure for Yahweh, Yahweh did not destroy Israel with the zeal of Yahweh. Yahweh makes a covenant promise for Phinehas because Phinehas used his zeal for Yahweh to protect the honor of Yahweh and keep Israel pure. Phinehas had made atonement for Israel and the sin. Because of that, Yahweh made a covenant promise for Phinehas and the sons of Phinehas to have a permanent priest job. Yahweh gave Phinehas and his descendants a covenant of everlasting peace.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "How do you feel about Yahweh noticing Phinehas?" You may hear answers like, "I was glad Yahweh noticed Phinehas. Phinehas defended Yahweh."

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "How did it feel to see someone with the same zeal or passion as you to keep Israel holy and pure?" You may hear answers like, "I was proud of Phinehas," or "It felt good to see an Israelite do good after so many had yoked with the false god."

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "How does it feel to be so angry?" You may hear answers like, "I was so angry with a righteous anger. My people were not devoted to me, Yahweh."

Ask the person playing Phinehas, "How did it feel when Moses told you what Yahweh said?" You may hear answers like, "I was surprised," or "I was humbled and honored for my family."

The story now reveals the names of the Israelite man and the Midianite woman. The Israelite man is Zimri, the son of Salu. Zimri was of the Simeon tribe, one of the 12 sons of Jacob. The father of Zimri, Salu, was a leader in the Simeon tribe.

The name of the Midianite woman was Kozbi. She was the daughter of Zur. Zur was either a Midianite chief or one of the five, local Midianite kings.

Immediately after Yahweh makes a covenant promise with Phinehas, Yahweh speaks to Moses. Yahweh tells Moses to treat the Midianites harshly, like enemies. Israel is to strike harshly and even kill the Midianites because the Midianites were harsh, and oppressive to Israel. The Midianites had tricked and deceived Israelites in Peor with Kozbi. Yahweh reminded Moses Kozbi was killed when the plague came as a result of the sin against Yahweh.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "How did it feel when Yahweh commanded Israel to treat the Midianites as enemies and kill them?" You may hear answers like, "I was saddened but not surprised since the Midianite people had hurt the Israelites and attacked Yahweh."

Ask the person playing Yahweh how it felt to declare the Midianites enemies and kill them. You may hear answers like, "The Midianites were given chances to be friends. The Midianites tricked my people and cannot be trusted."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 25:10-18 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Before this story, the Israelites had been unfaithful to **Yahweh**. Use the same word for Yahweh that you have used in previous passages. For more information about Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

Immediately, Yahweh spoke to Moses. Yahweh recognized Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron the high **priest**, was full of zeal of Yahweh. Use the same word for priest that you have used in previous passages, and refer to the Master Glossary for more information about priests.

Yahweh recognized Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron the high priest, was full of the **zeal** of Yahweh. When someone is zealous, they are so passionately devoted to someone or something that they are jealous for that relationship to stay pure. In this case, Phinehas wanted the Israelites to keep a pure relationship with Yahweh. He was zealous, or jealous, for that relationship with Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss what word or phrase you will use for **zeal**. If you have translated this in another book of the Bible, use the same word here. Refer to the master glossary for more information about zeal. Pause the audio here.

Yahweh was full of **wrath**, or extreme anger, to righteously defend the honor of Yahweh. Yahweh said Phinehas had a zeal like the zeal of Yahweh. Since Phinehas had a similar zeal for keeping Israel pure for Yahweh, Yahweh did not destroy Israel with the zeal of Yahweh. Although this is a different word than some other words translated wrath, it has the same idea of strong anger. You may use the same word for wrath, or strong anger, that you have used in previous passages. Refer to the Master Glossary for more information about wrath.

Yahweh makes a **covenant** promise for Phinehas because Phinehas used his zeal for Yahweh to protect the honor of Yahweh and keep Israel pure. Use the same words you have used before for covenant and **peace**. For more information about covenant and peace, look in the Master Glossary.

Phinehas had made **atonement** for Israel and the sin. When someone makes atonement, they restore a broken relationship with God that is caused by sin or impurity. Use the same word you have used in previous passages for atonement. For more information on atonement, refer to the Master Glossary.

The story now reveals the names of the Israelite man, the Midianite woman, and of their fathers. Both of the fathers, Salu and Zur, were the heads of their **household**, or the father and leader of their whole family. Use the same word for household that you have used in previous passages. For more information on household, refer to the Master Glossary.

Immediately after Yahweh makes a covenant promise with Phinehas, Yahweh speaks to Moses. Yahweh tells Moses to treat Midianites harshly, like **enemies**, because the Midianites deceived or tricked the Israelites like enemies. The Midianites persuaded or convinced the Israelites to believe things that were not true and were evil.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How will you talk about the Midianites treating the Israelites like enemies and deceiving or tricking them? What words will you use to describe the trickery and deception?

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 25:10-18

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (21619420 KB)

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Numbers 26:1-11

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 26:1-11 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:1-11 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:1–11 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this passage, the Israelites are on the plains of Moab and east of the Jordan River. The Israelites are near the city of Jericho. Yahweh has ended the plague, the terrible illness that killed many people. You may remember that years before this, Yahweh had said that none of the Israelite men who left Egypt would see and enter the land that Yahweh promised to the Israelites. Almost all of the older people who left Egypt with Moses and Aaron are dead. The plague killed the older people who were still alive after being in the wilderness. Yahweh's punishment of the disobedience of the Israelites is finished. Yahweh has allowed Caleb and Joshua to live and to be able to enter the land Yahweh has promised to the Israelites. Moses is also still alive.

Stop here as a group and look at a map of the plains of Moab, the Jordan River, and Jericho. Pause this audio here.

After Yahweh ends the plague, Yahweh speaks to Moses and Eleazar. Eleazar, the eldest son of Aaron, is the high priest now. Moses calls Eleazar "the priest" which helps us to remember that Eleazar is the high priest. Yahweh wants Moses and Eleazar to take a census, to count and make a record of the Israelites again. The last time Moses and the high priest counted and recorded the Israelites was before the Israelites left Mount Sinai to travel towards the land Yahweh promised the Israelites. Many years have passed since Moses and Aaron made this count of people. This new count is a sign of a new beginning for the Israelites. The Israelites are ready to enter the land Yahweh promised to the Israelites and go to fight the Midianites. Yahweh wants a record of the Israelites who are 20 years old or more and who are able to go to war and fight for the people of Israel. The men are the people who will fight, so the Israelites will count men 20 years old or more. Yahweh wants Moses and Eleazar to record the men by their father's house. Yahweh does not mean that the Israelites should record each man with his actual father, but rather with the clan, or large family group, the men belong to. The male ancestors of the Israelite people are important and show which clan a person belongs to. Each Israelite can say who their ancestors have been and which son or grandson of Jacob is their ancestor. You will remember that another name for Jacob is Israel. The son or grandson of Jacob was the first father in the group of people who have been born in the family over the years. You will remember that the Israelite tribes are named after the sons of Jacob or Joseph, Jacob's son, who left Canaan and entered Egypt.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about a time when you needed to gather or count your belongings or money to see what you had before starting a new project or beginning a new time in your life. Pause this audio here.

Moses and Eleazar need help to count and record the people of Israel. Moses and Eleazar ask the people of Israel to count and record the men who are 20 years old and more. We do not know who Moses and Eleazar asked to help them do this counting. We know that Yahweh chose a man from each tribe to help Moses and Aaron take the first census. A leader from each tribe may have helped Moses and Eleazar take the second census. Moses and Eleazar tell the Israelites that the Israelites are counting and recording the people to be obedient to Yahweh.

This record of the people of Israel who came out of Egypt is not the actual people who left Egypt. This record is the Israelites who completed the journey from Egypt and are ready to enter the land Yahweh promised to the Israelites. The people in the list have been dead a long time, but the people in the list are the important ancestors of the Israelites who are now alive. Each name in the list identifies the ancestor and the name of the clan that all the people who have been born afterwards belong to. These people are the descendants of the ancestor they named. The Israelites make a clan name by adding onto the ancestor's name a special ending. The special ending means something belonging to that named person. It is the same as the Israelites being the people of Israel.

The Israelite leaders record the count by tribe. The leaders record the tribe of Reuben first. You will remember that Reuben was the first son, the oldest son, of Jacob, who was also known as Israel. Moses gives the results of the census according to the camping and marching groups of the Israelites and almost in the same order of tribes as the first census. The clans in the tribe of Reuben are all named after the sons of Reuben who left Canaan with their father and grandfather. Descendants of Hanoch are part of the Hanochite clan. Descendants of Pallu

are part of the Palluite clan. Descendants of Hezron are part of the Hezronite clan. Descendants of Carmi are part of the Carmite clan. The census records 43,730 men of 20 years or older in all of the clans of the tribe of Reuben.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How are different groups of people identified in your community? Are groups named after special people or after something else like a skill or the place where they live? Pause this audio here.

After we learn how many men the Israelites record for the tribe and clans of Reuben, Moses tells a story about a particular group of descendants from Pallu in the Palluite clan. Sometimes the word son may mean any male descendant of a person. They may be the son of that person, or they may be the grandson or even more generations apart. When Moses tells us about Nemuel, Dathan, and Abiram, Moses calls Eliab a son of Pallu, but Eliab was not his direct son. Eliab was a direct descendant of Pallu, and probably separated from Pallu by many generations of people. However, Eliab was the direct father of Nemuel, Dathan, and Abiram.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What words do you use to indicate that someone is related to an ancestor? How, if at all, does this change for male and female descendants? Pause this audio here.

A group of Israelites, led by Korah the Levite, chose Dathan and Abiram to also be leaders of the group. This is similar to what the Israelites did near Mount Sinai when the Israelites chose clan leaders to help with the first census. However, choosing Dathan and Abiram was part of Korah's rebellion against Moses, Aaron, and Yahweh. Yahweh did not make this group of people. Yahweh broke open the earth, just as a mouth opens up to eat. Yahweh made the earth open up, and all the tents, belongings, and Korah, Dathan, and Abiram's families fell into the earth. The earth covered the people and tents just like people eat and swallow food. Moses calls the people who rebelled against Yahweh a company or a community. However, the rebellious people were not the same kind of community as the entire community of Israel. The rebellious community did not belong to Yahweh like the Israelite community did—Yahweh did not consider them good or part of his plan for the Israelites. The writer names the group of people this way to show the contrast between the two communities and to highlight that Korah's community was wrong.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you use words to mock and make fun of people who may be doing something wrong or stupid? How do you change the tone of your voice, or the way your voice sounds, to help you mock or make fun? Pause this audio here.

Fire from Yahweh devoured the 250 men who were offering incense at the tabernacle. To devour means to eat quickly, as if somebody is very hungry. The fire did not eat the people as a person eats food, but the fire burnt the people so quickly that it was just like the fire ate the people so that the people were gone. This part of the passage is a warning, a signpost of danger, to the Israelites, to encourage the Israelites to be obedient to Yahweh. This part of the passage also helps us to understand why the number of people in the tribe of Reuben is nearly 3,000 people less than the count from the first census.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Can you tell a true story that your family told to you that acts as a warning against doing something dangerous or disobedient? Pause this audio here.

The passage ends by telling us that not all of the sons, the family, of Korah died during the rebellion. There are descendants of Korah alive among the Israelites at the time of this new census.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:1–11 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 four scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh tells Moses and Eleazar, the high priest, son of Aaron, to make a census, to count and record men 20 years old and older who can fight for Israel.

In the second scene: Moses and Eleazar tell the leaders of the tribes to help take a census of the Israelites.

In the third scene: Moses records the clans and number of men in the tribe of Reuben.

In the fourth scene: The passage reminds us of two Reubenite men, Dathan and Abiram, who rebelled against Moses, Aaron, and Yahweh. Yahweh killed Dathan and Abiram along with a Levite called Korah. Not all of Korah's descendants died.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Eleazar
- Leaders of the tribes of Israel
- Reuben
- Hanochites, Palluites, Hezronites, and Carmites
- Eliab the Palluite, and Eliab's son Nemuel
- Eliab's sons Dathan and Abiram
- Korah

Reuben is the ancestor of the people of the Reubenite tribe. Reuben died many years before this. Eliab, Dathan, Abiram, and Korah died on the journey to the plains of Moab. Nemuel probably died on the journey to the plains of Moab.

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

The first scene highlights a new beginning for the Israelites who have been in the wilderness many years. This story of the Israelites happens after the plague that killed the remaining Israelites of the older generation who rebelled against Yahweh. Yahweh tells Moses and Eleazar to take a census, or a count, of the people of Israel who can fight, and to record these people according to their tribe and clan.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What phrases at the beginning of stories in your community help you and other listeners to understand when the event took place? Pause this audio here.

After Yahweh gives instructions to Moses and Eleazar, Moses and Eleazar go to speak to other Israelites, possibly the tribe leaders. Moses and Eleazar tell the other Israelites to take a census just like Yahweh has told Moses and Eleazar to do. This is so that they are obedient to Yahweh.

The results of the census are given as the people of Israel who came out of Egypt, but it is important to remember that these are only the people who are at the plains of Moab. Almost all of the people who left Egypt have died. The Israelites who have finished the journey from Egypt are the children who have grown up in the wilderness.

The list of the tribe of Reuben names the sons of Reuben who have clans named after them. Each clan name is made from the name of a son. The number of men of fighting age in the tribe of Reuben at the time of this census is 43,730. We do not know how many people are in each clan.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: If your community records the number of people in it, how do they do this? How often do they do it? How do you record large numbers of people? Pause this audio here.

Moses tells the story about the descendants of Pallu as a warning to the Israelites. Pallu's male descendants are given as sons of Pallu. Eliab was born many years after Pallu died, and many generations were born in between Pallu and Eliab. Eliab is the father of three sons: Nemuel, Dathan, and Abiram. The story of warning is about the Palluite men Dathan and Abiram from the tribe of Reuben. The story of warning reminds us of an event many years earlier when the Israelites were in the wilderness. We do not know exactly where or when Korah, Dathan,

and Abiram's rebellion happened. Fire from Yahweh devoured, or ate, the 250 men who were part of the rebellion and who burned incense.

Stop here and review how you talked about the fire devouring the 250 men in the story about Korah's rebellion in Numbers 16. How will you talk about the fire in this passage? Pause this audio here.

Although Korah was a Levite, not a Reubenite, the writer of this passage uses the story of Korah's rebellion to tell the Israelites that some of Korah's descendants are alive. We do not know who is alive or how many of them there are.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:1–11 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
- Eleazar
- Leaders of the tribes of Israel
- Reuben
- Hanochites, Palluites, Hezronites, and Carmites
- Eliab the Palluite, and Eliab's son Nemuel
- Eliab's sons Dathan and Abiram
- Korah

Reuben is the ancestor of the people of the Reubenite tribe. Reuben is dead. Eliab, Dathan, Abiram, and Korah died on the journey to the plains of Moab. Nemuel probably died on the journey to the plains of Moab.

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 Eleazar, son of Aaron, are on the plains of Moab. Yahweh tells Moses and Eleazar to take a census of the Israelites who are 20 years old or older and who can fight for Israel.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "Now we can get ready to enter the land I have promised to my people," or, "Moses and Eleazar need to know who can fight the Midianites," or, "Moses and Eleazar need to know how many Israelites will need land in their new home."

Moses and Eleazar tell other Israelites, possibly the leaders of the tribes and clans of Israel, to take a census of the Israelites who are 20 years old or older. Moses and Eleazar want the other Israelites to do this because Yahweh has asked them to do it.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "We will take another count of the people to be obedient to Yahweh," or, "I wonder how many of our people will enter the land Yahweh promised to us."

Ask the person playing Eleazar, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I will serve Yahweh and count and record our people," or, "We need help to count our people, just like my father needed help near Mount Sinai."

Ask the person playing leaders of the tribes of Israel, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "We will help Moses and Eleazar to make the count and record," or, "We will obey Yahweh," or, "We are excited to get ready to enter the land Yahweh promised us."

The descendants of Reuben, son of Israel, are called the Reubenites. The Reubenites who finished the journey from Egypt and camped on the plains of Moab near the River Jordan and Jericho belong to four different clans. The Hanochite clan are the descendants of Hanoch. The Palluite clan are the descendants of Pallu. The Hezronite clan are the descendants of Hezron. The Carmite clan are the descendants of Carmi.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Hanochites, Palluites, Hezronites, and Carmites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "There are many of us ready to fight for Israel," or, "Even though Yahweh killed some of us, we are a strong tribe," or, "We are ready to obey Yahweh."

When the Israelites were in the wilderness, Eliab, the Palluite, had three sons called Nemuel, Dathan, and Abiram. Dathan and Abiram followed Korah and rebelled against the leadership of Moses and Aaron. Dathan, Abiram, and the Levite Korah were killed by Yahweh when Yahweh made the earth break open so that the men fell into it. The other leaders in the group of followers of Korah were burnt to death by Yahweh. This story reminds the Israelites to be obedient to Yahweh. It is a warning to the Israelites. Some of Korah's descendants are alive.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I want the Israelites to remember how Yahweh punishes the people who rebel," or, "We must remember that we must obey Yahweh," or, "I was frightened when Yahweh killed Dathan, Abiram, and their households."

Ask the person playing the Hanochites, Palluites, Hezronites, and Carmites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "We remember the story of Dathan and Abiram rebelling against Yahweh," or, "We know that we must trust our priests to serve Yahweh for us."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:1–11 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

After the plague, **Yahweh** spoke to Moses and Eleazar. Use the same word or phrase for **plague** that 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 that you have in previous passages, and remember that Yahweh is in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh asks Moses and Eleazar to take a **census** of the **Israelites** who can fight and to record them by their father's house, their clan. Use the same words or phrases for census and Israelites that you used in previous passages, and remember that Israelites is in the Master Glossary.

Moses and Eleazar ask the leaders of the Israelite tribes and **clans** to take a census of the Israelites who can fight just as Yahweh told Moses to do it. Clans are groups of people who are related to each other through an ancestor. All the people in the clan are descended from that ancestor. Use the same word for clans that you used in previous passages. The passage records the results of the census.

The "sons of Pallu" are the male descendants of Pallu. Use the same word or phrase for sons, the male descendants, that you used in previous passages.

A descendant of Pallu, Eliab, had three sons called Nemuel, Dathan, and Abiram. Dathan and Abiram, with a Levite called Korah, rebelled against Moses and Aaron. Yahweh killed Dathan and Abiram and the other leaders of the **community** of people. Use the same word for community of people that you used in previous passages.

The story of Dathan, Abiram, and Korah, and the other rebels, is a **warning sign** to the Israelites. A sign to others can be a banner or physical item that shows who a group of people are and that they all fight together. Other times, a sign can be something to stop people from doing something or going somewhere. In this case, the sign is the story of an event that reminds people what to do or not do.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **warning sign**. If you have already translated this idea in another book of the Bible, use the same words that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

The sons, the male family of Korah the Levite, did not die.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 26:1–11

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (17133914 KB)

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Numbers 26:12–14

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 26:12–14 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:12–14 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:12–14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this passage, we continue to hear the number of Israelites who are on the plains of Moab, near Jericho and east of the River Jordan. You will remember that Yahweh asked Moses and Eleazar to take a census of, or to count and record, all the men 20 years old and older who can fight. In this passage, Moses tells us about the tribe of Simeon and the clans, or the family groups, in this tribe. Simeon was the second son of Jacob who is also known as Israel.

Stop here as a group and look at a map of the plains of Moab, the Jordan River, and Jericho, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Moses tells us about the sons, or the male descendants, of Simeon. In the book of Genesis, when Jacob and his family left Canaan to go to Egypt, Moses told us who was making the journey. The people that Moses lists here in the book of Numbers is really similar to the earlier list. If you compare the names, you will notice some small changes. For example, in Genesis, Moses names Simeon's son Jemuel, but in Numbers, Moses names Simeon's son Nemuel. Sometimes, how we remember names changes over time, or people choose to change a name. We do not know why Jemuel has changed to Nemuel, but it is very likely that they are the same person.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Can you think of an example when some people have remembered names of ancestors differently than each other or names have changed over time? Pause this audio here.

Moses gives the sons of Simeon as Nemuel, Jamin, Jachin, Zerah, and Shaul. You will remember from the previous passage that the Israelites named clans after an important ancestor and added an ending to the ancestor's name to show it is a clan name. Descendants of Nemuel are part of the Nemuelite clan. Descendants of Jamin are part of the Jaminitie clan. Descendants of Jachin are part of the Jachinite clan. Descendants of Zerah are part of the Zerahite clan. Descendants of Shaul are part of the Shaulite clan. Moses records 22,200 men who are 20 years old or older in all of the clans of the tribe of Simeon. This is a much smaller number than the number that Moses and Aaron recorded in the first census. Many Simeonites have died in the time between the first census and the second census.

Moses only lists five sons and their clans in this census. Simeon had another son called Ohad who travelled with Simeon to Egypt. We do not know why Moses does not list Ohad and any clan named after Ohad here. You may remember from an earlier passage that the Israelites, when they were in Shittim, were unfaithful to Yahweh. The Simeonite Zimri, son of Salu, took a Midianite woman into his family. Yahweh sent a plague, or a deadly illness, to kill some of the Israelites, and Phinehas, son of Eleazar, killed Zimri and stopped the plague. Twenty-four thousand people died in the plague. We do not know if the Ohadite clan died out before the plague or if the plague destroyed the clan completely. The plague might be why the number of Simeonites is so much smaller in the second census than in the first census.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:12–14 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 one scene.

In the scene: Moses records the clans and number of men in the tribe of Simeon.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Simeon
- Nemuelites, Jaminites, Jachinites, Zerahites, and Shaulites

Simeon is the ancestor of the people of the Simeonite tribe, and Simeon has already died.

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

Moses is telling us the results of the census that Moses and Eleazar took of the Israelites with the help of the Israelite community leaders. Moses has told us about the tribe of Reuben, and now Moses is telling us about the tribe of Simeon. The tribe of Simeon is next because Simeon was the second son of Jacob, also known as Israel.

The list of the tribe of Simeon names the sons of Simeon who have clans named after them and exist at this time. Each clan name is made from the name of a son. The number of men of fighting age in the tribe of Simeon at the time of this census is 22,200. We do not know how many people are in each clan.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story from your people's history when a people group got much smaller from one generation to the next. How might the people who lived in that next generation feel? 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

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:12–14 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:

- Moses
- Simeon
- Nemuelites, Jaminites, Jachinites, Zerahites, and Shaulites

Simeon has already died.

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 us about the tribe of Simeon. The descendants of Simeon, son of Israel, are called the Simeonites. The Simeonites who finished the journey from Egypt and camped on the plains of Moab near the River Jordan and Jericho belong to five different clans. The Nemuelite clan are the descendants of Nemuel. The Jaminites are the descendants of Jamin. The Jachinite clan are the descendants of Jachin. The Zerahite clan are the descendants of Zerah. The Shaulite clan are the descendants of Shaul.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Nemuelites, Jaminites, Jachinites, Zerahites, and Shaulites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "So many of our tribe died in the wilderness," or, "Those of us who are left will be faithful to Yahweh," or, "We are excited to start our new lives in the land Yahweh gives to us."

Moses tells us that there are 22,200 fighting people in the tribe of Simeon.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "This tribe has become so much smaller," or, "I am sad that so many Simeonite people died on the way to this place."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:12–14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Moses tells us the results of the census for the tribe of Simeon. Moses records the male descendants or **sons** of Simeon according to their **clan**, or family group. Use the same words or phrases for sons and clan that you used in previous passages.

The number of fighting men in the tribe of Simeon is 22,200.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 26:12-14

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (8170830 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Numbers 26:15–18

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 26:15–18 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:15–18 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:15–18 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this passage, we continue to hear the number of Israelites who are on the plains of Moab, near Jericho and east of the Jordan River. You will remember that Yahweh asked Moses and Eleazar to take a census of, or to count and record, all the men 20 years old and older who can fight. In this passage, Moses tells us about the tribe of Gad and the clans, or the family groups, in this tribe. Gad was a son of Jacob who is also known as Israel.

Stop here as a group and look at a map of the plains of Moab, the Jordan River, and Jericho, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Moses tells us about the sons, or the male descendants, of Gad. In the book of Genesis, when Jacob and his family left Canaan to go to Egypt, Moses told us who was making the journey. The people that Moses lists here in the book of Numbers is really similar to the earlier list. If you compare the names, you will notice some small changes. For example, in Genesis, Moses names Gad's son Ziphion, but in Numbers, Moses names Gad's son Zephon. Sometimes, how we remember names changes over time, or people choose to change a name. Moses gives some of Gad's other sons slightly different names too. Ezbon has become Ozni, and Arodi has become Arod. We do not know why the names Moses gives here are different from what he wrote before, but it is very likely that Moses is referring to the same people. Moses is naming the sons of Gad in the same way that the Israelites named the sons of Gad at the time the Israelites arrived at the plains of Moab.

Moses gives the sons of Gad as Zephon, Haggi, Shuni, Ozni, Eri, Arod, and Areli. You will remember from the previous passage that the Israelites named clans after an important ancestor and added an ending to the ancestor's name to show it is a clan name. Descendants of Zephon are part of the Zephonite clan. Descendants of Haggi are part of the Haggite clan. Descendants of Shuni are part of the Shunite clan. Descendants of Ozni are part of the Oznite clan. Descendants of Eri are part of the Erite clan. Descendants of Arod are part of the Arodite clan. Descendants of Areli are part of the Areelite clan. There are seven clans in the tribe of Gad. Moses records 40,500 men who are 20 years or older in all of the clans of the tribe of Gad. For the tribe of Gad, Moses records 5,000 less people in this second census than in the first census. We do not know of any events that especially affected the tribe of Gad as the Israelites travelled to the plains of Moab.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:15–18 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 one scene.

In the scene: Moses records the clans and number of men in the tribe of Gad.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Gad
- Zephonites, Haggites, Shunites, Oznites, Erites, Arodites, and Areletes

Gad is the ancestor of the people of the Gadite tribe. Gad has already died.

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

Moses is telling us the results of the census that Moses and Eleazar took of the Israelites with the help of the Israelite community leaders. Moses has told us about the tribes of Reuben and Simeon, and now Moses is telling us about the tribe of Gad.

The list of the tribe of Gad names the sons of Gad who have clans named after them and exist at this time. Each clan name is made from the name of a son. The number of men of fighting age in the tribe of Gad at the time of this census is 40,500. We do not know how many people are in each clan.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:15–18 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:

- Moses
- Gad
- Zephonites, Haggites, Shunites, Oznites, Erites, Arodites, and Aremites

Gad has already died.

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 us about the tribe of Gad. The descendants of Gad, son of Israel, are called the Gadites. The Gadites who finished the journey from Egypt and camped on the plains of Moab near the River Jordan and Jericho belong to seven different clans. The Zephonite clan are the descendants of Zephon. The Haggite clan are the descendants of Haggi. The Shunite clan are the descendants of Shuni. The Oznite clan are the descendants of Ozni. The Erite clan are the descendants of Eri. The Arodite clan are the descendants of Arod. The Areelite clan are the descendants of Areli.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Zephonites, Haggites, Shunites, Oznites, Erites, Arodites, and Aremites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "We are sad that our fathers are dead and will not enter the land Yahweh has promised us," or, "Our tribe became smaller as we travelled to this place," or, "We are ready to fight for our new home."

Moses tells us that there are 40,500 fighting people in the tribe of Gad.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "There are many clans in the tribe of Gad," or, "I am sad that the tribe of Gad is smaller than it was when we left Mount Sinai."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:15–18 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Moses tells us the results of the census for the tribe of Gad. Moses records the male descendants, or **sons**, of Gad according to their **clan**, or family group. Use the same words or phrases for sons and clan that you used in previous passages.

The number of fighting men in the tribe of Gad is 40,500.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 26:15-18

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Numbers 26:19–22

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 26:19–22 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:19–22 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:19–22 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this passage, we continue to hear the number of Israelites who are on the plains of Moab, near Jericho and east of the Jordan River. You will remember that Yahweh asked Moses and Eleazar to take a census of, or to count and record, all of the men 20 years old and older who can fight. In this passage, Moses tells us about the tribe of Judah and the clans, or the family groups, in this tribe. Judah was a son of Jacob who is also known as Israel.

Stop here as a group and look at a map of the plains of Moab, the Jordan River, and Jericho, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Moses tells us about the sons, or the male descendants, of Judah. Moses starts off by reminding us about two sons of Judah called Er and Onan. This is another warning sign for the Israelites to be obedient to Yahweh. Er and Onan both did things that Yahweh said were wrong. Yahweh caused both Er and Onan to die in Canaan before the Israelites left to go to Egypt. Er and Onan had no descendants and do not have clans named after them. Moses uses the names of Er and Onan to remind the Israelites to follow Yahweh's instructions and commandments.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What names of people are used by leaders or older people in your family as a warning? How do these names remind you of certain events that are warnings? Pause this audio here.

In the book of Genesis, when Jacob and his family left Canaan to go to Egypt, Moses told us who was making the journey. The first three people that Moses lists here in the book of Numbers is the same as the earlier list of the sons of Judah who travelled to Egypt. The direct sons of Judah are Shelah, Perez, and Zerah. You will remember from the previous passage that the Israelites named clans after an important ancestor and added an ending to the ancestor's name to show it is a clan name. Descendants of Shelah are part of the Shelanite clan. Descendants of Perez are part of the Perezite clan. Descendants of Zerah are part of the Zerahite clan.

Moses names two more men who are important in the tribe of Judah and who have clans named after them. Both of these sons, Hezron and Hamul, are descended from Perez. We do not know if they were the direct sons of Perez or were male descendants with a different relationship to Perez. Descendants of Hezron are part of the Hezronite clan. Descendants of Hamul are part of the Hamulite clan. There are five clans in the tribe of Judah. We do not know if the Shelanite, Perezite, and Zerahite clans are more important than, or are equal to, the Hezronite and Hamulite clans.

Moses records 76,500 men who are 20 years old or older in all of the clans of the tribe of Judah. For the tribe of Judah, Moses records almost 2,000 more people in this second census than in the first census. The tribe of Judah is the biggest tribe according to the second census.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:19–22 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 two scenes.

In the first scene: Moses reminds us of Er and Onan, sons of Judah who died in Canaan.

In the second scene: Moses records the clans and number of men in the tribe of Judah.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Judah
- Er and Onan
- Shelanites, Perezites, Zerahites, Hezronites, and Hamulites

Judah is the ancestor of the people of the tribe of Judah. Judah has already died. Er and Onan have also already died.

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

Moses pauses telling us the results of the census to remind the Israelites about Er and Onan. Moses puts the warning before telling us about the tribe of Judah. Er and Onan were sons of Judah, but no clans were named after Er and Onan, because Er and Onan died and had no descendants.

Moses tells us the results of the census that Moses and Eleazar took of the Israelites with the help of the Israelite community leaders. Moses has told us about the tribes of Reuben, Simeon, and Gad, and now Moses is telling us about the tribe of Judah.

The list of the tribe of Judah names the three direct sons of Judah who have clans named after them and exist at this time. Each clan name is made from the name of a direct son. There are also two descendants of Perez,

son of Judah, who have clans named after them. The number of men of fighting age in the tribe of Judah at the time of this census is 76,500. We do not know how many people are in each clan.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:19–22 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:

- Moses
- Judah
- Er and Onan
- Shelanites, Perezites, Zerahites, Hezronites, and Hamulites

Judah, Er, and Onan have already died.

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 reminds us of Er and Onan, the sons of Judah.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I want to remind the people that Er and Onan died before they could have children," or, "Yahweh needs us to follow his instructions to avoid his judgment."

Moses tells us about the tribe of Judah. The descendants of Judah, son of Israel, who finished the journey from Egypt and are camped on the plains of Moab near the River Jordan and Jericho belong to five different clans. The Shelanite clan are the descendants of Shelah. The Perezite clan are the descendants of Perez. The Zerahite clan are the descendants of Zerah. The Hezronite clan are the descendants of Hezron, descendant of Perez. The Hamulite clan are the descendants of Hamul, descendant of Perez.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Shelanites, Perezites, Zerahites, Hezronites, and Hamulites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "Our tribe has the most fighting men," or, "The number of us has increased since Mount Sinai," or, "We are excited to start a new life in the land Yahweh has promised us."

Moses tells us that there are 76,500 fighting people in the tribe of Judah.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "Judah is a big, strong tribe," or, "The sons of Judah would be proud to see so many descendants."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:19–22 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Moses reminds the Israelites of Er and Onan, sons of Judah.

Moses tells us the results of the census for the tribe of Judah. Moses records the male descendants, or **sons**, of Judah according to their **clan**, or family group. Use the same words or phrases for sons and clan that you used in previous passages.

The number of fighting men in the tribe of Judah is 76,500.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 26:19–22

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (8486946 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
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- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Numbers 26:23-25

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 26:23–25 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:23–25 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:23–25 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this passage, we continue to hear the number of Israelites who are on the plains of Moab, near Jericho and east of the Jordan River. You will remember that Yahweh asked Moses and Eleazar to take a census of, or to count and record, all of the men 20 years old and older who can fight. In this passage, Moses tells us about the

tribe of Issachar and the clans, or the family groups, in this tribe. Issachar was a son of Jacob who is also known as Israel.

Stop here as a group and look at a map of the plains of Moab, the Jordan River, and Jericho, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Moses tells us about the sons, or the male descendants, of Issachar. In the book of Genesis, when Jacob and his family left Canaan to go to Egypt, Moses told us who was making the journey. The people that Moses lists here in the book of Numbers is really similar to the earlier list. If you compare the names, you will notice a small change. In Genesis, Moses names Issachar's son Yob, but in Numbers, Moses names Issachar's son Jashub. Sometimes, how we remember names changes over time, or people choose to change a name. We do not know why Yob has changed to Jashub, but it is very likely that they are the same person.

Moses gives the sons of Issachar as Tola, Puvah, Jashub, and Shimron. You will remember from the previous passage that the Israelites named clans after an important ancestor and added an ending to the ancestor's name to show it is a clan name. Descendants of Tola are part of the Tolaite clan. Descendants of Puvah are part of the Punite clan. Descendants of Jashub are part of the Jashubite clan. Descendants of Shimron are part of the Shimronite clan. Moses records 64,300 men who are 20 years old or older in all of the clans of the tribe of Issachar. For the tribe of Issachar, Moses records almost 10,000 more people in this second census than in the first census.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:23–25 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 one scene.

In the scene: Moses records the clans and number of men in the tribe of Issachar.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Issachar
- Tolaites, Punites, Jashubites, and Shimronites

Issachar is the ancestor of the people of the tribe of Issachar. Issachar has already died.

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

Moses is telling us the results of the census that Moses and Eleazar took of the Israelites with the help of the Israelite community leaders. Moses has told us about the tribes of Reuben, Simeon, Gad, and Judah, and now Moses is telling us about the tribe of Issachar.

The list of the tribe of Issachar names the direct sons of Issachar who have clans named after them and exist at this time. Each clan name is made from the name of a direct son of Issachar. The number of men of fighting age in the tribe of Issachar at the time of this census is 64,300. We do not know how many people are in each clan.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:23–25 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:

- Moses
- Issachar
- Tolaites, Punites, Jashubites, and Shimronites

Issachar has already died.

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 us about the tribe of Issachar. The descendants of Issachar, son of Israel, who finished the journey from Egypt and are camped on the plains of Moab near the River Jordan and Jericho belong to four different clans. The Tolaite clan are the descendants of Tola. The Punite clan are the descendants of Puvah. The Jashubite clan are the descendants of Jashub. The Shimronite clan are the descendants of Shimron.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Tolaites, Punites, Jashubites, and Shimronites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "We are ready to leave the wilderness," or, "The number of us has increased since Mount Sinai."

Moses tells us that there are 64,300 fighting people in the tribe of Issachar.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "The tribe of Issachar is big," or, "The four clans bring honour to their ancestor Issachar."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:23–25 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Moses tells us the results of the census for the tribe of Issachar. Moses records the male descendants, or **sons**, of Issachar according to their **clan**, or family group. Use the same words or phrases for sons and clan that you used in previous passages.

The number of fighting men in the tribe of Issachar is 64,300.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 26:23–25

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Numbers 26:26–27

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 26:26–27 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:26–27 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:26–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this passage, we continue to hear the number of Israelites who are on the plains of Moab, near Jericho and east of the Jordan River. You will remember that Yahweh asked Moses and Eleazar to take a census of, or to count and record, all of the men 20 years old and older who can fight. In this passage, Moses tells us about the tribe of Zebulun and the clans, or the family groups, in this tribe. Zebulun was a son of Jacob who is also known as Israel.

Stop here as a group and look at a map of the plains of Moab, the Jordan River, and Jericho, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Moses tells us about the sons, or the male descendants, of Zebulun. In the book of Genesis, when Jacob and his family left Canaan to go to Egypt, Moses told us who was making the journey. The people that Moses lists here in the book of Numbers is the same as the earlier list of the sons of Zebulun who travelled to Egypt.

Moses gives the sons of Zebulun as Sered, Elon, and Jahleel. You will remember from the previous passage that the Israelites named clans after an important ancestor and added an ending to the ancestor's name to show it is a clan name. Descendants of Sered are part of the Seredite clan. Descendants of Elon are part of the Elonite clan. Descendants of Jahleel are part of the Jahleelite clan. Moses records 60,500 men who are 20 years old or older in all of the clans of the tribe of Zebulun. For the tribe of Zebulun, Moses records approximately 3,000 more people in this second census than in the first census.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:26–27 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 one scene.

In the scene: Moses records the clans and number of men in the tribe of Zebulun.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Zebulun
- Seredites, Elonites, and Jahleelites

Zebulun is the ancestor of the people of the tribe of Zebulun. Zebulun has already died.

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

Moses is telling us the results of the census that Moses and Eleazar took of the Israelites with the help of the Israelite community leaders. Moses has told us about the tribes of Reuben, Simeon, Gad, Judah, and Issachar, and now Moses is telling us about the tribe of Zebulun.

The list of the tribe of Zebulun names the direct sons of Zebulun who have clans named after them and exist at this time. Each clan name is made from the name of a direct son of Zebulun. The number of men of fighting age in the tribe of Zebulun at the time of this census is 60,500. We do not know how many people are in each clan.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:26–27 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:

- Moses
- Zebulun
- Seredites, Elonites, and Jahleelites

Zebulun has already died.

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 us about the tribe of Zebulun. The descendants of Zebulun, son of Israel, who finished the journey from Egypt and are camped on the plains of Moab near the River Jordan and Jericho belong to three different clans. The Seredite clan are the descendants of Sered. The Elonite clan are the descendants of Elon. The Jahleelite clan are the descendants of Jahleel.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Seredites, Elonites, and Jahleelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "Our clan has been on a long journey," or, "We must look after our tribe and keep it strong," or, "We trust Yahweh to give us good land."

Moses tells us that there are 60,500 fighting people in the tribe of Zebulun.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "There are many people in the three clans of Zebulun."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:26–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Moses tells us the results of the census for the tribe of Zebulun. Moses records the male descendants, or **sons**, of Zebulun according to their **clan**, or family group. Use the same words or phrases for sons and clan that you used in previous passages.

The number of fighting men in the tribe of Zebulun is 60,500.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 26:26–27

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 4](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Numbers 26:28-34

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 26:28–34 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:28–34 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:28–34 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this passage, we continue to hear the number of Israelites who are on the plains of Moab, near Jericho and east of the Jordan River. You will remember that Yahweh asked Moses and Eleazar to take a census of, or to count and record, all of the men 20 years old and older who can fight. In this passage, Moses tells us about the

descendants of Joseph, who are part of the tribe of Manasseh, and the clans, or the family groups, in this tribe. Manasseh was a direct son of Joseph, the direct son of Jacob who is also known as Israel.

Stop here as a group and look at a map of the plains of Moab, the Jordan River, and Jericho, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Moses tells us about the sons, or the male descendants, of Manasseh. In the book of Genesis, when Jacob and his family left Canaan to go to Egypt, Moses told us that Joseph had two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, who were born while Joseph was living in Egypt. Manasseh and Ephraim both have tribes named after them. Moses refers to Manasseh and Ephraim as clans in this census, but they are tribes of the people of Israel.

You will remember from the previous passage that the Israelites named clans after an important ancestor and added an ending to the ancestor's name to show it is a clan name. The clans of Manasseh are named after people in several different generations of descendants of Manasseh. We do not know if the sons were direct sons, or if they were male descendants separated by a number of generations of people. Descendants of Machir are part of the Machirite clan. Descendants of Gilead are part of the Gileadite clan. Iezer, Helek, Asriel, Shechem, Shemida, and Hepher are descended from Gilead. Descendants of Iezer are part of the Iezerite clan. Descendants of Helek are part of the Helekite clan. Descendants of Asriel are part of the Asrielite clan. Descendants of Shechem are part of the Shechemite clan. Descendants of Shemida are part of the Shemidaite clan. Descendants of Hepher are part of the Hepherite clan.

Moses tells us about Zelophehad, a son, or male descendant, of Hepher. Zelophehad had no direct sons, but Zelophehad had five daughters. Zelophehad died before the second census. Moses names the daughters as Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. Moses wants the Israelites to know about this family because, later on in the book of Numbers, Moses will tell us a story about a problem these women have and the solution that Yahweh gives to Moses for these women.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Can you name a family who has had only daughters in a single generation? Were there any difficulties for the family because they had no sons? Pause this audio here.

Moses records 52,700 men who are 20 years old or older in all of the clans of the tribe of Manasseh. For the tribe of Manasseh, Moses records 22,500 more people in this second census than in the first census. The tribe of Manasseh has increased a lot in the time since the first census.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:28–34 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 three scenes.

In the first scene: Moses records the clans in the tribe of Manasseh, son of Joseph.

In the second scene: Moses tells us about the daughters of Zelophehad in the Hepherite clan.

In the third scene: Moses records the number of men in the tribe of Manasseh.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Joseph
- Manasseh
- Ephraim
- Machirites, Gileadites, Iezerites, Helekites, Asrielites, Shechemites, Shemidaites, and Hepherites
- Zelophehad
- Daughters of Zelophehad: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah

Joseph and Manasseh are the ancestors of the people of the tribe of Manasseh. Joseph and Manasseh have already died. Ephraim has also already died. Zelophehad died before the Israelites arrived at the plain of Moab.

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

Moses is telling us the results of the census that Moses and Eleazar took of the Israelites with the help of the Israelite community leaders. Moses has told us about the tribes of Reuben, Simeon, Gad, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun, and now Moses is telling us about the tribe of Manasseh, son of Joseph.

The list of the tribe of Manasseh names the male descendants of Manasseh who have clans named after them and exist at this time. Each clan name is made from the name of a male descendant of Manasseh.

Moses gives us some extra information about a family in the Hepherite clan. This is not part of the result of the census. Moses mentions this family because there are no men in the family. Zelophehad only had daughters to carry on the family.

Now Moses gives the results of the census to the Israelites. The number of men of fighting age in the tribe of Manasseh at the time of this census is 52,700. We do not know how many people are in each clan.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:28–34 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
- Joseph
- Manasseh
- Ephraim
- Machirites, Gileadites, Iezerites, Helekites, Asrielites, Shechemites, Shemidaites, and Hepherites
- Zelophehad
- Daughters of Zelophehad: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah

Joseph and Manasseh are the ancestors of the people of the tribe of Manasseh. Joseph and Manasseh have already died. Ephraim has also already died. Zelophehad died before the Israelites arrived at the plains of Moab.

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 us about the tribe of Manasseh. The descendants of Manasseh, son of Joseph, who finished the journey from Egypt and are camped on the plains of Moab near the River Jordan and Jericho belong to eight different clans. The Machirite clan are the descendants of Machir. The Gileadite clan are the descendants of Gilead. The Iezerite clan are the descendants of Iezer. The Helekite clan are the descendants of Helek. The Asrielite clan are the descendants of Asriel. The Shechemite clan are the descendants of Shechem. The Shemidaite clan are the descendants of Shemida. The Hepherite clan are the descendants of Hepher.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Machirites, Gileadites, Iezerites, Helekites, Asrielites, Shechemites, Shemidaites, and Hepherites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "There are many clans in our tribe," or, "The tribe of Manasseh is strong."

Moses tells us about the daughters of Zelophehad in the Hepherite clan.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "Remember these women; they are important!"

Ask the person playing the daughters of Zelophehad, who are Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "We have no brothers, and our father is dead," or, "We are worried that we have no men in our family."

Moses tells us that there are 52,700 fighting people in the tribe of Manasseh.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "The tribe of Manasseh has grown so much since we left Mount Sinai."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:28–34 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Moses tells us the results of the census for the tribe of Manasseh. Moses records the male descendants, or **sons** of Manasseh, according to their **clan**, or family group. Use the same words or phrases for sons and clan that you used in previous passages.

The number of fighting men in the tribe of Manasseh is 52,700.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 26:28-34

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (9345173 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 4](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Numbers 26:35-37

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 26:35–37 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:35–37 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? 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:35–37 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this passage, we continue to hear the number of Israelites who are on the plains of Moab, near Jericho and east of the Jordan River. You will remember that Yahweh asked Moses and Eleazar to take a census of, or to count and record, all of the men 20 years old and older who can fight. In this passage, Moses tells us about the descendants of Joseph who are part of the tribe of Ephraim, and the clans, or the family groups, in this tribe. Ephraim was a direct son of Joseph, the direct son of Jacob who is also known as Israel.

Stop here as a group and look at a map of the plains of Moab, the Jordan River, and Jericho, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Moses tells us about the sons, or the male descendants, of Ephraim. In the book of Genesis, when Jacob and his family left Canaan to go to Egypt, Moses told us that Joseph had two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, who were born while Joseph was living in Egypt. Ephraim is a tribe of the people of Israel.

You will remember from the previous passage that the Israelites named clans after an important ancestor and added an ending to the ancestor's name to show it is a clan name. The clans of Ephraim are named after people in several different generations of descendants of Ephraim. We do not know if the sons were direct sons, or if they were male descendants separated by a number of generations of people. Descendants of Shuthelah are

part of the Shuthelahite clan. Descendants of Becher are part of the Becherite clan. Descendants of Tahan are part of the Tahanite clan. Eran is descended from Shuthelah. Descendants of Eran are part of the Eranite clan.

Moses records 32,500 men who are 20 years old or older in all of the clans of the tribe of Ephraim. For the tribe of Ephraim, Moses records 8,000 fewer people in this second census than in the first census. The tribe of Ephraim has become smaller since the first census. The tribe of Ephraim is now smaller than the tribe of Manasseh. In the first census, the tribe of Ephraim was larger than the tribe of Manasseh. This might be why Moses has changed the order of reporting the census results: Moses reports the count for the tribe of Manasseh first, perhaps because it is larger.

Moses finishes this section of reporting the census by reminding us that both Ephraim and Manasseh are the sons, or the descendants, of Joseph.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:35–37 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 one scene.

In the scene: Moses records the clans and number of men in the tribe of Ephraim.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Ephraim
- Shuthelahites, Becherites, Tahanites, and Eranites

Ephraim is the ancestor of the people of the tribe of Ephraim. Ephraim has already died.

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

Moses is telling us the results of the census that Moses and Eleazar took of the Israelites with the help of the Israelite community leaders. Moses has told us about the tribes of Reuben, Simeon, Gad, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, and Manasseh, and Moses is now telling us about the tribe of Ephraim, son of Joseph.

The list of the tribe of Ephraim names the male descendants of Ephraim who have clans named after them and exist at this time. Each clan name is made from the name of a male descendant of Ephraim. The number of men of fighting age in the tribe of Ephraim at the time of this census is 32,500. We do not know how many people are in each clan.

Moses ends the section of the tribes descended from Joseph by stating that the census reports the sons, or descendants, of Joseph according to their clans.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:35–37 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:

- Moses
- Ephraim
- Shuthelahites, Becherites, Tahanites, and Eranites

Ephraim is already dead.

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 us about the tribe of Ephraim. The descendants of Ephraim, son of Joseph, who finished the journey from Egypt and are camped on the plains of Moab near the River Jordan and Jericho belong to four different clans. The Shuthelahite clan are the descendants of Shuthelah. The Becherite clan are the descendants of Becher. The Tahanite clan are the descendants of Tahan. The Eranite clan are the descendants of Eran.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Shuthelahites, Becherites, Tahanites, and Eranites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "We have become fewer in number over the years."

Moses tells us that there are 32,500 fighting people in the tribe of Ephraim.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "The tribe of Ephraim is smaller than the tribe of Manasseh now."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:35–37 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Moses tells us the results of the census for the tribe of Ephraim. Moses records the male descendants, or the **sons** of Ephraim, according to their **clan**, or family group. Use the same words or phrases for sons and clan that you used in previous passages.

The number of fighting men in the tribe of Manasseh is 32,500.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 26:35-37

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
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- [FIA Step 4](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Numbers 26:38-41

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 26:38–41 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:38–41 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:38–41 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this passage, we continue to hear the number of Israelites who are on the plains of Moab, near Jericho and east of the Jordan River. You will remember that Yahweh asked Moses and Eleazar to take a census of, or to count and record, all of the men 20 years old and older who can fight. In this passage, Moses tells us about the tribe of Benjamin and the clans, or the family groups, in this tribe. Benjamin was a son of Jacob who is also known as Israel.

Stop here as a group and look at a map of the plains of Moab, the Jordan River, and Jericho, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Moses tells us about the sons, or the male descendants, of Benjamin. In the book of Genesis, when Jacob and his family left Canaan to go to Egypt, Moses told us the sons, or the male descendants, of Benjamin. The people that Moses lists here in the book of Numbers is quite different to the earlier list. Some of the names in Genesis are missing from Numbers. It is possible that some of Benjamin's sons died without having a family, or without having a big enough family to start a clan. Some of the names are changed. In Genesis, Moses names Benjamin's son Ehi, but in Numbers, Moses names Benjamin's son Ahiram. Ehi is a short version of the name Ahiram.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What names in your community have common short versions? Talk about how the full names and their shortened versions are similar or different from each other. Pause this audio here.

Sometimes, how we remember names changes over time, or people choose to change a name. Muppim has changed to Shephupham or Shupham, and Huppim has changed to Hupham. We do not know why these names have changed, but it is very likely that they are the same people.

You will remember from the previous passage that the Israelites named clans after an important ancestor and added an ending to the ancestor's name to show it is a clan name. Moses gives the direct sons of Benjamin as Bela, Ashbel, Ahiram, Shephupham, and Hupham. Descendants of Bela are part of the Belaite clan. Descendants of Ashbel are part of the Ashbelite clan. Descendants of Ahiram are part of the Ahiramite clan. Descendants of Shephupham are part of the Shuphamite clan. Descendants of Hupham are part of the Huphamite clan. Ard and Naaman were descended from Bela. Ard and Naaman are probably the direct sons of Bela. Descendants of Ard are part of the Ardite clan. Descendants of Naaman are part of the Naamite clan. Moses records 45,600 men who are 20 years old or older in all of the clans of the tribe of Benjamin. For the tribe of Benjamin, Moses records about 10,000 more people in this second census than in the first census.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:38–41 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 the scene: Moses records the clans and number of men in the tribe of Benjamin.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Benjamin
- Belaites, Ashbelites, Ahiramites, Shuphamites, Huphamites, Ardites, and Naamites

Benjamin is the ancestor of the people of the tribe of Benjamin. Benjamin has already died.

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

Moses is telling us the results of the census that Moses and Eleazar took of the Israelites with the help of the Israelite community leaders. Moses has told us about the tribes of Reuben, Simeon, Gad, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Manasseh, and Ephraim. Now Moses is telling us about the tribe of Benjamin.

The list of the tribe of Benjamin names the sons, or the male descendants, of Benjamin who have clans named after them and exist at this time. Each clan name is made from the name of a male descendant of Benjamin. The number of men of fighting age in the tribe of Benjamin at the time of this census is 45,600. We do not know how many people are in each clan.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:38–41 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:

- Moses
- Benjamin
- Belaites, Ashbelites, Ahiramites, Shuphamites, Huphamites, Ardites, and Naamites

Benjamin has already died.

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 us about the tribe of Benjamin. The descendants of Benjamin, son of Jacob, who finished the journey from Egypt and are camped on the plains of Moab near the River Jordan and Jericho belong to seven different clans. The Belaite clan are the descendants of Bela. The Ashbelite clan are the descendants of Ashbel. The

Ahiramite clan are the descendants of Ahiram. The Shuphamite clan are the descendants of Shephupham or Shupham. The Huphamite clan are the descendants of Hupham. The Ardite clan are the descendants of Ard. The Naamites are the descendants of Naaman.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Belaites, Ashbelites, Ahiramites, Shuphamites, Huphamites, Ardites, and Naamites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "We are so happy to have survived," or, "We are looking forward to making our tribe stronger."

Moses tells us that there are 45,600 fighting people in the tribe of Benjamin.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "The clans from Jacob's youngest son are strong and mighty."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:38–41 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Moses tells us the results of the census for the tribe of Benjamin. Moses records the male descendants, or **sons**, of Benjamin according to their **clan**, or family group. Use the same words or phrases for sons and clan that you used in previous passages.

The number of fighting men in the tribe of Benjamin is 45,600.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 26:38-41

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Numbers 26:42-43

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 26:42–43 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:42–43 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:42–43 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this passage, we continue to hear the number of Israelites who are on the plains of Moab, near Jericho and east of the Jordan River. You will remember that Yahweh asked Moses and Eleazar to take a census of, or to count and record, all of the men 20 years old and older who can fight. In this passage, Moses tells us about the tribe of Dan and the clans, or the family groups, in this tribe. Dan was a son of Jacob who is also known as Israel.

Stop here as a group and look at a map of the plains of Moab, the Jordan River, and Jericho, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Moses tells us about the sons, or the male descendants, of Dan. In the book of Genesis, when Jacob and his family left Canaan to go to Egypt, Moses told us who was making the journey. The person that Moses lists here in the book of Numbers is similar to the earlier list of the sons of Dan who travelled to Egypt. If you compare the names, you will notice a small change. In Genesis, Moses names Dan's son Hushim, but in Numbers, Moses names Dan's son Shuham. Sometimes, how we remember names changes over time, or people choose to change a name.

Moses gives the sons of Dan as Shuham. You will remember from the previous passage that the Israelites named clans after an important ancestor and added an ending to the ancestor's name to show it is a clan name. Descendants of Shuham are part of the Shuhamite clan. We do not know why Moses refers to more than one clan but only lists one clan. It is possible that there are smaller clans within the Shuhamite clan. Moses records 64,400 men who are 20 years or older in the clans of the tribe of Dan. For the tribe of Dan, Moses records approximately 2,000 more people in this second census than in the first census.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:42–43 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 one scene.

In the scene: Moses records the clans and number of men in the tribe of Dan.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Dan
- Shuhamites

Dan is the ancestor of the people of the tribe of Dan. Dan has already died.

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

Moses is telling us the results of the census that Moses and Eleazar took of the Israelites with the help of the Israelite community leaders. Moses has told us about the tribes of Reuben, Simeon, Gad, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Manasseh, Ephraim, and Benjamin. Now Moses is telling us about the tribe of Dan.

The list of the tribe of Dan names the son, or the male descendant, of Dan who has a clan named after him and exists at this time. The clan name is made from the name of a male descendant of Dan. The number of men of fighting age in the tribe of Dan at the time of this census is 64,400.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:42–43 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:

- Moses
- Dan
- Shuhamites

Dan has already died.

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 us about the tribe of Dan. The descendants of Dan, son of Jacob, who finished the journey from Egypt and are camped on the plains of Moab near the River Jordan and Jericho belong to one clan. The Shuhamite clan are the descendants of Shuham.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Shuhamites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "We are a big tribe," or, "We hope there is plenty of land for all of us."

Moses tells us that there are 64,400 fighting people in the tribe of Dan.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "The tribe of Dan will need lots of land to support their people."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:42–43 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Moses tells us the results of the census for the tribe of Dan. Moses records the male descendants, or the **sons**, of Dan according to their **clan**, or family group. Use the same words or phrases for sons and clan that you used in previous passages.

The number of fighting men in the tribe of Dan is 64,400.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 26:42-43

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
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- [FIA Step 4](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Numbers 26:44-47

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 26:44-47 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:44–47 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:44–47 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this passage, we continue to hear the number of Israelites who are on the plains of Moab, near Jericho and east of the Jordan River. You will remember that Yahweh asked Moses and Eleazar to take a census of, or to count and record, all of the men 20 years old and older who can fight. In this passage, Moses tells us about the tribe of Asher, and the clans, or the family groups, in this tribe. Asher was a son of Jacob who is also known as Israel.

Stop here as a group and look at a map of the plains of Moab, the Jordan River, and Jericho, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Moses tells us about the sons, or the male descendants, of Asher. In the book of Genesis, when Jacob and his family left Canaan to go to Egypt, Moses told us about the sons, or the male descendants, of Asher. The people that Moses lists here in the book of Numbers is similar to the earlier list. Asher's son Ishvah is missing from Numbers. It is possible that Ishvah died without having a family, or without having a big enough family to start a clan.

You will remember from the previous passage that the Israelites named clans after an important ancestor and added an ending to the ancestor's name to show it is a clan name. Moses gives the direct sons of Asher as Imnah, Ishvi, and Beriah. Descendants of Imnah are part of the Imnite clan. Descendants of Ishvi are part of the Ishvite clan. Descendants of Beriah are part of the Beriite clan. Heber and Malchiel were descended from Beriah. They are probably the direct sons of Beriah. Descendants of Heber are part of the Heberite clan. Descendants of Malchiel are part of the Malchielite clan. Moses reminds the Israelites that Asher had a daughter called Serah. We do not know why Moses mentions Serah at this time.

Moses records 53,400 men who are 20 years old or older in all of the clans of the tribe of Asher. For the tribe of Asher, Moses records almost 12,000 more people in this second census than in the first census.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:44–47 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 the scene: Moses records the clans and number of men in the tribe of Asher.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Asher
- Imnites, Ishvites, Beriites, Heberites, and Malchielites

Asher is the ancestor of the people of the tribe of Asher. Asher has already died.

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

Moses is telling us the results of the census that Moses and Eleazar took of the Israelites with the help of the Israelite community leaders. Moses has told us about the tribes of Reuben, Simeon, Gad, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Manasseh, Ephraim, Benjamin, and Dan. Now Moses is telling us about the tribe of Asher.

The list of the tribe of Asher names the sons, or the male descendants, of Asher who have clans named after them and exist at this time. The clan names are made from the name of a male descendant of Asher. Moses reminds the Israelites that Asher had a daughter called Serah. The number of men of fighting age in the tribe of Asher at the time of this census is 53,400.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:44–47 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:

- Moses
- Asher
- Imnites, Ishvites, Beriites, Heberites, and Malchielites

Asher has already died.

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 us about the tribe of Asher. The descendants of Asher, son of Jacob, who finished the journey from Egypt and are camped on the plains of Moab near the River Jordan and Jericho belong to five clans. The Imnite clan are the descendants of Imnah. The Ishvite clan are the descendants of Ishvi. The Beriite clan are the descendants of Beriah. The Heberite clan are the descendants of Heber. The Malchielite clan are the descendants of Malchiel.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Imnites, Ishvites, Beriites, Heberites, and Malchielites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "The years of travel have been hard," or, "We are ready to fight for our new land."

Moses tells us that there are 53,400 fighting people in the tribe of Asher.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Asher's clans have grown big. There are many people who can fight."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:44–47 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Moses tells us the results of the census for the tribe of Asher. Moses records the male descendants, or **sons**, of Asher according to their **clan**, or family group. Use the same words or phrases for sons and clan that you used in previous passages.

The number of fighting men in the tribe of Asher is 53,400.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 26:44-47

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
- [FIA Step 2](#)
- [FIA Step 3](#)
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- [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](#)

Numbers 26:48–50

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 26:48–50 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:48–50 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:48–50 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this passage, we continue to hear the number of Israelites who are on the plains of Moab, near Jericho and east of the Jordan River. You will remember that Yahweh asked Moses and Eleazar to take a census of, or to count and record, all of the men 20 years old and older who can fight. In this passage, Moses tells us about the

tribe of Naphtali, and the clans, or the family groups, in this tribe. Naphtali was a son of Jacob who is also known as Israel.

Stop here as a group and look at a map of the plains of Moab, the Jordan River, and Jericho, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Moses tells us about the sons, or the male descendants, of Naphtali. In the book of Genesis, when Jacob and his family left Canaan to go to Egypt, Moses told us about the sons, or the male descendants, of Naphtali. The people that Moses lists here in the book of Numbers is the same as the earlier list.

You will remember from the previous passage that the Israelites named clans after an important ancestor and added an ending to the ancestor's name to show it is a clan name. Moses gives the direct sons of Naphtali as Jahzeel, Guni, Jezer, and Shillem. Descendants of Jahzeel are part of the Jahzeelite clan. Descendants of Guni are part of the Gunite clan. Descendants of Jezer are part of the Jezerite clan. Descendants of Shillem are part of the Shillemite clan.

Moses records 45,400 men who are 20 years old or older in all of the clans of the tribe of Naphtali. For the tribe of Naphtali, Moses records 8,000 fewer people in this second census than in the first census.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:48–50 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 the scene: Moses records the clans and number of men in the tribe of Naphtali.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Naphtali
- Jahzeelites, Gunites, Jezerites, and Shillemites

Naphtali is the ancestor of the people of the tribe of Naphtali. Naphtali has already died.

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

Moses is telling us the results of the census that Moses and Eleazar took of the Israelites with the help of the Israelite community leaders. Moses has told us about the tribes of Reuben, Simeon, Gad, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Manasseh, Ephraim, Benjamin, Dan and Asher. Now, Moses is telling us about the tribe of Naphtali.

The list of the tribe of Naphtali names the sons, or the male descendants, of Naphtali who have clans named after them and exist at this time. The clan names are made from the name of a male descendant of Naphtali. The number of men of fighting age in the tribe of Naphtali at the time of this census is 45,400.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:48–50 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:

- Moses
- Naphtali
- Jahzeelites, Gunites, Jezerites, and Shillemites

Naphtali has already died.

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 us about the tribe of Naphtali. The descendants of Naphtali, son of Jacob, who finished the journey from Egypt and are camped on the plains of Moab near the River Jordan and Jericho belong to four clans. The Jahzeelite clan are the descendants of Jahzel. The Gunite clan are the descendants of Guni. The Jezerite clan are the descendants of Jezer. The Shillemite clan are the descendants of Shillem.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Jahzeelites, Gunites, Jezerites, and Shillemites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "So many people have died since we left Mount Sinai," or, "We will stay faithful to Yahweh and receive Yahweh's blessing."

Moses tells us that there are 45,400 fighting people in the tribe of Naphtali.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I am sad that the clans of Naphtali have become smaller."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:48–50 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage. Moses tells us the results of the census for the tribe of Naphtali. Moses records the male descendants, or **sons**, of Naphtali according to their **clan**, or family group. Use the same words or phrases for sons and clan that you used in previous passages.

The number of fighting men in the tribe of Naphtali is 45,400.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 26:48-50

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (6757096 KB)

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Numbers 26:51-56

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 26:51-56 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:51-56 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:51–56 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this passage, we hear the result of the census of the Israelites who are on the plains of Moab, near Jericho and the Jordan River. You will remember that Yahweh asked Moses and Eleazar to take a census of, or to count and record, all of the men 20 years old and older who can fight.

Stop here as a group and look at a map of the plains of Moab, the Jordan River, and Jericho, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Moses tells us the total number of fighting men who are 20 years old or older who Moses and Eleazar have recorded in the census. There are 601,730 men. You may remember from earlier passages that the counts of the Israelites may only give an idea of the number of people rather than the exact number at the time. The number of men recorded in the second census is a bit smaller than the number recorded in the first census near Mount Sinai.

Yahweh speaks to Moses to tell Moses how to divide the land among the tribes of Israel. We do not know if Yahweh spoke to Moses after the census was finished or after Yahweh gave Moses instructions to take the census. Yahweh now gives the second reason for taking the census of the Israelites on the plains of Moab. Yahweh tells Moses that the land that Yahweh is giving to the Israelites will be divided up according to the number of names for each tribe.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you feel about the idea of owning land? Do some or all of the people in your community own the land that they use? Does the land belong to someone else or to no one? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh gives the land to the tribes so that the tribes will not have to choose between themselves who gets which piece of land.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: If your community gets a new piece of land to own or to use, how do you decide who uses or owns the land? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh gives the land as a gift that is passed on, or inherited, from one generation to the next generation of people within the tribe.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your community, when someone who owns something valuable dies, how does the community decide who will get the valuable item? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses to give a larger piece of land to a larger group and a smaller piece of land to a smaller group. Moses will give every tribe an amount of land that relates to, or is in proportion to, the size of the tribe.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story of a time when a person, or people, had too much land, or too little land, to live on. What difficulties did that person or group of people have? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses that the land is given out using a system of casting lots. When someone casts lots, they use something like pebbles or pieces of straw, which they may throw or draw from a container. The outcome is random, with no pattern and no influence from any person, and it determines the decision. In the countries surrounding the Israelites at Mount Sinai, people often used items to cast lots to help make a decision. We do not know what system of casting lots Yahweh wants Moses to use to allocate the land. We do know that the high priest carries the Urim and Thummim for decision-making in his breastpiece of judgement. We also know from elsewhere in the Bible that although the lot is cast by a person, Yahweh determines how the lots fall. The casting of lots is a way for Yahweh to show Yahweh's will.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What method does your community use to decide something in a random way? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh wants to assign the land by the casting of lots so the tribes will not argue that Moses gave better land to one tribe than to another tribe because Moses prefers one tribe over another tribe. Yahweh wants the Israelite tribes to know that the process is fair.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story of a time when one of your parents, or someone in your family, divided out something special among you and your family or friends. Did you all get the same amount, or did someone get more or something better? How did you feel? Pause this audio here.

Each group of people will be given land according to their tribe. This means that clans will be given land next to each other. The people will have more power by having everyone from the same tribe in the same place.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your community, do people who are related to each other live near one another, or do they live wherever they like? How do you decide where people who are related to each other live? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses that Moses must determine the location of the land by casting, or throwing, lots. Moses decides the amount of land each tribe receives using the size of the tribe. Bigger tribes get more land. Smaller tribes get less land.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:51–56 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: Moses records the total number of Israelite men.

In the second scene: Yahweh tells Moses how to give out the land to the tribes of Israel.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Men of Israel
- Yahweh

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

Moses finishes reporting the census taken on the plains of Moab by recording the total number of men of Israel who can fight. Moses records all the results of the census after telling us how Yahweh instructed Moses to take a census.

Yahweh tells Moses how to give out the land to the tribes of Israel. Moses may be in the tabernacle or somewhere else in the camp of the Israelites. We do not know if Yahweh gives these instructions to Moses after the census is completed or after Yahweh instructs Moses to take the census.

Yahweh tells Moses that larger tribes will get more land and smaller tribes will get less land. Yahweh emphasizes that Yahweh wants Moses to use the casting of lots to decide who gets each location of land. The land is a gift from Yahweh that is passed on from one generation to the next within the tribe.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:51–56 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:

- Moses
- Men 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.

Moses records the total number of Israelite men.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "Many Israelites have survived our difficult time travelling here," or, "We have lost a lot of people on our way to the plains of Moab," or, "There are many men who will fight the Midianites."

Yahweh tells Moses to give the land to the tribes as a gift to be passed from one generation in the tribe to the next. Yahweh tells Moses to give more land to the larger tribes and less to the smaller tribes. Yahweh tells Moses to cast lots to decide which tribe has each area of land.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the men of Israel, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "We are excited to receive the land that Yahweh is giving us," or, "Yahweh will make sure each tribe has good land."

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "My people will have good land," or, "Each clan in each tribe will have enough land to look after their families," or, "I do not want my people to argue about who has which piece of land."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:51–56 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Moses records the total number of **men of Israel** as 601,730. Use the same word for **Israelites** or men of Israel that you have used in previous passages. Israelites is in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses how to divide the land among the tribes of Israel. Yahweh is the personal name for God. In this passage, God is called Yahweh. Be sure to translate Yahweh in the same way that you have in previous passages, and remember that Yahweh is in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses that the land is to be **allotted**, or **divided up**, among the tribes of Israel.

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

The land is an **inheritance**. An inheritance is the property or wealth that a child receives from their father when their father dies. Yahweh gives his children an inheritance, or a gift from himself as the father to his children. Use the same word or phrase for inheritance that you used in previous passages.

A larger **tribe** will receive more land and a smaller tribe will receive less land. Use the same word or phrase for tribe that you used in previous passages.

Moses will divide up and give out the land **by lots** or the **casting of lots**. The casting of lots is a way to allocate something in a random way or without preferring one person more than another person. Casting lots may involve throwing down stones or wood with or without marks on them. In the Bible, casting lots may give Yahweh an opportunity to show Yahweh's choice or will in a situation.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **lots** or **casting of lots**. 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

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.

Numbers 26:51-56

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (12440552 KB)

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Numbers 26:57-65

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 26:57–65 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:57–65 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:57–65 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this passage, Moses tells us about the tribe of Levi, called the Levites. Moses and Eleazar did not include the Levites in the census of the Israelites who are on the plains of Moab, near Jericho and east of the Jordan River. You will remember that the Levites are separate from the other Israelites and belong to Yahweh.

Stop here as a group and look at a map of the plains of Moab, the Jordan River, and Jericho, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Moses tells us about the Levite clans, or the family groups in the tribe. The Levites have three main clans. You will remember from the previous passages that the Israelites named clans after an important ancestor and added an ending to the ancestor's name to show it is a clan name. Descendants of Gershon are part of the Gershonite clan. Descendants of Kohath are part of the Kohathite clan. Descendants of Merari are part of the Merarite clan. Moses tells us about five more clans in the Levite tribe. The Libnites are descended from Libni, who was descended from Gershon. The Hebronites are descended from Hebron, who was descended from Kohath. The Mahlites are descended from Mahli, and the Mushites are descended from Mushi. Mahli and Mushi are descended from Merari. The Korahites are descended from Korah, who was descended from Kohath. The Libnite, Hebronite, Mahlite, Mushite, and Korahite family groups are sometimes called sub-clans. A sub-clan is a smaller family group that is part of a bigger clan. We do not know what happened to the other three clans or sub-clans that Moses recorded at Mount Sinai when Moses counted and recorded the Levites the first time.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What family groups do you identify yourselves as belonging to? Do you belong to more than one family group? Pause this audio here.

Moses reminds the Israelites of the ancestors of the high priest. Moses reminds the Israelites that Eleazar is a Kohathite Levite and part of the clan that Yahweh chose to serve in the tabernacle. Also, Eleazar is the son of Aaron, and Yahweh chose Aaron to be high priest. Yahweh told Moses and Aaron that Aaron's son would be high priest when Aaron died. Amram was the son of Kohath. We do not know if this was the direct son of Kohath or a descendant of Kohath. Amram was the father of Moses and Aaron. We do not know if Amram, father of Moses, is the same Amram who is named son of Kohath. If Amram was a direct son of Kohath, then Amram, father of Moses and Aaron, was probably a different Amram. Moses shows the Israelites that Aaron was a Levite from both his father and his mother. Jochebed, Aaron's mother, was a daughter, or a female descendant, of Levi. Levi has been dead a long time and cannot be Jochebed's direct father.

Moses reminds us of Aaron's sons and gives a third and final warning to the Israelites to stay obedient to Yahweh. You will remember that Moses reminded the Israelites of Dathan and Abiram, from the tribe of Reuben, as the first warning. Moses reminded the Israelites of Er and Onan, from the tribe of Judah, as the second warning. Nadab and Abihu, from the tribe of Levi, are the third warning. Nadab and Abihu did not follow Yahweh's instructions about the kind of fire to burn, and Yahweh killed them.

Moses records 23,000 men and boys who are one month old or older in the tribe of Levi. The Levites are recorded in the same way as at Mount Sinai. This is different from the other tribes of Israel. Moses includes babies more than one month old, boys, and all men in the count of Levites. We do not know how many people are in each clan. For the tribe of Levi, Moses records 1,000 more people in this second count than in the first count.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: If someone makes a count of your people, who is included in the count? Are different people groups counted or recorded differently? Pause this audio here.

Moses took the census of the tribes of Israel on the plains of Moab to find out the amount of land that each tribe would need and how many men could fight. The Levites do not need land, and they will not fight, so they are not included in the second census. The Levites receive no inheritance, or no gift of land to be passed down through the generations, because the tribes of Israel give a part of what they have to support the Levites. The Levites are set apart to serve Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Who, if anyone, in your community does not buy or grow their own food but has other members of the community provide food for them? Why does the rest of the community look after them? Pause this audio here.

Moses finishes telling the Israelites about the second census and the record of the Levites. Moses has told us the number of men who are 20 years old or older in the 12 tribes of Israel by their clans and the number of Levite boys and men who are one month old or older who were on the plains of Moab at the time of the census.

Moses tells us that Yahweh's judgment of the people of Israel is complete. Almost no one who was counted and recorded in the first census was alive at the second census. Only two men were counted and recorded in both places. Caleb and Joshua were faithful to Yahweh and survived the time in the wilderness. Moses does not include himself as someone who will survive. Moses knows that Moses will not live to enter the land that Yahweh has promised to the Israelites. Moses was unfaithful to Yahweh and will die in the wilderness.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:57–65 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: Moses records the Levite clans and sub-clans.

In the second scene: Moses reminds the Israelites of the ancestors of the high priests Aaron and Eleazar.

In the third scene: Moses reminds the Israelites of Nadab and Abihu as a warning to stay obedient to Yahweh.

In the fourth scene: Moses tells the Israelites the number of Levites on the plains of Moab.

In the fifth scene: Moses ends by telling the Israelites about the second census. Moses tells the Israelites that Yahweh has completed Yahweh's judgment of the Israelites' unfaithfulness.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Gershonites, Kohathites, Merarites, Libnites, Hebronites, Mahlites, Mushites, and Korahites
- Aaron and Aaron's ancestors, Amram, Kohath, and Jochebed
- Nadab and Abihu, Aaron's dead sons
- Eleazar, the high priest
- Ithamar, a priest
- Yahweh
- Caleb and Joshua

Aaron and Aaron's ancestors, Amram, Kohath and Jochebed, are already dead. Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu, have also died.

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

Moses has finished giving the results of the census of the tribes of Israel. Now, Moses gives a list of the tribe of Levi and names the sons, or the male descendants, of Levi who have clans or sub-clans named after them and exist at this time. The clan and sub-clan names are made from the names of male descendants of Levi.

Moses gives some extra background information that does not relate to the census. Moses talks about Kohath's descendants and gives a warning to the Israelites. Kohath was the ancestor of Aaron, Moses, and Miriam. Aaron was the direct father of Eleazar. Moses is reminding the Israelites that Aaron and Aaron's sons have been set apart by Yahweh to be Yahweh's priests. Moses reminds the Israelites of Aaron's first and second sons, Nadab and Abihu. Moses uses Nadab and Abihu as a third warning to the Israelites. The warning reminds the Israelites to stay obedient to Yahweh and only do what Yahweh tells them to do. Yahweh killed Nadab and Abihu because they offered fire to Yahweh the wrong way.

After Moses gives the third warning, Moses finishes recording the Levites who are at the plains of Moab. The number of male people, boys and men, who are one month old or older in the tribe of Levi at the time of this record is 23,000. Moses explains to the Israelites that the Levites are recorded separately because the Levites will not receive an inheritance, or gift of land. Yahweh provides food and shelter for the Levites in a different way than the rest of the tribes of Israel.

Stop here and do this activity as a group: Have one person in the group talk about what they did yesterday, but before they finish, have them pause their story in the middle and give extra background information about a person who they saw yesterday. Pay attention to how they give the extra information and then go back to the main story. Pause this audio here.

The last section of the passage is an ending for all the previous passages where Moses tells the Israelites about the second census and record of the tribes of Israel and record of the Levites. The Israelites now have a full record of all the Israelites who are at the plains of Moab by the River Jordan at Jericho. Moses tells the Israelites that the record from this census is of different people than the record from the first census. This is because everyone from the first census, except Caleb and Joshua, has died. Yahweh's judgment has been completed.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:57–65 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
- Gershonites, Kohathites, Merarites, Libnites, Hebronites, Mahlites, Mushites, and Korahites
- Aaron and Aaron's ancestors, Amram, Kohath, and Jochebed
- Nadab and Abihu, Aaron's dead sons
- Eleazar, the high priest
- Ithamar, a priest
- Yahweh
- Caleb and Joshua

Aaron, Amram, Kohath, Jochebed, Nadab, and Abihu are already dead.

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 records the Levite clans and sub-clans.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I want to give a record of the Levite clans who are at the plains of Moab," or, "Some of the family groups of the Levites have not survived our journey to the plains of Moab."

Ask the person playing the Gershonites, Kohathites, Merarites, Libnites, Hebronites, Mahlites, Mushites, and Korahites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "We have served Yahweh on the journey through the wilderness," or, "We are happy to be close to entering the land that Yahweh has promised to the tribes of Israel."

Moses reminds the Israelites of the ancestors of the high priests Aaron and Eleazar.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "The Israelites need to remember that Eleazar is high priest because he is a Levite and descended from Aaron, who Yahweh chose to be high priest," or, "Yahweh's high priest will always be a Levite descended from Aaron."

Ask the person playing Eleazar, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "Yahweh has chosen me to be high priest because I am the oldest surviving son of Aaron."

Moses reminds the Israelites of Nadab and Abihu as a warning to stay obedient to Yahweh.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "The Levites need to follow all of Yahweh's instructions carefully as they serve Yahweh."

Ask the person playing Ithamar, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "I feel like Yahweh is warning me to be careful! I will only serve Yahweh as Yahweh's priest and not try to do any of the work of the high priest."

Moses tells the Israelites the number of Levites on the plains of Moab.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Gershonites, Kohathites, Merarites, Libnites, Hebronites, Mahlites, Mushites, and Korahites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "Many Levites will be ready to serve Yahweh in our new homeland," or, "The other tribes will need to provide a lot of food to support all of us."

Moses ends by telling the Israelites about the second census. Moses tells the Israelites that Yahweh has completed Yahweh's judgment of the Israelites' unfaithfulness. Only Caleb and Joshua were recorded in the census at both Mount Sinai and the plains of Moab.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "Moses and Eleazar have obeyed me and made a record of all my people," or "I am so happy for my people! They are ready to cross into the land that I have promised them," or, "My judgment on my people is complete."

Ask the person playing Caleb and Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like, "We are sad that we have seen our friends and family die in the wilderness, but we are so happy to finally enter the land that looked so good all those years ago."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 26:57–65 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Moses records the Levite **clans** and sub-clans or smaller **family groups**. Use the same word or phrase for clan or family group that you used in previous passages.

Kohath was the **father of**, or **fathered**, Amram. The word fathered means that Kohath caused Amram to be born. Use the same word or phrase for "father of" or fathered that you used in previous passages.

Amram's wife was Jochebed, the **daughter**, or **female descendant**, of Levi. Use the same word or phrase for daughter or female descendant that you used in previous passages.

Jochebed was **born to**, or **descended from**, Levi. Use the same word or phrase for born to or descended from that you used in previous passages.

Nadab and Abihu offered unauthorised fire to **Yahweh**. When someone does something that is unauthorized, it means that they do not follow Yahweh's instructions. Yahweh is the personal name for God. In this passage, God is called Yahweh. Be sure to translate Yahweh in the same way that you have in previous passages, and remember that Yahweh is in the Master Glossary. Nadab and Abihu made an **offering** to Yahweh. Use the same word for offer or offering that you have used in previous passages, and remember that offering is in the Master Glossary.

Moses did not count the Levites in the same way that Moses counted the other **Israelites**, because there was no inheritance or land for the Levites. Use the same word or phrase for Israelites and inheritance that you used in previous passages. Israelites is in the Master Glossary.

The census was done by Moses and Eleazar the **priest**. Use the same word or phrase for priest that you used in previous passages. For more information on priest, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses and Eleazar recorded the people in the plains of Moab. Use the same word or phrase for plains of Moab that you used in previous passages. No one who was counted in the **wilderness** of Sinai was still alive for this census, except for Joshua and Caleb. Use the same word or phrase for wilderness that you used in previous passages, and remember that wilderness is in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 26:57-65**Audio Content**[webm zip](#) (17220990 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Numbers 27:1-11*Hear and Heart**Hear and Heart*

In this step, hear Numbers 27:1-11 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 27:1-11 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**Setting the Stage*

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 27:1-11 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last passage, a new generation of Israelites had grown up to replace the wilderness generation. Yahweh told Moses and Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, to take a tribal census of all the Israelite men who are 20 years old or older. These men should be ready to take part in military war to take possession of the land of Canaan. Moses would also use the information from the census to determine what land each clan or family would inherit in the promised land.

We see in the census that there is a father, Zelophehad, from the tribe of Manasseh, who does not have any sons. Zelophehad has five daughters. The names of his daughters are Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. In the culture of that time, only sons inherited land from their fathers.

Some time after the tribal census, the daughters of Zelophehad approach the entrance to the tent of meeting, or tabernacle, and stand before Moses. The tent of meeting is a place where Moses met with the people to hear their concerns.

The daughters present themselves before Moses, Eleazar the priest, the chiefs or leaders, and before the whole community of Israel at the door of the tent of meeting. Moses, the priest, and the leaders are an important group of people who make the decisions when people have a request. In a polite way, the daughters say to Moses, Eleazar, the chiefs, and the rest of the Israelites, "Kindly give us our possession, or property, among our father's relatives." Property rights normally passed from father to son, and daughters did not have rights to the property that belonged to their father. These daughters were asking for something unusual.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Discuss in your culture how you share inheritance among family members. Pause this audio here.

The daughters explain to Moses, Eleazar, the chiefs, and the rest of the Israelites why they should receive the property. First they show that their father was a faithful man. Remember in the previous stories that Korah, Dathan, and Abiram rebelled against Moses and Aaron. The daughters point out that their father was not among those rebels. The daughters say that their father died "for his own sin," meaning that their father, like everyone, sometimes sinned, but that his sin did not affect others in the community in a big way like the sin of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.

Zelophehad's daughters ask, "Why should the name of our father be taken away from his clan because he had no son?" Zelophehad's daughters know that if they do not inherit the land, their father's name will no longer exist in the clan, or family. Zelophehad was the son of Hepher, the son of Gilead, the son of Makir, the son of Manasseh. Therefore, Zelophehad's daughters belong to the clans of Manasseh, the son of Joseph. The daughters do not want their father's name to disappear from his clan, or family, in the tribe of Manasseh. In the culture of that time, family names were very important, and it was important to a family that someone continue to have the same name as their ancestors for many generations.

Stop and discuss what happens in your culture when a father's name disappears from his clan. What happens to the rest of his family? Pause this audio here.

No one had ever made such a request before, so there were no laws about what to do if a man had no sons to whom to give his land. Moses asks Yahweh for direction. Moses brings the daughters' case before Yahweh. We do not know where Moses talks to Yahweh about this, although it appears that Moses is at the door of the tent of meeting where Yahweh would meet the leaders of Yahweh's people Israel to make decisions about important things.

Yahweh gives Moses a decision that has consequences for the entire community of Israel. Yahweh gives Moses an official decree, or a legal ruling. Yahweh says that the daughters of Zelophehad are right; the daughters have a valid claim. Yahweh says that Moses must certainly give the daughters property as an inheritance. Moses must transfer the father's inheritance over to the daughters so that the daughters will also have property among the property of their father's brothers, or their uncles.

Yahweh tells Moses to tell the Israelites that if a man dies and does not give birth to a male child, then the Israelites should give that man's inheritance to the man's daughter. Yahweh says that in situations where the man also does not have a daughter, that man's inheritance should be transferred to the man's blood brothers. Yahweh says that if the man does not have a blood brother, the inheritance should go to the man's father's brothers. If the man's father also has no brothers, the inheritance should go to another close relative.

These are the laws and commandments Yahweh gives to the Israelites. These statements that Yahweh makes became the legal requirement, or statutes, about cases like these involving inheritance of property in the Promised Land. Yahweh wants Moses to give this formal ruling, or direct speech, to the people of Israel.

Stop here and discuss these questions as a group: In your culture, who are the people involved when there is disagreement among family members about property inheritance? Tell a story about when a family member had some disagreement about who would inherit the properties of their father. Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 27:1–11 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 three scenes.

In the first scene: The daughters of Zelophehad come to the tent of meeting and stand before Moses to claim their father's inheritance among their father's brothers.

In the second scene: In a polite way, the daughters ask Moses, Eleazar, the chiefs, and the rest of the Israelites to let the daughters receive their father's inheritance. The daughters ask why their father's name should disappear from their clan because their father does not have a son. Moses looks to Yahweh for direction about the daughters' case.

In the third scene: Yahweh gives a specific legal decision about how to judge inheritance cases like this one.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Eleazar the priest
- Chiefs or leaders
- Community of the Israelites
- Daughters of Zelophehad: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah

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

The first scene happens shortly after Moses and Eleazar the priest take a tribal census of all the Israelites who are ready to take part in military activities when taking possession of Canaan. This census also determined who would receive property in the Promised Land.

In this passage, we hear more about the daughters of Zelophehad. We hear that Zelophehad is the son of Hepher. Hepher is the son of Gilead. Gilead is the son of Makir. Makir is the son of Manasseh. Manasseh is the son of Joseph. Zelophehad and his daughters belong to the tribe of Manasseh. We hear the names of the five daughters: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. The five daughters come to the tent of meeting and stand before Moses, Eleazar, the tribal leaders or chiefs, and the entire community of Israel. In this way, the entire community of Israel hears the demands of the daughters and understands Yahweh's ruling.

Stop here and discuss as a group: In this introduction we hear the names of Zelophehad's family and daughters. This is important information to help us understand the daughters' position in the family. When you want to introduce someone and talk about their family, how do you talk about it? Practice introducing someone and their family history. Listen for the words you use and how you introduce them. Pause this audio here.

In the second scene, the daughters of Zelophehad began their plea by explaining that their father had died in the wilderness. However, their father was not part of Korah's followers who once opposed Yahweh. Although

their father died, their father died for his own sins. The daughters are showing the difference between their father's sin and the sin of the band of Korah. The sin of Korah's followers made bad consequences for all of Israel, but their father's sin did not. However, now the worst punishment of all would happen to their father. Their father did not have any sons, so no one would inherit their father's property rights. The daughters ask a question that they do not expect an answer to. They ask, "Why should our father's name disappear from his clan because he had no son?" This means that their father's name would no longer pass down from one generation to the next generation in the land that the tribe of Manasseh received. Because their father does not have a son, their father's name can only be preserved if his daughters inherit his land. In response to the daughters' request, Moses asks Yahweh for a legal decision so that Moses can address the case these women have brought to Moses.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Talk about a time when your community asked for a person in authority to make a legal decision. Listen for the words you use to describe what you are asking for. Pause this audio here.

In the third scene, Yahweh responds to Moses. Yahweh gives Moses a legal decision about this case. The first thing Yahweh says is that these women are right; these women have a valid claim. Yahweh very strongly says that Moses must give these women their father's inheritance among the inheritance that all of their father's tribe will receive. Moses must give their father's inheritance over to the women from among their father's brothers, or relatives. Inheritance in Israel had been transferred to males on the father's side. Now, Yahweh pronounces a new rule about inheritance in Israel. If a man dies, and the man has no son, then the man's inheritance will pass to his daughter. If the man has no daughter, the man's inheritance will go to that man's brothers. If the man has no brothers, the man's inheritance will go to his father's brothers. If the man's father does not have brothers, the inheritance will go to the man's nearest blood relatives.

These become the legal requirements, or customs, the Israelites now adopt to address legal issues in circumstances like this one.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 27:1–11 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:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Eleazar the priest
- Chiefs
- Community of the Israelites
- Daughters of Zelophehad: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah

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, the daughters of Zelophehad approach the entrance to the tent of meeting and stand before Moses to present their special inheritance case. Zelophehad was the son of Hepher, the son of Gilead, the son of Makir, the son of Manasseh. Zelophehad's daughters therefore belonged to the clans of Manasseh, son of Joseph. The names of Zelophehad's daughters were: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah.

Pause the action.

Ask the person playing Moses, "How are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "I hope all is well, because I am seeing all five of the daughters of Zelophehad standing not only before me at the tent of meeting, but before the entire community of Israel."

Ask the people playing daughters of Zelophehad, "How are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "We feel there is no other way to meet with Moses than at the tent of meeting. We are afraid. We are not too sure of the outcome, because we know that daughters do not usually have inheritance. But we hope that Moses will give us some kind consideration."

In the second scene, Zelophehad's daughters present themselves before Moses, Eleazar the priest, the chiefs, and the whole community of Israel at the door of the tent of meeting. The daughters say, "When our father died in the wilderness, he was not among Korah's followers who gathered themselves together against Yahweh. But he died in the wilderness for his own sins and he had no sons left. So, why should the name of our father disappear from his clan because he had no son? We ask that the properties among our father's brothers or uncles be given to us."

Pause the action.

Ask the people playing Moses, Eleazar the priest, the chiefs, and the community of Israel, "How are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like: "We really respect the courage of these women in search of justice. This is an issue that truly needs urgent attention. We must find a lasting solution so issues like this do not reoccur," or, "How dare these women come to ask for something that is not their right!"

Ask the people playing the daughters of Zelophehad, "How are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "We are proud that we took the opportunity at the tent of meeting to express our fears and expectations towards our rights to our inheritance. We are hopeful that justice shall be done."

In the third scene, Moses looks to Yahweh for direction. Yahweh says to Moses, "The daughters of Zelophehad are right; they have a valid claim. You must certainly give them property as an inheritance and transfer their father's inheritance over to them among their father's brothers, or uncles." Yahweh continues to talk to Moses, saying, "You shall say to the people of Israel, if a man dies, and has no son, then the people of Israel shall cause the man's inheritance to pass to his daughter. And if the man has no daughter, give his inheritance to his brother. And if the man has no brothers, then the people of Israel shall give the man's inheritance to his relative that is next to him in his family line. And these shall be to the people of Israel the statutes and ordinances of Yahweh from Moses."

Pause the action.

Ask the person playing Moses, "How are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "I am really surprised and altogether happy that Yahweh took such decisions to change the narrative in our community."

Ask the people playing the daughters of Zelophehad, "How are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "We are very hopeful that Moses will respond to us without bias and make sure that we get justice among our father's brothers or uncles."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 27:1–11 in the easiest to understand translation.

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

The daughters of Zelophehad present themselves before Moses, Eleazar the **priest**, the **leaders** or chiefs, and before the whole congregation or **community of Israel** at the door of the **tent of meeting**. Translate priest, leaders, and community of Israel in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that priest is in the Master Glossary. The tent of meeting refers to the tabernacle. Translate tent of meeting in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that tabernacle is in the Master Glossary.

The daughters of Zelophahed explain that their father was not part of the rebellion, but that he died in the wilderness for his own **sin**, or disobedience to God. Translate sin in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that sin is in the Master Glossary.

The people of Israel have been wandering in the **wilderness** for several years. Use the same word for wilderness that you have in previous passages, and remember that wilderness is in the Master Glossary.

Moses brings the daughters' case before **Yahweh**. Yahweh is the personal name for God. Use the same name for Yahweh that you have in previous passages, and remember that Yahweh is in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses that Yahweh's ruling will be a **statute** and an **ordinance** for the **Israelites**. Statutes are often rules that show people what tasks to do, and ordinances are established customs or legal decisions. In this case the two words are used together to show that Yahweh is making a legal requirement to use in the same way in any future cases. Use the same words for statutes, ordinances, and Israelites that you have used in previous passages. Israelites, statute, and ordinance are in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 27:1–11

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (11544939 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Numbers 27:12–23

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 27:12–23 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 27:12–23 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 27:12–23 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last passage, the daughters of Zelophehad approached Moses to request their possession and inheritance. Moses promised that the daughters would receive their inheritance.

In this passage, Yahweh tells Moses to go up on a mountain in the mountain range of Abarim and see the land that Yahweh will give to the people of Israel. The mountain range of Abarim is about 10 miles northwest of the

Jordan River. Yahweh tells Moses that after Moses sees the land, Yahweh will "gather Moses to his people" like Moses's brother Aaron. This means that Moses will die and go to the place of the dead with Moses's ancestors. Yahweh reminds Moses how Moses and Aaron disobeyed by failing to make it known to the people of Israel that it was Yahweh who made it possible for the Israelites to get water from the rock at Meribah. Yahweh reminds Moses how Yahweh had decided that Moses and Aaron would not enter the Promised Land. Moses will only see the Promised Land from Mount Abirim.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, if a community leader disobeys the instructions of the king, or the main leader, and the king or main leader decides to replace that community leader with someone else because they disobeyed, how does that replacement happen? Pause this audio here.

Moses says to Yahweh, "May you, the God who gives breath to all living things, select someone to lead the people of Israel and direct their going out and coming in. This will help your people not be like sheep without a shepherd." Moses prays and asks Yahweh to select someone who can provide good leadership in all matters or circumstances of life, like going into battles and coming out of battles. Moses compares the people of Israel to sheep who are scattered and helpless.

Yahweh does not want the people of Israel to be without a leader or king to guide, protect, and give direction. Yahweh chose Joshua among many other potential leaders and has been preparing Joshua to be the next leader to possess the Promised Land. Now Joshua becomes the new leader who will replace Moses. Yahweh says to Moses, "Select Joshua son of Nun. He is a man who has the spirit or heart for leadership. Tell Joshua to stand before Eleazar the priest and all the people of Israel, and place your hand upon Joshua." At Yahweh's command, Moses will transfer some of Moses's authority to Joshua to take leadership, even though Moses can still speak and is very active in leading the people of Israel. Yahweh also asks Eleazar the high priest to begin to instruct Joshua about Yahweh's plans.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, how is a leader selected to lead people? Before a former leader leaves their position, what does their relationship with the new leader look like? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses to have Joshua stand before Eleazar the priest who will be the one speaking to God directly. You will remember that the high priest uses the Urim, often along with the Thummim, as holy lots to find the will of Yahweh or to receive counsel from Yahweh. The Urim and Thummim were probably stones or sticks that the high priest kept in his front pocket and sometimes threw on a flat surface, in the presence of Yahweh. The priest would look at how the Urim and Thummim landed to see what Yahweh's will was. In this way, through the instructions from Yahweh, Joshua will give the people of Israel their directions for going out and coming in, which means that Joshua will give the people their directions for the battles to conquer the Promised Land.

Moses does exactly what Yahweh commands Moses to do and presents Joshua before Eleazar the priest and the community of Israel. Moses places his hand publicly on Joshua's head to show that Moses is transferring power and authority to Joshua. Now the people will begin to obey Joshua just as Yahweh told them to do.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, what are some of the ceremonies that people do to show that someone who has been selected as a leader is officially appointed?

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 27:12–23 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 three scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh tells Moses to climb mount Abarim to see the Promised Land, but Yahweh also tells Moses that Moses will die without entering the Promised Land because of Moses's disobedience when Moses refused to honor Yahweh before the people of Israel at the waters of Meribah.

In the second scene: Moses asks Yahweh to appoint someone who can provide good leadership to the people of Israel as they enter into the Promised Land.

In the third scene: Yahweh tells Moses to appoint Joshua son of Nun to lead the people of Israel. Yahweh also tells Moses to ask Eleazar the high priest to give Joshua instructions from Yahweh.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Eleazar the priest
- Community of the Israelites
- Joshua son of Nun

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

It is important to remember that Yahweh spoke to Moses at the mountains of Abarim. The mountains are located in the northwestern region of Moab. Before this story happened, Moses and Aaron had failed to honor Yahweh by letting the children of Israel know that Yahweh was the one who brought water out of the rock at Meribah. Yahweh had decided that Moses and Aaron would no longer lead the people of Israel into the Promised Land.

Stop here and look at a photo of the mountains of Abarim. Pause this audio here.

Moses asks Yahweh in a polite way to select someone to take over the leadership from Moses. This person must be capable of leading the people of Israel into the Promised Land. The leader should be able to go out before them and come in before them, which means that he should be able to lead them in all situations. Moses is most likely thinking of the battles that the Israelites will have when they conquer the Promised Land.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How do you describe leaders in your community who are good at leading in all situations, and especially in times of war? Remember that this is the kind of leader who Moses asked Yahweh for. Pause this audio here.

Moses tells Yahweh that unless the people of Israel have a good leader, they will only be like a sheep without a shepherd. Moses compares the new leader to a shepherd, and the people of Israel to sheep. The leader, like the shepherd, will lead the Israelites, like the sheep, so that they do not scatter and become hopeless.

It is important to notice that Yahweh tells Moses to select Joshua son of Nun, who has the "spirit or heart of leadership." Most likely, Yahweh is not specifically referring to Joshua having Yahweh's spirit, but that Joshua has courage and skills to be a good leader.

Stop here and discuss how you talk about leaders in your community who have the characteristics of a good leader, like courage and skillfulness. How would you describe their "spirit or heart of leadership"? Pause this audio here.

It is important to remember that Yahweh told Moses to tell Joshua to stand before Eleazar the priest and all the congregation or community of Israel when Moses placed Moses's hand upon Joshua to transfer power and authority. Moses obeyed Yahweh's commandments and presented Joshua before Eleazar the priest and the people of Israel. Moses laid Moses's hand on Joshua's head and blessed Joshua, just as Yahweh told Moses to do.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 27:12–23 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:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Eleazar the priest
- Community of the Israelites
- Joshua son of Nun

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.

One day, Yahweh tells Moses to go up into the mountain of Abarim and see the land that Yahweh will give to the people of Israel. Yahweh says to Moses, "Because you and Aaron disobeyed my words in the wilderness of Zin before the entire Israelites, and you made me look unholy before the people, you will only see the land from Abarim Mountain. You will die without entering the land."

Pause the action.

Ask the person playing Moses, "How are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "I did not think that God would really be this angry and take such a decision against us not to enter the Promised Land."

In the second scene, Moses says to Yahweh, "You are the one who gives breath to all living things, so appoint someone over the people of Israel who will lead them out and bring them in, so that your people will not be like sheep without a shepherd."

Stop the action.

Ask the people playing Moses, "How are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Since Yahweh decided to take such a decision against me, who am I to further rebel against him? But I hope the new leader is good for the people."

In the third scene, Yahweh says to Moses, "Appoint Joshua son of Nun. He is a man who has the spirit, or heart, of leadership. Make Joshua stand before Eleazar the priest and all the community of Israel and place your hand upon him."

Stop the action.

Ask the person playing Moses, "How are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Now I am losing authority as a leader, but I will try and cooperate with God's plans through Joshua even though this is so tough for me."

Ask the person playing Joshua, "How are you feeling or thinking?" You might hear things like, "Who am I that Yahweh could have considered me fit to lead the people of Israel? I am afraid. This is a huge responsibility to handle."

Yahweh tells Moses to bring Joshua in front of Eleazar the high priest and the entire congregation of Israelites. Eleazar will use the Urim to hear from Yahweh. Joshua will lead the people in the battle to take the Promised Land.

So Moses did as Yahweh commanded. Moses took Joshua, put Joshua in front of Eleazar and the entire congregation of Israel, and placed his hands on Joshua's head to appoint Joshua.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 27:12–23 in the easiest to understand translation.

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

Yahweh tells Moses to go up to the Abarim Range of mountains. Yahweh is God's proper name. Translate Yahweh in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that Yahweh is in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses to go up on a mountain in the mountain range of Abarim and see the land that Yahweh will give to the sons of Israel, or **Israelites**. Israelites refers to the people who are descendants of Abraham. Translate Israelites in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that Israelites is in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh says to Moses, "Because you and Aaron disobeyed my words in the **wilderness** of Zin before the congregation or **community** of Israelites, and you made me look **unholy** before the people, you will only see the land from Abarim Mountain." Translate community, wilderness, and holy in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that wilderness and holy are in the Master Glossary.

Moses says to Yahweh, "You are the one who gives breath to all living things. Appoint someone over the people of Israel who will lead them out and bring them in, so that your people will not be like sheep without a **shepherd**." Because shepherds were so common in Israel, the word shepherd is often used as picture language for a protector or a ruler. God calls himself the Shepherd of Israel. People are called the sheep of God. Translate shepherd in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that shepherd is in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh says to Moses, "Select Joshua son of Nun. He is a man who has the **spirit**, or heart, of leadership." God created people with a body, and we can touch and see each other's bodies. But God also created people with thoughts and feelings and desires. We cannot see this part of a person, but we know it is there. In the Bible, this invisible part of a person is usually called a soul, but sometimes it is called a spirit. Translate spirit in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that spirit is in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses to take Joshua to stand before Eleazar the **priest** and all the people of Israel and to place Moses's hand on Joshua. Translate priest in the same way you have in previous passages, and remember that priest is in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh says that Joshua must stand before Eleazar the priest. Eleazar will speak to Yahweh directly rather than Joshua receiving instructions directly from Yahweh. Eleazar the priest will hear directions from Yahweh by the judgment of the **Urim**. While using the Urim and Thummim was a form of divination, it showed the priest what Yahweh wanted Yahweh's people to do. The priest could then give that information to the people. Yahweh allowed the priest to use the Urim and Thummim for decision-making, but only when the high priest was in the presence of Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss how you will translate **Urim** in this passage. If you have translated Urim in other books of the Bible, like in Exodus 28:30, use the same word you used there. Pause this audio here.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 27:12-23

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (9995712 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Numbers 28:1-10

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 28:1-10 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 28:1–10 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 28:1–10 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passages, the Israelites camped on the plains of Moab by the Jordan River near Jericho. Moses took a census of all of the Israelites. Yahweh commanded Moses to appoint Joshua in front of the whole congregation, or community, to take Moses' place in leadership after Moses died.

In this passage, the story is interrupted so that Yahweh can tell Moses to instruct the Israelite congregation on daily and weekly offerings to Yahweh. This passage begins a section of instructions on offerings that start with daily, then weekly, then monthly, and then yearly offerings to Yahweh.

Stop here and, if necessary, look again at a map of the plains of Moab. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What types of offerings do people in your culture give to gods or idols that they worship? What do these offerings mean or symbolize? What are the special times of the week, month, or year that your people offer sacrifices? Pause this audio here.

The Israelites are to begin and end their day with offerings, or sacrifices, to Yahweh. Yahweh instructs the Israelites to be careful to make the daily sacrifices at the correct time. The Israelites are to live in this daily pattern of worship to Yahweh by bringing a sacrifice by fire, which is also called a burnt offering, in the morning and in the evening. These are sacrifices of animals that the priests burn completely on the altar. Yahweh calls these sacrifices Yahweh's food and a pleasing, or soothing, aroma to Yahweh. Yahweh is not necessarily pleased by the smell of burnt animals. Yahweh is showing that Yahweh is satisfied and pleased with the Israelites' obedience and worship of Yahweh.

Yahweh tells the Israelites to offer two male lambs. Yahweh says to offer one lamb in the morning and one lamb in the evening. The lambs should be a year old, without blemish or physical defect. When a lamb is a year old, it is fully grown and more valuable. The Israelites are to offer one lamb in the morning every day. When the priests kill and burn a lamb to give to Yahweh, they will also give a mixture of flour and oil, as well as some strong drink. The priests should make a dough of finely ground wheat flour mixed with a quarter of a hin of olive oil. The wheat flour is to weigh one-tenth of an ephah, which could have been anything from 1 to 3 kilograms. One-quarter of a hin of olive oil is about 1 litre of oil. The Israelites were to beat the olives for this oil with a mortar and pestle instead of crushing them in an olive press. Beating the olives would produce a better and more pure oil, with none of the parts of the olive pits left in it. 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 strong drink, or a strong wine. This is a drink offering that the priest was to pour out in the Holy Place, which probably refers to the altar in the courtyard, when the priest offers the lamb and the grain. 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 pictures of young male lambs, fine flour, olive oil, and a mortar and pestle. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh first gave instructions about these burnt offerings when he gave Moses Yahweh's laws at Mount Sinai. The Israelites first offered these burnt offerings when they dedicated the tabernacle to Yahweh. Now Yahweh reminds the Israelites that they are to offer these daily burnt offerings morning and evening when they are in the land Yahweh promised them.

Yahweh reminds the Israelites that they will offer the same offering to the Lord in the evening every day, or at twilight, which is between sunset and nightfall. Nightfall is when it is completely dark. The Israelites will offer this offering of a one-year-old unblemished male lamb, fine flour mixed with beaten oil, and the drink offering to the Lord as a pleasing smell to the Lord.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What smells are pleasing or soothing to you, and why are they pleasing or soothing? Pause this audio here.

On the Sabbath day, or seventh day, the day of rest, the Israelites are to also offer another two male lambs that are a year old with no blemishes, along with a double portion, or two-tenths of an ephah, which is around 2 to 6 kilograms, of the grain offering mixed with oil, and also the drink offering. The Israelites are to offer this additional sacrifice once a week on the Sabbath along with the daily burnt offering and drink offering.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 28:1–10 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: Yahweh speaks to Moses and tells Moses to tell the Israelites to present the burnt offerings or sacrifices by fire at the correct time. Yahweh says these offerings are Yahweh's food and a pleasing smell to Yahweh.

In the second scene: Yahweh tells Moses that the offerings by fire shall be two male lambs that are one year old, without any physical defect. This is to be the burnt offering every day. The Israelites will offer one male lamb in the morning and one in the evening. With the lamb they shall also offer fine flour mixed with pure olive oil. Yahweh first established this continual burnt offering, which is a pleasing smell to Yahweh, while the Israelites were at Mount Sinai. Yahweh tells Moses that the drink offering should be one-fourth of a hin of a strong alcoholic drink, or strong wine, for each lamb. The priests will pour the wine on the altar in the sanctuary.

In the third scene: The Israelites will offer the same burnt, grain, and drink offering in the evening as well, as a soothing smell to Yahweh.

In the fourth scene: Once a week, on the Sabbath, the Israelites will offer two male lambs a year old without physical defect, and two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil, as well as the drink offering. This offering is to be given every week on the Sabbath in addition to the daily burnt and drink offering.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- The Israelites
- The priest, who is presenting the offerings, although he is not mentioned

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

Remember that the Israelites are in the plains of Moab near the Jordan River next to Jericho. In the usual way, Yahweh speaks to Moses. Yahweh tells Moses to give these instructions to the Israelites. Yahweh gives instructions for the daily burnt offerings and drink offerings that the Israelites are to offer in the morning and

in the evening. Yahweh says that the people should give these offerings continually, or each day, once in the morning and once in the evening. Although the priest is not mentioned in this passage, it is the priest who is offering the offerings on the altar.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How would you talk about a ritual or action that is done on a daily or regular basis? Pause this audio here.

Though Yahweh is talking about sacrifices and offerings that will take place at different times of the day, in the morning and evening, these actions will take place later, after Moses has given the information to the Israelites. These appointed times are the specific times of day that the Israelites will give a sacrifice to Yahweh. Yahweh is giving the Israelites a pattern of worship to live by.

Yahweh calls the burnt offerings Yahweh's food, but this does not mean that Yahweh actually eats the burnt offerings. Use the general word for food in your language.

Yahweh specifically mentions that the Israelites will pour out the drink offering in the Holy Place, or the sanctuary. The Holy Place was another way to describe the general area of the tabernacle. This area included the courtyard where the altar was for the burnt offering. This does not mean that only the drink offering will be given in the sanctuary. The Israelites will also offer the burnt offering of the lambs in the sanctuary, which included the altar for the burnt offering in the courtyard, as well.

In the third scene, Yahweh repeats that the Israelites should give the same offering in the evening, at twilight, as in the morning. Yahweh mentions the lamb, the grain, and the drink offering. Yahweh repeats, for emphasis, that this is a food offering that is a pleasing smell to Yahweh.

In the fourth scene, Yahweh gives the Israelites an additional burnt offering that will happen once a week on the Sabbath. This is in addition to the daily offering, not instead of the daily offering. So on the Sabbath, the Israelites will offer the daily offerings, one in the morning and one in the evening. The Israelites will probably offer the Sabbath day offering right after the morning offering.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 28:1–10 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:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- The Israelites
- The priest, who is presenting the offerings, although he is not 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.

You may have the group act out the people and priests making these offerings.

Yahweh speaks to Moses. Yahweh tells Moses to tell the Israelites to present the offerings by fire at the correct time. Yahweh says these offerings are Yahweh's food and a pleasing smell to Yahweh.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I cannot imagine that smell would be a good one or pleasing to God, but we will do what he says," or, "I wonder if Yahweh will really eat these offerings," or, "I am so thankful for the details that Yahweh gives to make sure we do this correctly."

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I will be so pleased with the Israelites and their obedience to me," or, "The Israelites' obedience and worship is a soothing smell to me. I hope they understand that what I want most of all is the Israelites to love me and follow me."

Yahweh tells Moses that the offerings by fire shall be two male lambs, one year old, without any physical defect. This is to be the burnt offering every day. The Israelites will offer one male lamb in the morning and one in the evening. With the lamb they shall also offer fine flour mixed with pure olive oil.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I really hope Yahweh provides us with a lot of male lambs without defects. I feel like that is a lot to ask every day," or, "I am worried about what may happen if we accidentally offer a lamb that has a defect," or, "I hope I remember all of these details to tell the Israelites."

Yahweh established and told the Israelites about this continual burnt offering, which is a pleasing smell to Yahweh, while the Israelites were at Mount Sinai.

Yahweh tells Moses that the drink offering should be a fourth of a hin of wine for each lamb. The priests will pour the wine on the altar in the sanctuary. Then the Israelites will offer the same burnt, grain, and drink offering in the evening as well, as a soothing smell to Yahweh.

Once a week on the Sabbath, the Israelites will offer two male lambs a year old without physical defect, and two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil, as well as the drink offering. This offering is to be given every week on the Sabbath in addition to the daily burnt and drink offering.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I thought we were supposed to rest on the Sabbath. I wonder why we have to give more offerings that day," or, "Yahweh has kept his promises to us all this way. He is worthy of worship. I hope the Israelites remember this!"

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 28:1–10 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 tells Moses to command the sons of Israel, or the **Israelites**, to present the **offerings** by fire at the correct time. Yahweh says these offerings are Yahweh's food and a **pleasing smell** or soothing aroma to Yahweh. Yahweh is the personal and proper name of God. The Israelites, or sons of Israel, are the descendants of Jacob whose name was changed to Israel. An offering is a gift or sacrifice offered to Yahweh, usually in the tabernacle. Use the same words you have used for Yahweh, Israelites, offerings, and

pleasing smell or soothing aroma that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, Israelites, and offerings, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses that the offerings by fire shall be two male lambs, one year old, without any physical defect. This is to be the sacrifice by fire, or **burnt offering**, every day. The burnt offering is an offering that people bring to Yahweh and kill and burn completely on the altar in the tabernacle. Use the same word for burnt offering, or sacrifice by fire, that you have used in previous passages. For more information on burnt offerings, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Israelites will offer one male lamb in the morning and one in the evening. With the lamb they shall also offer one-tenth of an **ephah**, or around 1 to 3 kilograms, of fine flour mixed with a fourth of a **hin** of pure olive oil. Bible scholars are not sure how much an ephah was, so it may be better to translate this as one-tenth of a measure of fine flour. You may also use a local term for the measurement of an ephah. One-fourth of a hin is approximately one litre. Olive oil is an oil that is released when the olive fruit is pressed. It is often used for cooking. Use the same translations for ephah, hin, and pure olive oil that you have used in previous passages. Drink offering, grain offering, ephah, and hin are in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh ordained, established, or instructed the Israelites about this continual burnt offering, which is a pleasing smell to Yahweh, while the Israelites were at Mount Sinai.

Yahweh tells Moses that the drink offering should be one-fourth of a hin of a strong alcoholic drink for each lamb. The priests will pour the wine on the altar in the **Holy Place**, or the **sanctuary**. The sanctuary is the general word for where Yahweh lived with the Israelites. The sanctuary was the whole tabernacle, including the courtyard. Use the same word for sanctuary or Holy Place that you have used in previous passages. For more information on sanctuary and Holy Place, refer to the Master Glossary. The Israelites will offer the same burnt and drink offering in the evening as well, as a pleasing smell to Yahweh.

Once a week, on the **Sabbath**, the Israelites will offer two male lambs a year old without physical defect, and two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil, as well as the drink offering. This offering is to be given every week on the Sabbath in addition to the daily burnt and drink offering. The Sabbath is the seventh day of the week. The Sabbath is a day of rest for the Israelites. The Sabbath started at sundown on Friday and ended at sunup on Saturday. Use the same word that you have used for Sabbath in previous passages. For more information on Sabbath, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 28:1–10

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (13897322 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Numbers 28:11–15

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 28:11–15 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 28:11–15 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 28:11–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passages, the Israelites camped on the plains of Moab by the Jordan River near Jericho. Yahweh has been giving Moses instructions for the Israelites concerning daily and weekly offerings.

In this passage, Yahweh tells Moses to instruct the Israelite congregation on monthly offerings to Yahweh.

Stop here and, if necessary, look again at a map of the plains of Moab. Pause this audio here.

The sacrifices at the beginning of the month have many more animals than the other sacrifices. These sacrifices at the beginning of the month are times for the Israelites to celebrate and to blow trumpets in worship. The beginning of the month for the Israelites is during the new moon. The new moon is when just a sliver, or small part, of the moon is showing in the evenings.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What monthly religious or cultural celebrations happen in your culture? Why are these monthly rituals important in your culture? Pause this audio here.

Stop here as a group and look at a photo of the new moon. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh instructs the Israelites to present a burnt offering on the first of each month. These special offerings are a community offering—the priests offer one set of animals for the entire Israelite community. Yahweh tells Moses to have the Israelites offer two young bulls, one ram, and seven male lambs that are a year old, all without blemish or physical defect. A ram is a male sheep.

Stop here and, if necessary, look again at pictures of a bull, a ram, and a male lamb. Pause this audio here.

Along with each animal, the Israelites are also to offer grain offerings. For each bull, the Israelites are to bring three-tenths of an ephah of the finest flour mixed with olive oil. An ephah is a dry measure for grain. Three-tenths of an ephah would probably be between 3 and 9 kilograms. The flour is one of the choicest, coarsely ground wheat flours. The Israelites are to mix the flour with olive oil.

With the ram, the Israelites are to offer a grain offering of two-tenths of an ephah with the finest flour mixed with olive oil. This would be approximately 2 to 6 kilograms. The Israelites are to offer a grain offering for each of the lambs. This offering is one-tenth of an ephah of finest flour mixed with olive oil for each lamb. One-tenth of an ephah would be between around 1 and 3 kilograms. All of this the Israelites are to offer as a burnt offering, which is a food offering and a pleasing aroma to Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What kinds of offerings have people in your culture made to gods in order to please the gods? Why do you think Yahweh called these offerings pleasing to Yahweh? Pause this audio here.

The Israelites are to pour out a drink offering to Yahweh with each of the animals and the grain offering. The Israelites are to pour out half of a hin of wine for each bull. A hin is a liquid measure that would be approximately 4 quarts, or 4 liters. For the ram, the Israelites are to pour out one-third of a hin. For each of the lambs, the Israelites are to pour out one-fourth of a hin.

The Israelites are to offer these burnt, grain, and drink offerings to Yahweh once a month at the new moon, or beginning of the month, during the whole year. Many other pagan religions practiced new moon festivals. However, these sacrifices to Yahweh are a reminder to the Israelites that their worship is to Yahweh alone and not any of the other gods that other cultures serve. Yahweh is declaring that the Israelites are Yahweh's people, with the dedication of sacrifices going to Yahweh alone.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What holidays or celebrations for other gods or idols have Christians in your community used to worship God instead? Pause this audio here.

Along with these offerings, the Israelites are to offer one male goat as a sin or purification offering for the forgiveness of the unintentional sins of the Israelites. Sometimes people become unclean, or unfit for service to Yahweh, because they have done something wrong without realizing it or touched something that is unclean or unfit. This offering purifies the people, or makes the people ritually clean again. This is also one of the kinds of burnt offerings, one in which people burn most of the animal on the altar. These offerings are all in addition to the daily offerings that we learned about in the last passage.

Stop here and, if necessary, look at a picture of a male goat.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 28:11–15 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 four scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh commands the Israelites to make a monthly burnt offering on the first of the month. The Israelites are to sacrifice two young bulls, one ram, and seven male lambs that are a year old. The animals must not have physical defects.

In the second scene: The Israelites must also offer a grain offering with each animal that is sacrificed. With each bull, they must offer three-tenths of an ephah of the finest flour mixed with oil. With the ram, they must offer two-tenths of an ephah of the finest flour mixed with oil. The Israelites must also offer, with each lamb, one-tenth of an ephah of the finest flour mixed with oil. This burnt offering is a pleasing aroma and a food offering for Yahweh.

In the third scene: The Israelites must also offer a drink offering with each animal. The Israelites must offer half a hin of wine with each bull. The Israelites must offer one-third of a hin of wine for the ram. The Israelites also must offer one-quarter of a hin for each of the seven lambs. All of this is the monthly burnt offering. The Israelites must make this offering at each new moon throughout the year.

In the fourth scene: Along with this monthly burnt offering and drink offering, the Israelites must also offer one male goat to Yahweh as a sin or purification offering.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- The Israelites
- The priest, who is presenting the offerings, although he is not mentioned

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

Remember that the Israelites are in the plains of Moab near the Jordan River next to Jericho. Yahweh is speaking to Moses and giving Moses instructions for the whole assembly of the Israelites. Yahweh gives instructions for the monthly burnt offerings and drink offerings that the Israelites are to offer at every new moon during the year.

Yahweh is giving Moses instructions to give to the Israelites later. The Israelites are to offer burnt offerings, grain offerings, and drink offerings to Yahweh. Each animal of the burnt offering has its own grain and drink offering that goes with it. The Israelites are to sacrifice two young bulls, one ram, and seven male lambs that are a year old. The animals must not have physical defects. With each bull, the Israelites will offer three-tenths of an ephah of the finest flour mixed with oil. With the ram, the Israelites will offer two-tenths of an ephah of the finest flour mixed with oil. The Israelites will also offer, with each lamb, one-tenth of an ephah of the finest flour mixed with oil. The Israelites must offer half a hin of wine with each bull. The Israelites must offer one-third of a hin of wine for the ram. The Israelites also must offer one-quarter of a hin for each of the seven lambs. The priests must pour out the drink offering at the altar in the courtyard where they burn the animals and grain offering.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Try to list each animal and the amount of grain and amount of drink offering that the people were to give with each animal. Discuss how you will list these items in your translation. Pause this audio here.

Notice in this passage that Yahweh does not give specific amounts of the oil the people should mix with the grain offering. Yahweh gave Moses the standard amounts of oil for each animal when he gave Moses instructions about previous sacrifices.

In the third scene, Yahweh says specifically that these offerings are to take place at each new moon throughout the year. The Israelites marked the beginning of months by each new moon that came.

Stop here and talk about how your culture defines time. Specifically, how does your culture define months, and how do you know when it is the beginning of the month? Pause this audio here.

Along with these offerings, the Israelites are to offer one male goat as a sin offering, or purification offering, for the forgiveness of the unintentional sins of the Israelites. These offerings are all in addition to the daily offerings we learned about in the last passage.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 28:11–15 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
- The priest, who is presenting the offerings, although he is not 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.

You may have the group act out the people and priests presenting these offerings.

Yahweh commands the Israelites to make a monthly burnt offering on the first of the month. The Israelites are to sacrifice two young bulls, one ram, and seven male lambs a year old. The animals must be without physical defects.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "That feels like a lot of animals. I wonder why just one animal would not be enough," or, "Yahweh has done so much for us, so I am glad to obey all that Yahweh desires."

The Israelites must also offer a grain offering with each animal that is sacrificed. With each bull, they must offer three-tenths of an ephah of the finest flour mixed with oil. With the ram, they must offer two-tenths of an ephah of the finest flour mixed with oil. The Israelites must also offer, with each lamb, one-tenth of an ephah of finest flour mixed with oil. This burnt offering is a pleasing aroma and a food offering for Yahweh.

The Israelites must also offer a drink offering with each animal. The Israelites must offer half a hin of wine with each bull. The Israelites must offer one-third of a hin of wine for the ram. The Israelites also must offer one-quarter of a hin for each of the seven lambs. All of this is the monthly burnt offering. The Israelites must make this offering at each new moon throughout the year.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I hope my people realize how much I love them and how this keeps us in relationship together," or, "I truly desire my people to have obedient hearts. I hope that they understand that."

Along with this monthly burnt offering and drink offering, the Israelites must also offer one male goat to Yahweh as a sin or purification offering.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Number 28:11–15 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. Yahweh tells Moses that at the first of every month the Israelites must present a **burnt offering** to Yahweh. Yahweh is the personal and proper name of God. The burnt offering is an **offering** that the priests would bring to Yahweh to kill and burn completely on the altar in the temple or tabernacle. An offering is a gift or sacrifice that the Israelites offer to Yahweh, usually in the tabernacle or temple. Use the same words for Yahweh and burnt offering that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh and burnt offerings, or offerings, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses that the burnt offerings shall be two bulls, one ram, and seven male lambs one year old, all without any physical defect. With each animal they shall also offer a **grain offering** of fine flour mixed with pure olive oil. This burnt offering will be a pleasing aroma and a food offering to the Lord. Use the same phrase for pleasing aroma and food offering that you have used in previous passages. Grain offering is in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses that the Israelites should also offer the **drink offering** with each animal. All of this is the burnt offering that the Israelites should offer at the beginning of each month throughout the year. See the Master Glossary for more information about the drink offering and the measurements for ephah and hin.

In addition to these continual or daily offerings, the Israelites should offer a male goat as a **sin offering** or **purification offering**. A sin offering was given as purification for the sins of people who had become unclean or unfit for Yahweh's service. Use the same phrase that you have used for sin or purification offering in previous passages. Sin offering and purification offering are in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 28:11-15

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (12399474 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (8692335 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Numbers 28:16-25

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 28:16–25 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 28:16–25 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 28:16–25 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passages, the Israelites camped on the plains of Moab by the Jordan River near Jericho. Yahweh has been giving Moses instructions for the Israelites concerning daily, weekly, and monthly offerings.

In this passage, Yahweh tells Moses to instruct the Israelite congregation on the sacrifices the Israelites are to give to Yahweh during the first month of the year, during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. On the fourteenth day of the first month, the Israelites celebrated Yahweh's Passover, and then started seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Although Moses does not mention the name of the Feast of Unleavened Bread here, we know this is the feast he refers to because they do not eat bread with yeast during these days.

The fourteenth day of the first month has already been established for the Israelites to celebrate Yahweh's Passover. Passover reminds the Israelites of when Yahweh brought them out of Egypt and when the angel of Yahweh passed over their homes, sparing the Israelites' firstborn children. The day after Passover is the beginning of a seven-day feast called the Feast of Unleavened Bread. During each of the seven days of this feast, the Israelites are to eat bread without leaven, or the yeast that makes bread rise.

Stop here and look at a picture of unleavened bread, if necessary. Pause this audio here.

On the first day of the feast, the Israelites are to have a sacred assembly where they are to come together and worship Yahweh and do none of their daily work. The passage does not say exactly what type of work they are not to do. Most likely it is work associated with their daily work, since they have to do the work of sacrificing animals to Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What are some times or occasions in your culture when people stop working for a day or several days? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh instructs the Israelites to present a food offering that consists of a burnt offering as well as a grain offering. Like the previous offerings, the offerings for the Feast of Unleavened Bread are public offerings that the priests offer to Yahweh for the entire Israelite community. The burnt offering is the same as the offering on the first day of the month. Yahweh tells Moses to have the Israelites offer two young bulls, one ram, and seven male lambs that are a year old, all without blemish or physical defect.

Stop here and, if necessary, look again at pictures of a bull, a ram, and a male lamb. Pause this audio here.

As usual, along with each animal for the burnt offering, the Israelites are also to offer grain offerings. For each bull, the Israelites are to bring three-tenths of an ephah of the finest flour mixed with olive oil. The flour is one of the choicest, coarsely ground wheat flours. The Israelites are to mix the flour with olive oil.

With the ram, the Israelites are to offer a grain offering of two-tenths of an ephah with the finest flour mixed with olive oil. Then the Israelites are to offer a grain offering for each of the lambs. This offering is one-tenth of an ephah of finest flour mixed with olive oil for each lamb.

Along with these offerings, the Israelites are to offer one male goat as a sin or purification offering, or an offering for the forgiveness of the unintentional sins of the Israelites.

Stop here and look at a picture of a goat, if necessary. Pause this audio here.

The Israelites are to repeat these offerings every day for all seven days of the festival. The Israelites are to give these offerings in addition to the regular daily morning burnt offerings and drink offerings. On the seventh day, the Israelites are to have another sacred assembly where they are to do no regular work.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 28:16–25 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 four scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh reminds Moses that the fourteenth day of the first month is Yahweh's Passover. The following day, the Israelites will celebrate a feast where unleavened bread shall be eaten for seven days. The Israelites will have a holy assembly on the first of those seven days, and they will do no work.

In the second scene: The Israelites will present a burnt offering to Yahweh of two bulls, one ram, and seven lambs one year old, all of them without physical defect. The Israelites will offer a grain offering of flour mixed with oil for each of the animals. The Israelites shall offer a male goat for a sin offering for the atonement of the Israelites.

In the third scene: Yahweh tells Moses to tell the Israelites that they will present this burnt offering in addition to the daily morning offering, which is a continual offering. The Israelites shall offer this burnt offering each of the seven days of the feast, as it is a soothing aroma to Yahweh. Yahweh repeats that the Israelites shall offer this burnt offering in addition to the continual daily burnt offering and drink offering.

In the fourth scene: Yahweh says that the seventh day of the festival shall be another day for a holy assembly where the Israelites will not do any regular work.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- The Israelites
- The priest, although he is not mentioned in the passage

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

Remember that the Israelites are in the plains of Moab near the Jordan River next to Jericho. Yahweh is speaking to Moses and giving Moses instructions for the whole assembly of the Israelites. Yahweh gives Moses instructions for the Israelites to carry out during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The first day of the feast, which is the day after Yahweh's Passover, is to be a day where the Israelites do no regular work. The Israelites, however, are to offer burnt offerings during every day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Yahweh is giving Moses instructions to give to the Israelites later. The Israelites are to offer food offerings of burnt offerings and grain offerings to Yahweh each day, from the fifteenth day of the first month to the twenty-first day of the first month. Each animal of the burnt offering has its own grain that goes with it. The Israelites are to offer the same amount of grain offering mixed with oil as the burnt offerings on the first day of the month. Notice in this passage that Yahweh does not give specific amounts of the oil they should use to mix with the grain offering. Also notice that there is no mention of the drink offerings that have gone with these burnt offerings in the past. Yahweh gave Moses the standard amounts of oil for each grain offering, and the amounts for the drink offerings, when he gave Moses instructions about previous sacrifices.

Along with the burnt offering, the Israelites are to offer a sin or purification offering of one male goat to make themselves right with Yahweh.

All of these offerings are to be offered in addition to the regular daily burnt offerings and drink offerings.

On the seventh day of the festival, the Israelites are again to have a sacred, or holy, assembly and to do no regular work.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 28:16–25 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
- The priest, although he is not mentioned in the passage

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 may have the group act out the people and priests making these offerings.

Yahweh reminds Moses that the fourteenth day of the first month is Yahweh's Passover. The following day, the Israelites will celebrate a feast where unleavened bread shall be eaten for seven days. The Israelites will have a holy assembly on the first of those seven days, and the Israelites will do no work.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I remember the Passover well. That was a scary time, but Yahweh was so faithful to us," or, "This will be such a great way to remember all that Yahweh has done for us. Yahweh deserves the best of all that we have!"

The Israelites will present a burnt offering to Yahweh of two bulls, one ram, and seven lambs one year old, all of them without physical defect. The Israelites will offer a grain offering of flour mixed with oil for each of the animals. The Israelites shall offer a male goat for a sin offering for the atonement of the Israelites as well.

Yahweh tells Moses to tell the Israelites that they will present this burnt offering in addition to the daily morning offering, which is a continual offering. The Israelites shall offer this burnt offering all seven days of the

feast, as it is a soothing aroma to Yahweh. Yahweh repeats that the Israelites shall offer this burnt offering in addition to the continual daily burnt offering and drink offering.

Yahweh says that the seventh day of the festival shall be another day for a holy assembly where the Israelites will not do any regular work.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "It will be nice to rest at the festival. I am thankful that Yahweh gives us rest," or, "I hope that all of these sacrifices will help the people recognize the worthiness of Yahweh," or, "I am amazed that Yahweh still wants to be in relationship with us after all of this time."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 28:16–25 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. Yahweh tells Moses that the fourteenth day of the first month is Yahweh's **Passover**. Yahweh is the personal and proper name of God. The Passover is an important celebration for the Israelites. This celebration helps the Israelites remember how Yahweh brought the Israelites out of Egypt. Use the same words for Yahweh and Passover that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh and Passover, refer to the Master Glossary.

The day following Passover begins a seven-day feast where the Israelites will not eat any bread with leaven in it. Leaven, or yeast, is what people add to flour to cause bread to rise or puff up. The first day of the feast will be a **holy** assembly where the Israelites will do no regular work. However, the Israelites will present a **burnt offering** to Yahweh. Something that is holy is set apart for Yahweh and is good and pure. The burnt offering is an offering that is brought to Yahweh and killed and burned completely on the altar in the temple or tabernacle. An **offering** is a gift or sacrifice offered to Yahweh, usually in the tabernacle or temple. Use the same word for holy and burnt offering that you have used in previous passages. For more information on holy, burnt offerings, and offerings, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses that the burnt offerings shall be two bulls, one ram, and seven male lambs one year old, all without any physical defect. With each animal they shall also offer a **grain offering** of fine flour mixed with pure olive oil. This burnt offering will be a pleasing aroma and a food offering to Yahweh. Use the same phrases for pleasing aroma and grain offering that you have used in previous passages, and remember that ephah and grain offering are in the Master Glossary.

In addition to these regular offerings, the Israelites must offer a male goat as a **sin or purification offering** in order to make **atonement** for the people. A sin offering is given as purification for the sins of people who have become unclean or unfit for Yahweh's service. Use the same words for sin or purification offering, and for atonement, that you have used in previous passages. For more information on sin offering, purification offering, and atonement, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Israelites must present this burnt offering and sin or purification offering every day of the seven-day festival in addition to the continual daily burnt and **drink offering**. Use the same words for drink offering that you have used in previous passages, and remember that drink offering is in the Master Glossary. On the seventh day, the Israelites will have another holy assembly where they will do no work.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 28:16-25

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (11545302 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (8236084 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Numbers 28:26-31

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 28:26-31 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 28:26-31 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 28:26–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passages, the Israelites camped on the plains of Moab by the Jordan River near Jericho. Yahweh has been giving Moses instructions for the Israelites concerning the sacrifices the Israelites are to give to Yahweh during the first month of the year, during the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

In this passage, Yahweh is giving Moses instructions about the sacrifice for the Festival of Weeks, also known as the Festival of First Fruits or the Harvest Festival, which was seven weeks and one day after Passover.

The day of the first fruits refers to the day when the Israelites bring their first crop that they have gathered to Yahweh. Yahweh has already instructed the Israelites to bring their first crop to Yahweh as a grain offering. When the Israelites offer the first produce to Yahweh, it symbolizes that the whole harvest belonged to Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What types of harvest or crops are offered to God, gods, or idols in your culture? Discuss the significance of these offerings. Pause this audio here.

On the day of the feast, when the Israelites bring their grain offering to Yahweh, the Israelites are to have a sacred or holy assembly, which means they are to do none of their occupational work. The passage does not specify what type of work they are not to do. Most likely it is work connected to their daily job, since on this day they have to do the work of sacrificing animals to Yahweh.

Yahweh instructs the Israelites to present a burnt offering that is a soothing smell to Yahweh. The burnt offering is the same as the offering on the first day of the month, as well as the offering that is given during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Yahweh tells Moses to have the Israelites offer two young bulls, one ram, and seven male lambs that are a year old, all without blemish or physical defect.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What are the physical characteristics of animals that people offer as sacrifices to God, gods, or deities in your culture or community? Pause this audio here.

Along with each animal, the Israelites are also to offer grain offerings. These grain offerings are the same for each animal that the Israelites were to offer during the first day of the month, and during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. For each bull, the Israelites are to bring three tenths of an ephah of the finest flour mixed with olive oil. An ephah was a dry measure for grain between approximately 13 and 23 kilograms. The flour was one of the choicest, coarsely ground wheat flours. The Israelites were to mix the flour with olive oil.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What types of grain and oil are used in your culture that are known to produce the best food products? What types of grain and oil are used to offer sacrifices to deities? Pause this audio here.

With the ram, the Israelites are to offer a grain offering of two-tenths of an ephah with the finest flour mixed with olive oil. Then the Israelites are to offer a grain offering for each of the lambs. This offering is one-tenth of an ephah of finest flour mixed with olive oil for each lamb.

Along with these offerings, the Israelites are to offer one male goat as a sin or purification offering, or offering for the forgiveness of the unintentional sins of the Israelites. This offering makes atonement for the broken relationship between the Israelites and Yahweh. The offering restores the relationship between the Israelites and Yahweh when that relationship has been broken due to sin or being unclean, or unfit for service to Yahweh.

Stop here and look at a picture of a male goat, if necessary. Pause this audio here.

The Israelites are to give this offering, along with its drink offering, in addition to the regular daily morning burnt offerings and grain offerings. Yahweh does not specify the drink offering, but it is likely similar to the ones given on the Sabbath and the first of each month. All of the animals are to be without a physical defect.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 28:26–31 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 three scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh reminds Moses to tell the Israelites that when they bring their grain offering for the Harvest Festival, they will have a sacred or holy assembly, and they will do no work.

In the second scene: The Israelites will also present a burnt offering, which is a pleasing aroma to Yahweh. The Israelites are to offer to Yahweh two bulls, one ram, and seven lambs one year old, all of them without physical defects. The Israelites will offer a grain offering of flour mixed with oil for each of the animals as well. They shall offer a male goat for the atonement of the Israelites as well. Yahweh tells Moses to tell the Israelites that they will present this burnt offering and its drink offering in addition to the daily burnt offering and grain offering.

In the third scene: Yahweh reminds Moses that all of the animals are to be without defect.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- The Israelites
- The priest who makes the sacrifices, although he is not mentioned in this passage

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

Remember that the Israelites are in the plains of Moab near the Jordan River next to Jericho. Yahweh is speaking to Moses. Yahweh is giving Moses instructions for the whole assembly of the Israelites. Yahweh gives Moses instructions for the Israelites to carry out during the Feast of Weeks, or the Festival of First Fruits. This festival is when the Israelites bring the first of their harvest of crops or grain to Yahweh as an offering. The Israelites are to take the day off from work and to keep the day holy, or set apart, to Yahweh. This feast takes place seven weeks and one day, or 50 days, after Passover.

Yahweh is giving Moses instructions to give to the Israelites later. The Israelites are to offer burnt offerings and grain offerings to Yahweh. Each animal of the burnt offering has its own grain offering that goes with it. The Israelites are to offer the same burnt offering and grain offerings that they do on the first of each month, and also on the days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Notice in this passage that Yahweh does not give specific amounts of the oil to be used to mix with the grain offering. Yahweh gave Moses the standard amounts of oil for each grain offering when Yahweh gave Moses instructions about previous sacrifices.

Along with the burnt offering, the Israelites are to offer a sin or purification offering of one male goat to make themselves right with Yahweh. The name of the offering, which is sin or purification offering, is not mentioned here, but it is described. We know that people make the sin or purification offering in order to restore their relationship with Yahweh, or to atone for their sins and the barriers that have kept them from a right relationship with Yahweh.

The people are to offer all of these offerings with the drink offering that goes along with their burnt offerings, in addition to the regular daily burnt offerings and grain offerings.

The Israelites are to be sure that all of the animals have no physical defects. Notice that Yahweh repeats this instruction about the animals because it is important. Be sure to show in your translation that it is important that the animals have no physical defects.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 28:26–31 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
- The priest who makes the sacrifices, although he is not mentioned in this passage

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 may have the group act out the people and priests making these offerings.

Yahweh reminds Moses to tell the Israelites that when they bring their grain offering for the Harvest Festival, they will have a holy assembly and they will do no work.

The Israelites will present a burnt offering, which is a pleasing aroma to Yahweh. The Israelites are to offer to Yahweh two bulls, one ram, and seven lambs one year old, all of them without physical defects. The Israelites will offer a grain offering of flour mixed with oil for each of the animals as well, and a drink offering for each animal. The Israelites shall offer a male goat for the atonement of the Israelites as well. Yahweh tells Moses to tell the Israelites that they will present all of these burnt offerings and their drink offering in addition to the daily burnt offering and grain offering.

Yahweh reminds Moses that all of the animals are to be without defect, or to be perfect.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "Yahweh, you are getting a little repetitive. I feel like I have heard this all before," or, "I am trying to trust that Yahweh will provide all of these perfect animals, but it is hard to believe we will have that many!"

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 28:26–31 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. Yahweh tells Moses that when the **Israelites** bring their grain offering to Yahweh on the Festival of First Fruits, or the Festival of Weeks, they will have a **holy** assembly and do no work. The Israelites will present a **burnt offering** to Yahweh. An **offering** is a gift or sacrifice given in thanksgiving or to ask for forgiveness from Yahweh. Yahweh is God's personal and proper name. The holy assembly is a special, set-apart meeting where the people worship Yahweh. The burnt offering is an offering that the people bring to Yahweh to kill and burn completely on the altar in the tabernacle. Use the same word for offering, Yahweh, holy assembly, and burnt offering that you have used in previous passages. For more information on offering, Yahweh, holy, and burnt offerings, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Festival of First Fruits, or Festival of Weeks, refers to the festival that takes place seven weeks and one day, or 50 days, after Passover. On this day the Israelites bring the first harvest from their crops to Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will translate **Festival of Weeks** or **Festival of First Fruits**. For more information on Festival of Weeks, refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses that the burnt offerings are a pleasing aroma to Yahweh. This offering shall be two bulls, one ram, and seven male lambs one year old, all without any physical defect. With each animal, the Israelites shall also offer fine flour mixed with pure olive oil. Use the same word for **ephah** that you used in previous passages, and remember that ephah is in the Master Glossary.

In addition to these regular offerings, the Israelites must offer a male goat as purification or **atonement** for the sins or impurity of people who have become unclean or unfit for Yahweh's service. Atonement is the covering of sin or impurity in order to be reconciled to Yahweh and restore a relationship that is broken. Use the same word for atonement that you have used in previous passages. For more information on atonement, refer to the Master Glossary. Although the name of this offering, which is the **sin or purification offering**, is not stated in this passage, this is the offering Yahweh is talking about. If you state that this is the sin or purification offering in your translation, be sure to use the same words that you have used in previous passages, and remember that sin or purification offering is in the Master Glossary.

The Israelites must present this burnt offering and **drink offering** in addition to the continual daily burnt and grain offering. The Israelites must be sure that the animals have no physical defects. Use the same words for drink offering that you have used in previous passages, and remember that drink offering is in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 28:26-31

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (11361099 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 4](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

[mp3 zip](#) (8148690 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Numbers 29:1-6

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 29:1-6 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 29:1-6 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 29:1–6 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passages, the Israelites have camped on the plains of Moab by the Jordan River near Jericho. Yahweh has been giving Moses instructions for the Israelites concerning the sacrifices they are to give to Yahweh throughout different times and festivals of the year.

In this passage, Yahweh is giving Moses instructions about the sacrifice for the first day of the seventh month. The seventh month was considered the most holy month. Several festivals took place in the seventh month. The seventh month was around the time of mid-September to mid-October on the current calendar.

Yahweh tells Moses that on the first day of the seventh month, the Israelites are to have a sacred assembly, which means they are to do none of their daily work. Instead, the Israelites are supposed to blow trumpets, or ram's horns, making loud shouts or acclamations of joy and celebration. This festival is sometimes called the Festival of Trumpets or Festival of the New Year.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What types of instruments would you use to make a loud noise of celebration or joy, especially in worship to God? Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of a shofar, or ram's horn. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh instructs the Israelites to present a burnt offering that is a soothing smell to Yahweh. The burnt offering includes the same animals as the offering on the first day of the month, as well as the offering that is given during the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and the Feast of Weeks. Yahweh tells Moses to have the Israelites offer one young bull, one ram, and seven male lambs that are a year old, all without blemish or physical defect.

Along with each animal, the Israelites are also to offer grain offerings. For each bull, the Israelites are to bring three-tenths of an ephah of the finest flour mixed with olive oil. An ephah is a dry measure for grain, approximately between 13 to 23 kilograms. The flour is one of the choicest, coarsely ground wheat flours. The Israelites are to mix the flour with olive oil.

With the ram, the Israelites are to offer a grain offering of two-tenths of an ephah of the finest flour mixed with olive oil. Then the Israelites are to offer a grain offering for each of the lambs. This offering is one-tenth of an ephah of finest flour mixed with olive oil for each lamb.

Along with these offerings, the Israelites are to offer one male goat as a sin or purification offering, which is an offering for the forgiveness of the unintentional sins of the Israelites.

The Israelites are to give this offering in addition to the regular daily and monthly burnt offerings and their drink offerings. Yahweh is pleased by the smell of this burnt offering as an act of worship by the Israelites.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 29:1–6 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 three scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh reminds Moses to tell the Israelites that on the first day of the seventh month, they are to have a holy assembly and they are not to do any work. The Israelites will make shouts of joy and blow trumpets loudly.

In the second scene: The Israelites are also to present a burnt offering, which is a pleasing aroma to Yahweh. The Israelites are to offer to Yahweh one bull, one ram, and seven lambs one year old, all of them without physical defects. The Israelites are to offer a grain offering of flour mixed with oil for each of the animals. The Israelites shall offer a male goat for the atonement of the Israelites as well.

In the third scene: Yahweh tells Moses to tell the Israelites that they are to present this burnt offering along with the monthly new moon offering, and the daily burnt offering and drink offerings, as a soothing aroma to Yahweh.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- The Israelites
- The priest, although he is not mentioned in this passage

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

Remember that the Israelites are in the plains of Moab, near the Jordan River, next to Jericho. Yahweh is speaking to Moses. Yahweh is giving Moses instructions for the whole assembly of the Israelites. Yahweh gives Moses instructions for the Israelites to carry out during the first day of the seventh month. This became known as the Festival of Trumpets, or the Festival of the New Year. This passage does not give this festival a name, however. It just describes what happens on this day.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you mark months, or seasons, in your community? How do you mark unique dates or times, including the new year, in your community? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh is giving Moses instructions to give to the Israelites later. Yahweh says that the Israelites are to offer burnt offerings and grain offerings to Yahweh. Each animal of the burnt offering has its own grain that goes with it. Yahweh says the Israelites are to offer the same offering that they do during the first day of every month as well as during other festivals, except that instead of two bulls, they are to offer only one bull.

Notice in this passage that Yahweh does not give specific amounts of the oil to be used to mix with the grain offering. Notice too that Yahweh does not mention a drink offering with this burnt offering. Yahweh gave Moses the standard amounts of oil for each grain offering, and the amounts for the drink offerings, when he gave Moses instructions about previous sacrifices.

Along with the burnt offering, the Israelites are to offer a sin or purification offering of one male goat to make themselves right with Yahweh.

All of these offerings are to be offered in addition to the regular monthly, new moon offerings, and the daily burnt offerings and drink offerings, as Yahweh instructed. Yahweh repeats that these offerings will be a pleasing aroma, or smell, to Yahweh. Yahweh says this again and again to show Yahweh's pleasure in the offerings.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 29:1–6 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
- The priest, although he is not mentioned in this passage

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 may have the group act out the people and priests making these offerings.

Yahweh reminds Moses to tell the Israelites that on the first day of the seventh month, they are to have a holy assembly, and they are not to do any work. Instead, the Israelites are to blow trumpets, or horns, and to shout loudly with joy and celebration.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "Wow, I am grateful for so many days not to do work. We get a lot of rest!" or, "This celebration sounds like it will be fun, because we will shout and blow horns."

Yahweh tells Moses that the Israelites are also to present a burnt offering, which is a pleasing aroma to Yahweh. The Israelites are to offer to Yahweh one young bull, one ram, and seven lambs one year old, all of them without physical defects. The Israelites will offer a grain offering of flour mixed with oil for each of the animals. The Israelites shall offer a male goat for the atonement of the Israelites as well. Yahweh tells Moses to tell the Israelites that they must present this burnt offering in addition to the monthly new moon offering and the daily burnt offerings and drink offerings. Yahweh says that this burnt offering will be a pleasing aroma, or a soothing smell, to Yahweh.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "I wonder why burnt flesh smells good to Yahweh," or "I am happy to continue to give these offerings to Yahweh. I like to see Yahweh pleased with us."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 29:1–6 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. Yahweh tells Moses to tell the Israelites that on the first day of the seventh month, the Israelites must have a **holy assembly** and do no work. However, the Israelites will use the day to blow trumpets and make loud shouts of joy to Yahweh. Yahweh says that the Israelites will present a **burnt offering** to Yahweh. Use the same words for holy assembly, burnt offering and Yahweh that you have used in previous passages. For more information on holy, burnt offerings, and Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

Some versions name this festival the **Festival of Trumpets**. Use the same phrase for Festival of Trumpets that you have used in previous passages, if you are going to use it in this passage. For more information about the Festival of Trumpets, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses that the burnt offerings are a pleasing aroma to Yahweh. This offering shall be one young bull, one ram, and seven male lambs one year old, all without any physical defect. With each animal, the Israelites shall also offer fine flour mixed with pure olive oil. Use the same word for **ephah** that you used in previous passages, and remember that ephah is in the Master Glossary.

In addition to this offering, the Israelites must offer a male goat as a **sin or purification offering** for the purification or **atonement** of the people. The people gave a sin or purification offering as purification for the sins of people who had become unclean or unfit for Yahweh's service. Atonement is the covering of sin in order to be reconciled to God and restore a relationship that was broken. Use the same words for sin or purification offering, and for atonement, that you have used in previous passages. For more information on sin or purification offering, and on atonement, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses that the Israelites must present this burnt offering and **grain offering** in addition to the new moon offering and the continual daily burnt and **drink offering**. These offerings are pleasing smells to Yahweh. Use the same words and descriptions that you have used in previous passages, and remember that grain offering and drink offering are in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 29:1–6

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (10105572 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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[mp3 zip](#) (7273154 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Numbers 29:7–11

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 29:7–11 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 29:7–11 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 29:7–11 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passages, the Israelites have camped on the plains of Moab, by the Jordan River, near Jericho. Yahweh has been giving Moses instructions for the Israelites concerning the sacrifices they are to give to Yahweh throughout different times and festivals of the year.

In this passage, Yahweh is giving Moses instructions about the sacrifice for the tenth day of the seventh month. The seventh month was considered the most holy month. Several festivals took place in the seventh month. The seventh month was around mid-September to mid-October. This festival later became known as the Day of Atonement.

On the tenth day of the seventh month, the Israelites are to have a sacred assembly and to deny themselves. Some versions say the Israelites are to afflict, or humble themselves. This means to deny themselves food, or to fast. They are also to do no work at all of any kind except to offer the sacrifices.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: When do you fast, or not eat food, in your community? Why do you fast during those times? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh instructs the Israelites to present a burnt offering that is a soothing smell to Yahweh. The burnt offering is the same as the offering on the first day of the seventh month, or the Festival of Trumpets. Yahweh tells Moses to have the Israelites offer one young bull, one ram, and seven male lambs that are a year old, all without blemish or physical defect.

Along with each animal, the Israelites are also to offer grain offerings. For each bull, the Israelites are to bring three-tenths of an ephah of the finest flour mixed with olive oil. An ephah was a dry measure for grain between approximately 13 to 23 kilograms. The flour is one of the choicest coarsely ground wheat flours. The Israelites are to mix the flour with olive oil.

With the ram, the Israelites are to offer a grain offering of two-tenths of an ephah of the finest flour mixed with olive oil. Then the Israelites are to offer a grain offering for each of the lambs. This offering is one-tenth of an ephah of finest flour mixed with olive oil for each lamb.

Along with these offerings, the Israelites are to offer one male goat as a sin or purification offering, which is the offering for the forgiveness of the unintentional sins or impurities of the Israelites.

The Israelites are to give this offering of one male goat in addition to the sin or purification offering for atonement, and the regular daily burnt offerings and their grain offerings and drink offerings. There is an extra sin or purification offering for atonement here. This is likely the very special sin offering that the people gave on the Day of Atonement. We do not know the purpose of this second sin or purification offering, because it has not yet been mentioned in Numbers.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 29:7-11 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 three scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh tells Moses to tell the Israelites that on the tenth day of the seventh month, the Israelites must have a holy assembly, and the Israelites must deny themselves food. The Israelites must also do no work of any kind.

In the second scene: Yahweh tells Moses that the Israelites must present a burnt offering, which is a pleasing aroma to Yahweh. The Israelites are to offer to Yahweh one bull, one ram, and seven lambs one year old, all of them without physical defects. The Israelites must offer a grain offering of flour mixed with oil for each of the animals. The Israelites shall offer a male goat for the atonement of the Israelites as well.

In the third scene: Yahweh tells Moses to tell the Israelites that they must present this burnt offering along with another sin or purification offering, the daily burnt offering, and all the grain and drink offerings that go along with each of them.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- The Israelites
- The priest who is presenting the offerings, although he is not mentioned

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

Remember that the Israelites are in the plains of Moab, near the Jordan River, next to Jericho. Yahweh is speaking to Moses. Yahweh is giving Moses instructions for the whole assembly of the Israelites. Yahweh gives Moses instructions for the Israelites to carry out during the tenth day of the seventh month.

Yahweh is giving Moses instructions to give to the Israelites later. Yahweh says that the Israelites are to offer burnt offerings and grain offerings to Yahweh. Yahweh says that each animal of the burnt offering has its own grain that goes with it. This offering is just like the offering for the Festival of Trumpets. Moses describes these grain offerings and the amounts for the grain offering in the same way, and with the same words, in each description of these burnt offerings.

Notice in this passage that Yahweh does not give specific amounts of the oil to be used to mix with the grain offering. Yahweh gave Moses the standard amounts of oil for each grain offering when Yahweh gave Moses instructions about previous sacrifices.

Along with the burnt offering, the Israelites are to offer a sin or purification offering of one male goat to make themselves right with Yahweh.

This passage ends with a summary statement. The Israelites should offer the burnt offering for this tenth day of the seventh month, the daily offerings, and a sin or purification offering. But in addition to all of those offerings, they should also offer the sin offering for atonement. Moses does not describe the sin offering for atonement here or explain what it is.

Stop here and list each offering that the Israelites should offer on this day. 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

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 29:7–11 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
- The priest who is presenting the offerings, although he is not 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.

You may have the group act out making the offerings as you tell this story.

Yahweh reminds Moses to tell the Israelites that on the tenth day of the seventh month they must have a holy assembly and they must deny themselves from eating food.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "Why are we not able to eat?" or, "What is the significance between us not having food and denying ourselves from eating food? I do not understand."

The Israelites will do no work, but the Israelites will present a burnt offering, which is a pleasing aroma to Yahweh. The Israelites are to offer to Yahweh two bulls, one ram, and seven lambs one year old, all of them without physical defects. The Israelites must offer a grain offering of flour mixed with oil for each of the animals. The Israelites shall offer a male goat for the sin or purification offering of the Israelites as well. Yahweh tells Moses to tell the Israelites that they must present this burnt offering in addition to the sin offering for atonement, and to the daily burnt offering and their grain and drink offering.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "Why does Yahweh get all of this food, but we cannot eat today?" or, "This must be a very special day for Yahweh."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 29:7-11 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. Yahweh tells Moses to tell the Israelites that on the tenth day of the seventh month, the Israelites must have a **holy assembly** and deny themselves from eating food. The Israelites must do no work. This means that the Israelites must do no work at all. However, the Israelites will present a **burnt offering** to Yahweh. Use the same words for holy assembly, burnt offering, and Yahweh that you have used in previous passages. For more information on holy, burnt offerings, and Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Moses that the burnt offerings are a pleasing smell to Yahweh. This offering shall be one bull, one ram, and seven male lambs one year old, all without any physical defect. With each animal they shall also offer fine flour mixed with pure olive oil. Use the same words for pleasing smell and **ephah** that you have used in previous passages, and remember that ephah is in the Master Glossary.

In addition to this offering, the Israelites should offer a male goat as a **sin or purification offering** for the purification of the people. The Israelites must give this offering as purification for the people who have become unclean or unfit for Yahweh's service. Use the same words for sin or purification offering and **atonement** that you have used in previous passages. For more information on sin or purification offering and atonement, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Israelites must present this burnt offering in addition to the sin or purification offering of atonement, and the continual daily burnt offering, **grain offering**, and **drink offering**. Use the same words for grain offering and drink offering, and see the Master Glossary for more information about these offerings.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 29:7–11

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (9536759 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Numbers 29:12-40

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 29:12–40 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 29:12–40 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 29:12–40 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passages, the Israelites camped on the plains of Moab, by the Jordan River, near Jericho. Yahweh has been giving Moses instructions for the Israelites about the sacrifices they are to give to Yahweh.

In this passage, Yahweh is giving Moses instructions about the sacrifice for the middle of the seventh month. The seventh month is one of the most important months for the Israelites. This festival was to take place on the fifteenth day of the seventh month and to continue for seven days. Some versions mention that this festival was called the Festival of Tabernacles, or the Festival of Booths. This festival was to remind the Israelites of the time they wandered in the wilderness, as well as to thank Yahweh for Yahweh's provision for the harvest. During this festival, the Israelites would build outdoor dwellings, tents, or booths out of branches, to live in during this festival. This reminded the Israelites of how they lived as they went through the wilderness.

Yahweh says that on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, the Israelites are to have a holy assembly, which means they are to do none of their daily work. The passage does not specify what type of work they are not to do. Most likely it means work associated with their daily work, since on this day they have to do the work of sacrificing animals to Yahweh. The Israelites are to celebrate a festival to Yahweh for seven days.

Yahweh instructs the Israelites to present a burnt offering that is a soothing smell to Yahweh. Yahweh tells Moses to have the Israelites offer thirteen bulls, two rams, and fourteen male lambs that are a year old, all without blemish or physical defect.

Along with each animal, the Israelites are also to offer grain offerings. For each bull, the Israelites are to bring three-tenths of an ephah, or around 3 to 9 kilograms, of the finest flour mixed with olive oil. An ephah was a dry measure for grain approximately between 13 to 23 kilograms. This flour was one of the choicest, coarsely ground wheat flours. The Israelites were to mix the flour with olive oil.

With each ram, the Israelites are to offer a grain offering of two-tenths of an ephah, or around 2 to 6 kilograms, with the finest flour mixed with olive oil. Then the Israelites are to offer a grain offering for each of the lambs. This offering is one-tenth of an ephah, or about 1 to 3 kilograms, of finest flour mixed with olive oil for each lamb.

Along with these offerings, the Israelites are to offer one male goat as a sin or purification offering, which is an offering for the forgiveness of the unintentional sins and impurities of the Israelites.

The Israelites are to give this offering in addition to the regular daily burnt offerings, drink offerings, and grain offerings.

Every day of the seven-day celebration, the Israelites are to offer the same burnt offering and grain offering as in the first day, except they are to lessen the number of bulls by one every day.

So on day two, the Israelites will offer twelve bulls, two rams, and fourteen lambs, along with the grain offering, the sin or purification offering, and the daily offerings. On day three, the Israelites are to offer eleven bulls, two rams, and fourteen lambs, along with the grain offering, the sin or purification offering, and the daily offerings. And so on, through the seventh day, on which they are to offer seven bulls, two rams, and fourteen lambs, along with the grain offering, the sin or purification offering, and the daily offerings.

On the eighth day, the Israelites are to hold another holy assembly and to do no work. However, the Israelites are to also offer another burnt offering that is a soothing smell to Yahweh. This burnt offering is one bull, one ram, and seven male lambs that are one year old, without defect. The Israelites must also offer the grain offering and drink offerings for the bull, the ram, and the lambs. Then they must also offer a male goat for the sin or purification offering, as well as the daily burnt offering, grain offering, and drink offering.

Yahweh finishes this section of Numbers by telling Moses that the Israelites are to present all of these offerings at the correct time. It is likely that Yahweh is talking about all of the offerings that Yahweh has mentioned in previous passages: the daily offerings, the weekly offering on the Sabbath, the monthly offerings, as well as the festival offerings. Yahweh also reminds the Israelites that all of these offerings are in addition to the offerings connected to vows that they make in relationship with Yahweh, as well as the freewill offerings they make of burnt offerings, grain offerings, drink offerings, and fellowship offerings, or offerings of peace to Yahweh.

Moses told the Israelites everything that Yahweh commanded Moses.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 29:12–40 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 four scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh reminds Moses to tell the Israelites that on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, they must have a holy assembly and must do no work.

In the second scene: The Israelites must also present a burnt offering, which is a pleasing aroma to Yahweh. The Israelites are to offer to Yahweh thirteen young bulls, two rams, and fourteen male lambs one year old, all of them without physical defects. The Israelites must offer a grain offering of flour mixed with oil for each of the animals. The Israelites shall offer a male goat for the sin or purification offering as well. Yahweh tells Moses to tell the Israelites that they must present this burnt offering and its drink offering in addition to the daily burnt offering and grain offering. The Israelites are to make this same offering for seven days, except to offer one less bull every day.

In the third scene: On the eighth day, the Israelites are to have another holy assembly and to do no work. On this day the Israelites are to present a burnt offering, which is a pleasing aroma to Yahweh. The Israelites are to offer to Yahweh one young bull, one ram, and seven male lambs one year old, all of them without physical defects. The Israelites will offer a grain offering of flour mixed with oil, as well as the drink offerings for each of the animals. The Israelites shall offer a male goat for the sin or purification of the Israelites as well. Yahweh tells Moses to tell the Israelites that the Israelites must present this burnt offering and its drink offering in addition to the daily burnt offering and grain offering.

In the fourth scene: Yahweh tells Moses that the Israelites are to present all of these offerings in addition to any offerings they make with vows, any voluntary offerings, burnt offerings, grain offerings, drink offerings, and peace offerings of fellowship. Moses tells the Israelites everything that Yahweh commanded Moses.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- The Israelites
- The priest who is presenting the offerings, although he is not mentioned

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

Remember that the Israelites are in the plains of Moab, near the Jordan River, next to Jericho. Yahweh is speaking to Moses. Yahweh is giving Moses instructions for the whole assembly of the Israelites. Yahweh gives Moses instructions for the Israelites to carry out during the Festival of Tabernacles, or the Festival of Booths. Some versions name this feast and others do not name the feast. This festival takes place five days after the previous festival ended, and this festival lasts for seven days. On the first day of the festival, the Israelites are to take the day off from work and to keep the day as holy, or set apart to Yahweh.

Stop here and, as a group, build a booth outside using branches like the Israelites might have slept in. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh is giving Moses instructions to give to the Israelites later. For this festival, the Israelites are to offer burnt offerings and grain offerings to Yahweh. Each animal of the burnt offering has its own grain that goes with it. The Israelites must offer the animals each day for seven days, and the only change is to the amount of bulls that the Israelites are to sacrifice each day. The number of bulls decreases by one bull each day.

Notice in this passage that Yahweh does not give specific amounts of the oil to be used to mix with the grain offering. Yahweh gave Moses the standard amounts of oil for each grain offering, and the amounts for the drink offerings, when Yahweh gave Moses instructions about previous sacrifices. The Israelites are to offer all of these festival burnt offerings with their drink offerings in addition to the regular daily burnt offerings and grain and drink offerings. Although Moses does not mention that the festival offering should have a drink offering on the first day, we know that it should because Moses mentions the drink offerings from day two onwards.

Along with these burnt offerings during the festival, each day the Israelites are to offer a sin or purification offering of one male goat to make themselves right with Yahweh.

On the eighth day, the Israelites will have another holy assembly and do no work. On that day they shall offer a burnt offering of one bull, one ram, and seven male lambs one year old, all without defect. The Israelites are to offer the grain and drink offerings that go with each animal, along with a male goat for a sin or purification offering and the daily offerings.

Now Moses gives a summary of the entire sacrificial system that Moses has talked about to this point in the previous passages. Yahweh tells Moses that the Israelites are to present all of these festival offerings in addition to any offerings made with vows, any freewill offerings, any burnt offerings, any grain offerings, any drink offerings, and any peace offerings of fellowship. You should make it clear in your translation that this is a summary of the entire sacrificial system.

Moses tells the Israelites everything that Yahweh commanded Moses.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 29:12–40 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
- The priest who is presenting the offerings, although he is not 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.

You may have the group act out the people and priests making these offerings.

Yahweh reminds Moses to tell the Israelites that on the fifteenth day of the seventh month they must have a holy assembly and they must do no work.

The Israelites must also present a burnt offering, which is a pleasing aroma to Yahweh. The Israelites are to offer to Yahweh thirteen bulls, two rams, and fourteen male lambs one year old, all of them without physical defects. The Israelites will offer a grain offering of flour mixed with oil for each of the animals. The Israelites shall offer a male goat for the sin or purification of the Israelites as well. Yahweh tells Moses to tell the Israelites that they must present this burnt offering and its drink offering in addition to the daily burnt offering and grain offering.

Yahweh tells Moses that the Israelites are to present this offering every day for seven days and to decrease the bulls by one each day.

On the eighth day, the Israelites will have another holy assembly and do no work. On that day they shall offer a burnt offering of one bull, one ram, and seven male lambs one year old, all without defect. The Israelites are to offer the grain and drink offerings that go with each animal.

Yahweh tells Moses that the Israelites are to present all of these offerings in addition to any offerings made with vows, any freewill offerings, any burnt offerings, any grain offerings, any drink offerings, and any peace offerings of fellowship. Moses tells the Israelites everything that Yahweh commanded Moses.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like: "That is a lot of animals, especially in the seventh month. Do we have that many animals that age and without blemish? What if we do not have that many?" or, "Yahweh has been so good to us, but this seems like a lot of dead animals, and it seems very messy," or, "Yahweh is worth all that he asks of us," or, "All of these animals remind us of what Yahweh provides for us at the harvest time."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 29:12–40 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. Yahweh tells Moses that on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, the Israelites must have a **holy assembly** and do no work. The Israelites must celebrate a festival to Yahweh for seven days. The Israelites must present a **burnt offering** to Yahweh. Use the same words for offering, Yahweh, holy assembly, and burnt offering that you have used in previous passages. For more information on offering, Yahweh, holy, and burnt offerings, refer to the Master Glossary.

Some translations name this festival the Festival of Tabernacles or Festival of Booths. This festival reminded the Israelites how they lived in tents as they wandered in the wilderness.

If you are going to name this festival in this passage, stop here and discuss how you will name the **Festival of Tabernacles**. See the Master Glossary for more information on Festival of Tabernacles. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses that the burnt offerings are a pleasing aroma to Yahweh. This offering shall be thirteen bulls, two rams, and fourteen male lambs one year old, all without any physical defect. With each animal they shall also offer a grain offering of fine flour mixed with pure olive oil.

In addition to these regular offerings, the Israelites should also offer a male goat as a **purification or sin offering** for the sins of the people who had become unclean or unfit for Yahweh's service. Use the same word for purification or sin offering that you have used in previous passages. For more information on sin or purification offering, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Israelites must present this burnt offering and drink offering in addition to the continual daily burnt and grain offering. Use the same words you used for **drink and grain offering** in previous passages. For more information on drink and grain offerings, refer to the Master Glossary.

On the eighth day, the Israelites will have another holy assembly and do no work. On that day they shall offer a burnt offering of one bull, one ram, and seven male lambs one year old, all without defect. The Israelites are to offer the grain and drink offerings that go with each animal.

Yahweh tells Moses that the Israelites are to present all of these offerings in addition to any offerings made with vows, any **voluntary or freewill offerings**, any burnt offerings, any grain offerings, any drink offerings, and any **peace or fellowship offerings**. Vow offerings are offerings that are required when someone makes a vow to Yahweh. Voluntary or freewill offerings are when a worshiper freely gives an offering because they want to. Offerings that go with vows and freewill offerings always seem to go together. Use the same words for freewill offerings and peace or fellowship offerings that you have used in previous passages. For more information on freewill offerings and peace or fellowship offerings, refer to the Master Glossary. Moses tells the Israelites everything that Yahweh commanded Moses.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 29:12-40

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (13784097 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Numbers 30:1-16

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 30:1-16 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 30:1-16 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 30:1–16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this passage, Moses now speaks to the leaders of each of the twelve tribes of Israel. Moses tells the leaders Yahweh's commands about vows and pledges. In that culture, the Israelites used a vow as a promise to act a certain way toward Yahweh. A pledge, however, was a promise not to do something specific. When an Israelite made a vow or a pledge, it bound them to fulfill everything they said, because Yahweh was the recipient of the vow or pledge. That person's word was a strong promise to Yahweh. Yahweh took these promises very seriously. When a person made a vow or pledge, it was a way to show even more than usual how much that person meant what they promised. It might also be a way to bargain with Yahweh, since a vow or pledge is usually conditional. Conditional means that if Yahweh did something, the person would fulfill their part. Since the person making the vow or pledge was coming into an agreement with Yahweh, the person could not break their part of the agreement or Yahweh would be displeased with them.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about vows in your culture. How do people in your community make a vow and pledge to God or deities? Why do people make vows and pledges? Why is it important to keep vow and pledges? What happens if someone breaks a vow or promise, especially to God or a deity or supernatural being? Pause this audio here.

The first part of this passage talks about men who make vows and pledges to Yahweh. These men are obligated to keep their promises and to do everything they say they will do, or not to do what they say they will not do. The rest of the passage talks about women and their vows and pledges to Yahweh. In Israelite culture, women were subject to the authority of the men in their lives: while they were unmarried, to their fathers; while they were married, to their husbands. Women can make vows and pledges, but those vows and pledges can be nullified by a man in authority over that woman. The only exception to this is for widows and women who are divorced. Their vows or pledges are as binding as a man's since they have no male authority over them.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, how do women make vows differently than men do? Discuss situations in your culture in which a woman would need a man's approval or authority to make a vow or pledge. Pause this audio here.

This passage discusses several different types of women and their vows and pledges. Each of the women are subject to the same rules concerning their vows and pledges. First the passage discusses an unmarried woman who is still in her father's house. Because the father is the authority over the unmarried woman, the woman is not allowed to do anything that would keep her father from using the woman's position to the advantage of the family, such as arranging a specific marriage. The father has the ability to keep or nullify the daughter's vows and pledges. When the father hears about the vow or pledge his daughter has made, if he says nothing, the vow or pledge stands. If the father speaks up immediately, and forbids the daughter from this vow or pledge, then Yahweh releases her from the vow.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What authority do fathers in your culture have over their daughters before the daughters are married? Pause this audio here.

Once a woman marries, the authority over her transfers from her father to her husband. It is now the woman's husband who can keep or cancel the vow the woman makes.

For the young woman who makes a vow or pledge and then marries, there is another rule. If the woman makes a vow or a rash, careless pledge, meaning she responds quickly without thinking through the situation, then

her husband can make her keep the vow by saying nothing, or the husband can nullify the vow by forbidding it. If the husband forbids the vow or pledge, the woman will be released from the vow or pledge.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, what kinds of careless vows or pledges might a young woman make before being married that someone might need to cancel? Pause this audio here.

A woman who is divorced, or a widow, meaning a woman whose husband has died, is obligated to fulfill any vow or pledge she makes. This woman does not have a man in authority over her, so the woman must fulfill her vow.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about the roles of widows and divorced women in your culture. Who are the people who take responsibility for these women, if any? What types of decisions might widows or divorced women have to make compared to women who are married? Pause this audio here.

For a woman who makes a vow or pledge while she is married, the husband, again, can keep or forbid the vow. However, if the husband does not speak up right away, and waits before he forbids the vow or pledge, then the husband is the one who will be punished for his wife's inability to fulfill the vow or pledge. The wife will be guilty, but the husband will experience the punishment for the wife's actions.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a time you made a vow or pledge and whether or not you were able to keep that vow or pledge. What are the consequences you or someone you know faced for breaking a vow or pledge? Pause this audio here.

This entire passage contains the laws, or statutes, that Yahweh gave concerning a husband and wife, as well as a father and daughter while that daughter is still living in the father's house.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 30:1–16 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 six scenes.

In the first scene: Moses gathers together the leaders of the tribes of Israel to tell them what Yahweh has commanded. Moses tells the leaders that Yahweh says if a man makes a vow to Yahweh, that man must keep every word of that vow.

In the second scene: If a young, unmarried woman makes a vow to Yahweh, and that woman's father hears about the vow but says nothing, then the woman must keep the vow. If the woman's father forbids her from the vow, then Yahweh will release the woman from the vow.

In the third scene: If the young woman makes a vow, or a careless pledge, and then gets married, it is her new husband who can either say nothing or forbid her from the vow. If the woman's husband forbids her from the vow, Yahweh will release her from it.

In the fourth scene: Women who are divorced or widowed must keep every word of their vow.

In the fifth scene: If a married woman makes a vow, it is her husband who can either say nothing or forbid her from the vow. However, if her husband hears of it and waits to forbid her, then he is responsible for her guilt in not being able to keep the vow.

In the sixth scene: Yahweh gives these commands to Moses concerning the relationship between a husband and wife, and concerning the relationship between a father and his daughter who is still living at home.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Leaders of the tribes of Israel
- Yahweh
- Adult male
- Young unmarried woman
- Father
- Husband
- Young woman about to be married
- Widow
- Divorced woman
- Married woman

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

Moses and the Israelites are still in the plains of Moab near the Jordan, across from Jericho. Moses is continuing to tell the Israelites and their leaders commandments from Yahweh. Moses gathers together the leaders of the tribes of Israel to tell them what Yahweh has commanded them.

Yahweh is giving instructions to Moses about when men or women take an oath to vow or promise to do something for God, or when people pledge not to do something. People vow, or promise things to God. When people vow things using an oath, they are saying that if they do not keep their vow, God can punish them. When people vow things to God using an oath, they are very serious about doing this thing. A pledge, however, was a promise not to do something specific.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How will you talk about making a very serious vow to Yahweh in this passage? Remember that vows are so serious, people said that Yahweh could punish them if they did not keep their vow. Pause the audio here.

According to this passage, young women and wives may not pledge themselves to a vow without the consent of their father or husband. The father or husband, as head of a household, has the right to cancel any such vow. Divorced women and widows could make vows and pledges, but they were bound to them because there are no men in authority over them.

Husbands can nullify a vow or pledge of his wife. However, if he first approves of the vow and later attempts to keep a woman from obeying, he gets the punishment for the woman not keeping the vow. Although women often had great influence over their husbands, only widows and elderly women appear to have been able to act on their own in Israelite society. Young women still living with their parents and wives were under the legal control of their fathers and husbands.

This passage ends with a summary statement: These are the statutes, or laws, that Yahweh gave to Moses.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 30:1–16 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
- Leaders of the tribes of Israel
- Yahweh
- An adult male
- Young unmarried woman
- Father
- Husband
- Young woman about to be married
- Widows
- Divorced woman
- Married woman

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 may have the team act out the statutes as Moses describes them.

Moses gathers together the leaders of the tribes of Israel to tell them what Yahweh has commanded them. Moses tells them that Yahweh says if a man makes a vow to Yahweh, the man must keep every word of that vow.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelite leaders, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- We better be very careful what we say! If there is no way out of a vow or pledge, I better not vow something that I do not intend to do; or
- Is there no way for us to get out of a vow or pledge once we make it? or
- Yahweh sure does take these commands seriously. I better honor him by keeping my vows and pledges.

If a young unmarried woman makes a vow to Yahweh, and the woman's father hears of the vow but says nothing, the young woman must keep the vow. If the woman's father immediately forbids her from the vow, then Yahweh will release the young woman from the vow. If the young woman makes a vow, or a careless pledge, and then gets married, it is the woman's new husband who can either say nothing or who can forbid the woman from the vow. If the young woman's husband immediately forbids her from the vow, Yahweh will release the woman from the vow.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the women, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- I better trust my father or husband to help me if I make a vow or pledge I should not make; or
- Maybe it is better if I do not make any vows or pledges.

Ask the person playing the husband or father, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- I hope my daughter or wife knows what they are saying when they make a vow; or
- What if my daughter or wife makes a vow or pledge I have to think about for a while? or
- I hope I do not have to fix any of my daughter or wife's messes.

Women who are divorced or widowed must keep every word of their vows. If a married woman makes a vow, it is her husband who can either say nothing or who can forbid the woman from the vow. However, if her husband hears of the vow and waits a few days to forbid her vow, then the woman's husband is responsible for the woman's guilt in not being able to keep the vow. Yahweh gave these statutes to Moses concerning the relationship between a husband and a wife, and between a father and his daughter who is still living at home.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 30:1–16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Moses gathers together the leaders of the tribes of **Israel** to tell them what **Yahweh** has commanded them. Moses tells the leaders that Yahweh says that if a man makes a **vow** or pledge to Yahweh under **oath**, that man must never break the vow or oath. That man must keep every word of his vow or oath. Both a vow and a pledge are solemn promises to Yahweh, and the person who makes a vow or pledge expects a good thing to happen when they keep it. A vow is a promise to do something for Yahweh. A pledge is a promise to stop doing something for a certain period of time. Use the same words for Israel, Yahweh, vow, and oath that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Israel, Yahweh, vow, or oath, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **pledge**. 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.

If a young unmarried woman makes a vow to Yahweh, and that woman's father hears of the vow but says nothing, the woman must keep the vow. If the young woman's father forbids the woman from the vow, then Yahweh will release the woman or forgive her from the vow. In this case, **forgiveness** is the idea of releasing someone. Use the same word that you have used for forgive in previous passages. For more information on forgiveness, refer to the Master Glossary.

If the young woman makes a vow, or a careless pledge, and then gets married, it is the woman's new husband who can either say nothing or who can forbid the woman from the vow. If the woman's husband forbids her from the vow, Yahweh will release the woman from the vow. Women who are **divorced** or **widowed** must keep every word of their vows. Divorce is a permanent legal separation between a husband and a wife. A widow is a woman whose husband has died.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **widow** and **divorced**. Look up divorce 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.

If a married woman makes a vow, it is the woman's husband who can either say nothing or who can forbid the woman from the vow. However, if the woman's husband hears of the vow and waits a few days to forbid her,

then the husband is responsible for the woman's guilt in not being able to keep the vow. Yahweh gives these laws, or statutes, to Moses concerning the relationship between a husband and a wife, and between a father and his daughter who is still living at home. Use the same word for **statutes** that you have used in previous passages, and see the Master Glossary for more information about statutes.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 30:1–16

Audio Content

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Numbers 31:1–24

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 31:1–24 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 31:1–24 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 31:1–24 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this story, the Israelites are encamped in Shittim in the plains of Moab, near the Jordan River, right across from Jericho. In this location, the Israelites are near the Promised Land. The Israelites just need to cross the Jordan River to finally arrive in Canaan.

Stop here and look at a map as a group. Trace Israel's journey to the Promised Land. Pause this audio here.

In a previous story, while the Israelites were staying in Shittim in the plains of Moab, the Israelites committed a grievous sin against Yahweh. Some of the Israelite men committed sexual sin with the Midianite women. Eventually the Midianite women influenced the Israelites to worship Baal of Peor, the god that the Moabites and Midianites worshipped. This made Yahweh very angry. Yahweh told Moses to treat the Midianites as enemies. Yahweh said to kill the Midianites for what they did to the Israelites. Somehow that punishment was postponed.

Now, in this story, it is time for Yahweh to punish the Midianites before the Israelites leave the plains of Moab to go towards the Promised Land. Yahweh commands Moses to avenge, or punish, the Midianites for influencing the Israelites to sin against Yahweh. Yahweh will use this situation to teach the Israelites what the Israelites should do in times of war. Perhaps this is to prepare the Israelites for the wars that await them as they conquer the Promised Land. This story tells the instructions and the purification rituals involving war.

The Israelite soldiers have to travel back south to punish the Midianites. The Midianites are a group of different tribes gathered together for political, as well as religious, purposes. Midian is located south of Edom and east of the gulf of Elath.

Yahweh tells Moses to send 1,000 men from each tribe of Israel to fight this battle against the Midianites. Phinehas will lead these men. Phinehas is a key figure in this war because of the role Phineas played when the Israelites sinned with the Midianite women and Yahweh punished the Israelites with a plague. You will remember that Phinehas showed zeal for Yahweh. An Israelite man and a Midianite woman shamelessly walked together in front of the people. When Phinehas saw them, Phinehas stood up, followed the man and woman, and killed the Israelite man together with the Midianite woman at once. Just then, Yahweh stopped the plague because of what Phinehas did.

Perhaps another reason why Phinehas has to go with the soldiers to punish the Midianites is because Eleazar the priest has to maintain his purity as priest. Yahweh had commanded the priest not to make himself unclean by touching blood and dead bodies. If Eleazar becomes impure, Eleazar will not be allowed to enter the tabernacle. Eleazar will not be able to serve Yahweh on behalf of the people.

However, although Eleazar must maintain his purity by avoiding dead bodies, the Israelites should also not go to the war without the order of Yahweh. Phinehas brings the priestly utensils from the Holy Place and the trumpet for the battle signals. Back when the Israelites were about to leave Mount Sinai and start their journey to the Promised Land, Yahweh had told Moses to instruct the Israelites to blow the trumpet whenever they go to war. Blowing the horn means the presence of Yahweh goes with the Israelites and Yahweh will save them.

Stop here as a group and look at a picture of the priestly utensils and the silver trumpet. Pause this audio here.

Stop and discuss as a group how you choose people to lead you in battle in your culture. What items would these people take with them into battle, and why? Pause this audio here.

The Israelites fight against the Midianites and kill every man that they find. The soldiers kill all the kings of Midian. The soldiers take women and children captives and gather a large number of farm animals and treasures. This greatly increases the number of farm animals and treasures that the Israelites own. However, the story also mentions that the soldiers kill Balaam. You will remember that Balak, the king of Moab, had hired Balaam to put a curse on the Israelites when the Israelites set their camp in the plains of Moab. However, Balaam was not able to put a curse on the Israelites because Yahweh did not allow it. Yahweh had repeatedly told Balaam not to harm the Israelites. That story had ended with Balak and Balaam going back to their towns separately. We are not sure why Balaam seems to have remained with the Midianites in this story rather than going all the way home. Perhaps Balaam stopped and stayed among the Midianites.

The Israelites bring back the treasures and captives to the camp on the plains of Moab. Moses is angry when he sees them, because they have not killed all the boys. Moses commands the Israelite soldiers to kill all the boys and all the women who have been married or have had sexual relations with a man. This is so the Midianites cannot continue to have children amongst the Israelites. Yahweh also wants to punish the women, because they were the ones who had tempted the Israelite men to sin against Yahweh by sleeping with the Israelite men. Moses allows the Israelites to keep all the young girls for themselves as slaves and wives.

The soldiers must first perform a ritual of purification before they can rejoin the community. This is consistent with the purity laws Moses gave to the Israelites earlier. The purity laws say that touching blood and dead bodies makes the people of Yahweh unclean. The purity laws also say that touching persons who are unclean makes the other person unclean too. That is why the soldiers must stay outside the camp for seven days, so that they do not make the whole camp unclean. The soldiers are to wash their bodies, and all of their belongings, on the third and seventh day to purify themselves.

Stop here and discuss as a group: When your soldiers come back from war, what kinds of things do they do before they enter their home communities again?

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 31:1-24 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: Yahweh instructs Moses to go to war and execute Yahweh's judgment against the Midianites. Moses gathers soldiers and sends them to war against the Midianites with Phinehas as their leader.

In the second scene: The Israelite soldiers destroy the Midianites and bring home captives, farm animals, and treasures of the war.

In the third scene: Moses becomes angry because soldiers brought Midianite women with them.

In the fourth scene: Moses and Eleazar instruct the soldiers to purify themselves, the captives, and the treasures of the war before they can enter the camp and join the community.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Eleazar
- Phinehas
- Commanders of the Israelite army
- Israelite soldiers
- Midianites
- Midianite kings
- Balaam son of Beor
- Midianite women
- Midianite boys
- Midianite young virgins

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

In the first scene, Yahweh commands Moses to punish the Midianites for the Israelites. Yahweh tells Moses to go to war against the Midianites. This instruction is Moses' final order from Yahweh as the war commander of Israel. Yahweh commands Moses to punish and avenge the Israelites who died during the plague. The plague happened in a previous story when the Israelites stopped and camped in Shittim in the plains of Moab. In that story, some of the Israelite men had committed sexual sin with the Midianite women. Soon the Midianite women influenced these men to worship Baal of Peor. Yahweh was very angry about what the Israelites did. As a consequence, Yahweh caused a plague that killed a large number of Israelites. But Yahweh has not yet punished the Midianites. So this time, Yahweh is about to punish the Midianites for influencing the Israelites to worship Baal of Peor.

Stop here and look at a picture of the Baal of Peor as a group. Pause this audio here.

In the second scene, Moses obeys what Yahweh commanded Moses to do. Moses orders the Israelites to gather men to go to war against the Midianites to avenge the Israelites. Vengeance is harming someone, or a group of people, for the harm they brought in the past against the one who will take vengeance. Vengeance can be seen as punishment or consequence for the harm done.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, how do you describe taking vengeance against other people? Pause this audio here.

Moses orders the Israelites to gather 1,000 men from each of the 12 tribes of Israel. The tribes of Israel gather the men and give them everything they need in order to attack the Midianites. Moses sends the soldiers, along with Phinehas, the son of Eleazar the priest. Phinehas will be holding the priestly utensils and the trumpets from the Holy Place.

In the third scene, we see how the war happened. The Israelite soldiers obey what Yahweh ordered Moses to do by going down to punish the Midianites. The soldiers kill all the Midianite men that they find. The men also kill the five kings of Midian.

Stop here, look at a map of the journey of the Israelites from Egypt to the Promised Land, and locate Midian as a group. Pause this audio here.

The soldiers kill the kings of Midian. These kings were Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba. The soldiers also kill Balaam, son of Beor.

The Israelite soldiers plunder the Midianites. The soldiers take the Midianite women, along with the children, as captives. The soldiers also take with them all the farm animals and treasures of the Midianites. The farm animals include cows and sheep. The soldiers do not leave anything behind. Then the soldiers bring all the captives, the farm animals, and the treasures of the war with them as they go back up to the Israelite camp in the plains of Moab.

The third scene shows a rather unlikely reaction for the Israelites' victory against the Midianites. Moses, Eleazar the priest, and all the leaders of the community go outside the camp in Shittim to meet the soldiers. The soldiers cannot come inside the camp because they killed people. You will remember that when someone is near a dead body, they become unclean. These soldiers cannot come inside the Israelite camp. But Moses gets angry with the soldiers because the soldiers let the Midianite women live and brought the women outside the camp. Moses is angry at the officers and commanders of the soldiers for letting the women live. Moses scolds the soldiers as if the soldiers had already forgotten that the Midianite women caused the plague that killed many Israelites. Moses commands the soldiers to kill all the young boys and all the women who already had sexual relations. The soldiers could keep the young women who had not had sexual relations as their own slaves or wives.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, how do you talk about women who have had sexual relations, and virgins, or women who have not had sexual relations? Pause this audio here.

The fourth scene talks about the purification rituals after the war. Moses instructs the soldiers who went to the war to stay out of the camp for a week. Just like Yahweh instructed earlier in the book of Numbers, the soldiers must also purify themselves on the third and on the seventh day. The Israelite soldiers need to wash their bodies and their clothes. The Israelite soldiers need to purify, or clean, everything made of skin, goats' hair, and wood, probably by sprinkling them with special water.

Eleazar the priest tells the soldiers about the requirement of the law. According to the law, all things that someone cannot destroy by fire must be purified through fire. Things like gold, silver, bronze, iron, tin, and lead should be purified through fire. As these things melt, the impurities get burned away, and what remains is pure. Eleazar says that after the Israelites purify these things through fire, they should wash them with water. All of the other things that would be destroyed by fire must be purified with water instead. On the seventh day or the final day, the soldiers are to wash themselves and their clothes. Here, Eleazar the priest reinforces what Moses said earlier. After doing this, the soldiers can enter the camp.

Stop here and discuss as a group: In your culture, how do you purify things that people consider unfit for use in the community? When you clean or purify these things, how do you talk about doing that? 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

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 31:1–24 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:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Eleazar
- Phinehas
- Commanders of the Israelite army
- Israelite soldiers
- Midianites
- Midianite kings
- Balaam son of Beor
- Eleazar
- Midianite women
- Midianite boys
- Midianite young virgins

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 punish the Midianites for what the Midianites did to the Israelites.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The person might answer things like:

- I think it is the right thing to do. The Midianites must experience the consequences of their actions.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What were you feeling when you heard Yahweh commanding you to punish the Midianites for the Israelites?" The person might answer things like:

- I feel honored, and at the same time humbled; or
- I feel secure because I know that Yahweh is just.

Moses orders the Israelites to gather 1,000 men from each tribe of Israel and send them to war against the Midianites.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Israelite soldiers, "What are you feeling?" The people might answer things like:

- We feel honored to be chosen to give Yahweh's punishment to the Midianites; or
- We feel afraid. Midian is a powerful country with five kings. We might lose in the battle; or
- We feel confident. Yahweh commanded this, and Yahweh will make us victorious.

Moses also sends Phinehas, the son of Eleazar the high priest. Phinehas brings things from the sanctuary, and the trumpets, and goes with the soldiers to fight the Midianites.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Phinehas, "What are you feeling?" The person might answer things like:

- I feel honored to serve Yahweh and to go to war against the Midianites; or
- I feel afraid. I have not experienced a war.

In the second scene, the Israelite soldiers go to war against the Midianites. The Israelites defeat the Midianites, including the five kings of Midian, and also Balaam. The soldiers completely burn the Midianite towns. The soldiers take women and children, farm animals, and treasures of the war.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Israelite soldiers, "How do you feel about having won the battle against the Midianites?" The people may answer things like:

- We feel very happy for defeating the Midianites; or
- We should have a big celebration!

Now ask the people who are playing the role of the Midianite men, the five kings of Midian, and Balaam, "How would you feel knowing you will be defeated and killed by the Israelite soldiers?" They may answer things like:

- We feel terrified! or
- We feel the need to ask for mercy and repent for our sins.

In the third scene, the Israelite soldiers go back to the camp in Shittim with all the treasures from the Midianites. Moses, Eleazar the priest, and the leaders of the community go out to meet them. Moses becomes very angry because the Israelite soldiers brought Midianite women back to the camp along with the spoils. So Moses commands the soldiers to kill all the Midianite women, along with the boys. Moses tells the soldiers to only spare the young virgins.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing Moses, Eleazar the priest, and the leaders of the community, "What are you feeling as you hear that the Israelites are arriving back to the camp after winning the war?" They might say things like:

- We are very happy and excited for the good news the soldiers are bringing.

Ask the person who is playing Moses, "What are you feeling when you rebuke the commanders and leaders of the soldiers for letting the Midianite women live, and for bringing them to the camp?" The person might say things like:

- I feel very angry. It was the Midianite women who caused the Israelites to sin; or
- I feel frustrated. The Israelite soldiers failed to obey the command of Yahweh.

Ask the people playing the Israelite soldiers, "What are you feeling when Moses rebukes you for taking the Midianite women to the camp?" They might answer things like:

- We feel sad and guilty for failing to do the command of Yahweh.

Ask the people playing the Midianite women and Midianite boys, "What are you feeling when you hear that you will still be punished and killed?" The people might answer things like:

- We feel terrified!

Ask the young virgins, "What are you feeling when you hear that you are spared from the punishment?" They might answer things like:

- We feel very thankful to Yahweh for his mercy; or
- We do not want to be the only survivors. We wish they would kill us too.

In the fourth scene, Moses and Eleazar instruct the soldiers to purify themselves before they can join the community inside the camp. The soldiers should purify everything, including the captives, the farm animals, and treasures of the war. The Israelite soldiers need to pass all the metal through fire on the third and seventh days, and clean everything with the water of purification on the third and seventh days.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing Moses and Eleazar the priest, "What are you thinking as you give the purification instruction to the Israelite soldiers?" They might say things like:

- We feel responsible to remind the Israelite soldiers of the command of Yahweh.

Ask the persons playing the Israelite soldiers, "What are you feeling when you are told to perform the purification ritual?" They might say things like:

- We feel very happy. We are spared; or
- We feel thankful. Yahweh provided a way for us to be pure before Yahweh and to join the community.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 31:1–24 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

In the first scene, **Yahweh** instructs Moses to punish the Midianites for their sin against Yahweh and the **Israelites**. Use the same words for Yahweh and Israelites that you have used in previous passages, and remember that Yahweh and Israelites are in the Master Glossary.

Moses orders the Israelites to gather 1,000 men from each tribe of Israel and give the men weapons to go to war against the Midianites. The Israelites obey Moses' orders. The Israelites give the 12,000 men weapons and make the men ready for war. Phinehas, the son of Eleazar the **priest**, joins the army and he brings holy objects, which means the utensils that the priests use in the **sanctuary**, or tabernacle. We do not know which holy utensils Phinehas brought with him, so you should use a general word for objects, or utensils. You may either say that Phinehas brought **holy** objects with him, or that Phinehas brought the utensils from the sanctuary, or Holy Place. See the Master Glossary for more information about priest, sanctuary, and holy. Use the same words for the holy utensils from the tabernacle that you have used in previous passages.

Phinehas also brings the silver trumpets that the Israelites use to signal the soldiers that it is time to march to war. Use the same words for the silver trumpets that you used in earlier passages in Numbers.

At the beginning of this story, Yahweh tells Moses to send men to fight against the Midianites. When the men come back, Moses is angry with the men who were leading the people, or the men who were in charge of thousands and hundreds of soldiers.

Stop here and discuss what word you will use for **officers**, or commanders of hundreds and thousands of soldiers. If you have translated words like this in other books of the Bible, use the same words here. Pause this audio here.

Eleazar the priest talks to the soldiers who fought in battle. These are the same men who Yahweh sent to fight. When they come back, they are called soldiers.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word you will use for **soldiers**, the men who fight in battles against the enemy. Pause this audio here.

The Israelites bring back captives and plunder, or treasures, from the war. Two words are used for plunder, but these words have very similar meanings. Plunder includes the livestock and items from the Midianite villages.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word you will use for **plunder**, or treasures, from the war. If you have translated this word in other books of the Bible, use the same word here. Pause this audio here.

The Israelites bring the plunder to the **community**, or congregation, of Israel. Use the same word for "community of Israel" that you have used in previous passages.

Moses tells the soldiers to only spare the young virgins. Virgins are women who have never had sexual relations with a man.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will talk about young women who have never slept with a man. Pause this audio here.

In the fourth scene, Moses and Eleazar instruct the soldiers to **purify** themselves and everything they brought from Midian before they can join the community inside the camp. Use the same word for purify as you have used previously. For more information on purify, refer to the Master Glossary.

The soldiers have to purify everything made from leather, goat hair, or wood. Leather is dried animal skins, and goat hair is the hair from a goat. The soldiers had to purify by fire all the things made of gold, silver, bronze, tin, iron, and lead. These are all different kinds of metal.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will talk about the leather, goat hair, and wood, and how you will talk about the gold, silver, bronze, tin, iron, and lead. Use the same words for these kinds of metal that you have used in previous books of the Bible. Pause this audio here.

Eleazar the priest tells the soldiers that these rules are the **statutes** of the law that Yahweh gave them. Statutes are often regulations about how to live in society. Use the same word for statutes that you have used in previous passages, and remember that statutes is in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 31:1–24 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.

Numbers 31:1–24

Audio Content

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Numbers 31:25–54

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 31:25–54 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 31:25–54 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 31:25–54 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Moses and Eleazar the priest instructed the soldiers to stay out of the camp until the soldiers purified themselves. The previous passage also emphasized how the soldiers were to purify themselves after the war.

In the current passage, Yahweh instructs Moses how to distribute the captives, the farm animals, and treasures of the war.

This story happens seven days after the Israelite soldiers get back from winning the war against the Midianites. In this story, the soldiers have already purified themselves, and now the soldiers rejoin the Israelite community inside the camp in Shittim in the plains of Moab.

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

Yahweh instructs Moses on how Moses, Eleazar the priest, and the leaders of the tribes must supervise the distribution of the captives, farm animals, and treasures of the war among the Israelites. Yahweh gives Moses detailed instructions for this distribution.

Yahweh tells Moses, Eleazar the priest, and the leaders of the community to count all the captives and farm animals. Yahweh says they should divide the captives and the farm animals from the war into two equal parts. The first half will go to the soldiers who went to the war, and the other half will go to the people who stayed in the camp.

Moses will take offerings to Yahweh from the portion of the soldiers who went to the war. Moses will give these portions to Eleazar the priest as an offering to Yahweh.

Moses will also take portions from the items received by the people who stayed in the camp. Moses will give this portion to the Levites for their work in the tabernacle. The story presents a detailed quantity of the distribution.

Stop here and discuss as a group: When you go to war, what do you do with the people and treasures you gain from the war? How do you take care of the people who supported you in the war? Pause this audio here.

Before this story ends, the soldiers who went to the war give the items of gold they had received during the battle to Moses and Eleazar the priest. The soldiers want to make atonement for themselves. In other words, the soldiers want to have a right relationship with Yahweh again after they have fought a battle and killed people. The soldiers recognize that Yahweh has saved them, and the soldiers also recognize that they are impure because they have touched dead bodies and killed people. The gold items will also serve as a way to remember what has happened. Yahweh will remember Yahweh's people, and Yahweh's people will remember what Yahweh has done for them.

Stop here and discuss as a group: When you come back from war, how do you thank God or your gods?

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 31:25–54 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 instructs Moses how to distribute the captives and the farm animals from the war against the Midianites. Yahweh says that Moses, together with Eleazar the priest and the leader of each tribe, must supervise the distribution.

In the second scene: Moses and Eleazar the priest obey the instructions of Yahweh. Moses and Eleazar the priest count all the things that the soldiers brought back from the war. Yahweh gives Moses instructions about which portion should go to Yahweh.

In the third scene: Moses gives the soldiers who went to the war the portion that Yahweh told Moses to give the soldiers. From this portion, Moses gives to Eleazar the priest the contribution for Yahweh, just as Yahweh instructed.

In the fourth scene: Moses gives the Israelites who had not gone to the war the portion that Yahweh told Moses to give to these Israelites. From this portion, Moses gives the Levites the contribution that Yahweh instructed Moses to give.

In the fifth scene: The officers and the commanders of the soldiers bring to Moses their gold offerings to Yahweh. Moses and Eleazar the priest receive the gold offerings and bring them inside the tabernacle. None of the soldiers had died during the war. The gold offerings serve as a reminder to the people of Israel that Yahweh protected the soldiers during the war.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Eleazar the priest
- Leaders of the tribes
- Levites
- Commanders who lead thousands of soldiers
- Commanders who lead hundreds of soldiers
- Israelite soldiers
- Israelites who did not go to war
- Captives

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

In the first scene, Yahweh instructs Moses to count all the captives and farm animals that the Israelites brought back from the war. Moses has to do this with Eleazar the priest and the leaders of the community. Yahweh gives instructions on how Moses, Eleazar the priest, and the leaders of the community are to distribute the captives and the farm animals from the war against the Midianites. In this case, the captives are only the young virgins. Moses, together with Eleazar the priest and the leader of each tribe, will supervise the distribution. Moses, Eleazar the priest, and the leaders of the twelve tribes are to count all the young virgins and then all the farm animals. Moses, Eleazar the priest, and the leaders of the twelve tribes will divide the total number of young virgins and the farm animals into two portions. The first half belongs to the soldiers who went to the war. Yahweh tells Moses to take 1 from every 500 young virgins, 1 from every 500 oxen, 1 from every 500 donkeys, and 1 from every 500 sheep from the portion of the soldiers who went to the war. Moses must give this portion to Eleazar the priest as an offering to Yahweh.

Moses will give the other half of the total captives and farm animals to the Israelites who did not go to war and who instead stayed in the camp. Moses will take 1 from every 50 young virgins, 1 from every 50 oxen, 1 from every 50 donkeys, 1 from every 50 sheep, and 1 from every 50 goats from the portion of the Israelites who did not go to the war and who instead stayed in the camp. Then Moses will give this portion to the Levites for the Levites' service in the tabernacle.

Stop here and look at pictures of oxen, donkeys, sheep, and goats as a group. Pause this audio here.

In the second scene, Moses and Eleazar the priest obey the instruction of Yahweh. The total number of the captives and farm animals, from the largest to the smallest number, were:

- 675,000 sheep
- 72,000 oxen
- 61,000 donkeys
- 32,000 young virgins

In the third scene, Moses gives the soldiers who had gone to the war the portion that Yahweh had instructed Moses to give to the soldiers. From this portion, Moses gives Eleazar the priest the contribution intended for Yahweh, just as Yahweh instructed.

The portion that Moses gives to the Israelite soldiers who went to the war is:

- 337,500 sheep. From these, Moses gives 675 of the sheep to Eleazar as an offering to Yahweh.
- 36,000 oxen. From these, Moses gives 72 of the oxen to Eleazar as an offering to Yahweh.
- 30,500 donkeys. From these, Moses gives 61 of the donkeys to Eleazar as an offering to Yahweh.
- 16,000 young virgins. From these, Moses gives 32 young virgins to Eleazar as an offering to Yahweh.

In the fourth scene, Moses gives the Israelites who had not gone to the war the portion that Yahweh had instructed Moses to give to these Israelites. From this portion, Moses gives the Levites the contribution that Yahweh had instructed Moses to give to the Levites.

The portion that Moses gives the Israelites who did not go to war and stayed in the camp is:

- 337,500 sheep. From these, Moses gives 6,750 sheep to the Levites for their service in the tabernacle.
- 36,000 oxen. From these, Moses gives 720 oxen to the Levites for their service in the tabernacle.
- 30,500 donkeys. From these, Moses gives 610 donkeys to the Levites for their service in the tabernacle.
- 16,000 young virgins. From these, Moses gives 320 young virgins to the Levites for their service in the tabernacle.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, how do you usually count and divide things? Practice saying these lists in a way that you would usually list things in your language. Pause this audio here.

In the fifth scene, the officers and the commanders of the soldiers bring Moses their gold offerings to Yahweh. The officers and commanders are classified according to the number of soldiers under them. An officer commands thousands of soldiers. Under each officer, there are commanders of one thousand soldiers and commanders of one hundred soldiers. When each of the officers and commanders counted the soldiers under them, they found out that none of the soldiers died in the war. The officers and the commanders of the soldiers acknowledged that Yahweh had protected the soldiers and saved the soldiers. The soldiers gave to Moses and Eleazar the priest all the jewelry and accessories the soldiers brought from the war. The jewelry and accessories that were made of gold included armlets, bracelets, signet rings, earrings, and beads. The soldiers brought the jewelry and accessories to make atonement before Yahweh.

Moses and Eleazar the priest received the gold offerings from the officers and the commanders. The total weight of the jewelry and accessories made of gold was 190 kilograms.

Stop here and look at pictures of gold armlets, bracelets, signet rings, earrings, and necklaces as a group. Pause this audio here.

The officers and commanders give Moses what they took from the war against the Midianites. The ordinary soldiers, who are not officers and commanders, take gold jewelry and accessories from the war for themselves. It is important to note that only the officers and the commanders gave gold offerings to Yahweh, perhaps as thanksgiving to Yahweh for protecting and saving all of the Israelite soldiers under their leadership during the war. The commanders say that, "No one—not one soldier—is missing."

Moses and Eleazar the priest receive the gold offerings and bring them inside the tabernacle. The gold offerings serve as a reminder to the people of Israel that Yahweh protected and saved the soldiers.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, how do you establish a memorial that will remind you of a very important event or a person? How do you talk about that memorial? 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

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 31:25–54 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:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Eleazar the priest
- Leaders of the tribes
- Levites
- Commanders who lead thousands of soldiers
- Commanders who lead hundreds of soldiers
- Israelite soldiers
- Israelites who did not go to war
- Captives

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, right after the Israelite soldiers have rejoined the community, Yahweh instructs Moses how to distribute the captives and the farm animals from the war. Moses, together with Eleazar the priest and the leaders of each tribe, will supervise the distribution. All of the Israelites will receive a portion of the captives and farm animals. Even the priest and the Levites who serve in the tabernacle will receive their portion.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you thinking when you instruct Moses on how to properly distribute the captives and farm animals from the war against the Midianites?" The person might answer things like:

- I think the Israelites need to learn how to be fair about how they distribute the captives and farm animals they bring back from the war.

Ask the people playing Moses, Eleazar the priest, and the tribe leaders, "What are you feeling when Yahweh gives you the instructions on how to properly distribute the captives and farm animals from the war against the Midianites?" These people might answer things like:

- We feel responsible to accurately teach the Israelites how to be fair in the distribution of captives and farm animals taken from the war.

Ask the people playing Eleazar the priest and the Levites, "What are you feeling when you learn that even the priest and the Levites will be included in the distribution?" These people might answer things like:

- We feel glad because everyone will have a portion of the captives and farm animals from the war. No one will be left out.

Ask the people playing as captives, "What are you feeling knowing you will be assigned to the people of Israel?" These people might answer things like:

- We feel sad. We lost our nation and our loved ones; or
- We feel grateful because Yahweh and the Israelites spared us; or
- We feel amazed about Yahweh's holiness.

In the second scene, Moses and Eleazar the priest obey Yahweh's instructions. Moses and Eleazar the priest count all the things that were brought back from the war.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you thinking when you count the captives and farm animals?" The person might answer things like:

- We think we need to accurately count the captives and farm animals so that the distribution will be fair.

In the third scene, Moses gives the soldiers who went to the war the portion that Yahweh told Moses to give the soldiers. From this portion, Moses gives to Eleazar the priest the contribution for Yahweh, just as Yahweh instructed.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Israelite soldiers, "What are you feeling when you receive your portion from the captives and farm animals from the war?" These people might answer things like:

- We feel very thankful.

Ask the person playing Eleazar the priest, "What are you feeling when you receive your portion from the captives and farm animals from the war?" The person might answer things like:

- I feel very grateful. I did not expect to receive a large number of captives and farm animals as a portion for Yahweh.

In the fourth scene, Moses gives the Israelites who had not gone to the war the portion that Yahweh told Moses to give to these Israelites. From this portion, Moses gives the Levites the contribution that Yahweh instructed Moses to give.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Israelites who had not gone to the war, and who had instead stayed in the camp, "What are you feeling when you receive your portion?" These people might answer things like:

- We feel very grateful for Yahweh's generosity and justice.[!end] Continue the drama.

In the fifth scene, the officers and the commanders of the soldiers bring Moses their gold offerings to Yahweh, because none of the soldiers died during the war. The officers and commanders give all the gold jewelry and accessories that the officers and commanders brought from the war. Moses and Eleazar the priest receive the gold offerings and bring them inside the tabernacle. The gold offerings are a reminder to the people of Israel that Yahweh protected the soldiers during the war.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the officers and commanders, "What are you feeling?" These people might answer things like:

- We think the right thing to do is to honor and thank Yahweh for protecting and saving us.

Ask the people playing Moses and Eleazar the priest, "What are you feeling?" These people might answer things like:

- We feel inspired and amazed by their desire to honor Yahweh.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 31:25–54 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

In the first scene, right after the Israelite soldiers had rejoined the community, **Yahweh** instructs Moses that Moses, Eleazar the **priest**, and the leaders of the community of Israel must divide out the captives and the oxen, donkeys, sheep, and other animals. Use the same words for oxen, donkeys, and sheep that you have used in other passages. Use the same words for Yahweh, priest, and community that you have used in previous passages, and remember that Yahweh and priest are in the Master Glossary.

All of the **Israelites** will receive a portion of the captives and farm animals. Even the priest and the **Levites** who serve in the **tabernacle** will receive their portion. Use the same words for Israelites, Levites, and tabernacle that you have used in previous passages, and remember that Israelites, Levites, and tabernacle are in the Master Glossary.

In the second scene, Moses and Eleazar the priest did what Yahweh instructed them to do. Moses and Eleazar the priest counted all the things that were brought back from the war. Moses and Eleazar the priest also counted all the women who had never had sexual relations with a man before. Use the same description of these women that you used in the previous passage.

In the third scene, Moses gives the soldiers who went to the war the portion that Yahweh told Moses to give the soldiers. From this portion, Moses gives to Eleazar the priest the contribution for Yahweh, just as Yahweh instructed. Use the same word for plunder that you used in the previous passage.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will talk about the portion, or part of the plunder, that each group will receive. Pause this audio here.

The officers and the commanders of the soldiers bring Moses their gold offerings to Yahweh, because none of the soldiers died during the war. The officers and commanders call themselves the **servants** of Moses as a way to show Moses respect. Use the same word for servant that you have used in previous passages, and remember that servant is in the Master Glossary.

The gold jewelry and accessories that the officers and commanders bring from the war include armlets, bracelets, signet rings, earrings, and necklaces.

Stop here and look at pictures of gold armlets, bracelets, signet rings, earrings, and necklaces as a group. Discuss as a group how you will describe each of these items. Pause this audio here.

The officers and commanders give the gold items to make **atonement** for themselves. In other words, the officers want to come close to Yahweh again and be restored to a full relationship with Yahweh. Use the same word for atonement that you have used previously. For more information on atonement, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses and Eleazar the priest receive the gold offerings and bring them inside the **tent of meeting**, which refers to the **tabernacle**. Use the same word for tent of meeting as you have used in previous passages, and see the Master Glossary for more information on tabernacle.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 31:25–54 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.

Numbers 31:25–54

Audio Content

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Numbers 32:1–15

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 32:1–15 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 32:1–15 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 32:1–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Israel had just defeated the Midianites in battle. Moses had given each tribe some of the plunder, livestock, and possessions that they had captured from the Midianites.

In this story, the Israelites are still camping in the plains of Moab. The tribes of Reuben and Gad come to Moses, Eleazar the priest, and the leaders of the Israelite community. The tribes of Reuben and Gad ask if they can remain in the land Israel has conquered.

The tribes of Reuben and Gad have a large number of animals, like cattle, sheep, and goats. The two tribes had previously seen that the land of Jazer and the land of Gilead has good land for the animals. Gilead is a large, fertile, and well-watered region to the east of the Jordan River, and Jazer is a town to the east of the Jordan River. The tribes probably saw this land when they fought Sihon and Og, the kings of that land, in a previous story.

Stop here and show a map of the plains of Moab, Gilead, and Jazer. Pause this audio here.

Leaders, or representatives, from the tribes of Reuben and Gad come to Moses, the leaders of the community of Israel, and Eleazar the priest. These leaders, or representatives, from the tribes of Reuben and Gad list the names of all the towns that Israel has conquered in their recent battles. These leaders respectfully ask if the people of Gad and Reuben can settle in this land, because the land is good for the tribes' animals. The land of Canaan that Yahweh had promised Israel is on the west side of the Jordan, but the tribes of Gad and Reuben ask not to go over the Jordan River. The land these two tribes want is on the east side of the Jordan River.

Moses responds to the two tribes by asking them some questions. Moses does not expect the tribes to answer these questions. Moses asks these questions as a way to show Moses' surprise and disapproval, and as a way to rebuke the two tribes. Moses first asks, "Do you intend to stay here while your brothers, the other tribes of Israel, go across and do all the fighting?" Moses uses this question to emphasize that if the people of Gad and Reuben do not cross the Jordan River, they will not be helping to support the other tribes of Israel in fighting the people of Canaan. Moses then asks, "Why do you want to discourage the rest of the people of Israel from going across to the land Yahweh has given them?" Moses uses this question to emphasize to the representatives of Gad and Reuben that if they do not enter into the land of Canaan, the other tribes of Israel might not want to enter Canaan and fight for the land either.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story about a time when one small group of people in your community made it difficult for the rest of the community to succeed or prosper. How did the rest of the community react to the small group? What kinds of feelings did they have towards them? Pause this audio here.

Moses reminds the representatives of the time 40 years ago when their fathers, or the previous generation of Israel, traveled from Kadesh-barnea up north to the Valley of Eschol and saw the land of Canaan. Moses reminds the two tribes how the explorers who went into the land discouraged the people of Israel from entering the land Yahweh had promised them. Moses reminds the tribes of how Yahweh was angry because the tribes of Israel did not want to enter into the land. Moses says Yahweh swore, or made an oath, that none of the men who came out of Egypt when they were 20 years or older would live in the land Yahweh promised Israel's ancestors. The only people who would enter the land from that group of explorers are Caleb and Joshua, because they were committed to following Yahweh. Moses reminds the two tribes how Yahweh was angry against Israel and made Israel wander, or stay, in the wilderness for 40 years until all the generations that sinned against Yahweh had died. Moses changes from talking about a story in the past, to telling Gad and Reuben that they are doing the same thing as their fathers, or the previous generation, and that they are a brood, or large group, of sinful men. Moses says that the two tribes are making Yahweh even more angry with Israel. Moses says that if Gad and Reuben stop following Yahweh, Yahweh will abandon Israel in the wilderness again and the tribes of Gad and Reuben will cause Israel to be destroyed.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 32:1–15 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: Reuben and Gad have a great number of livestock.

In the second scene: The leaders of Reuben and Gad go to Moses, Eleazar the priest, and the leaders of the community of Israel to ask them if the tribes of Reuben and Gad can live in the land Israel just conquered.

In the third scene: Moses responds to the leaders' request by reminding them what happened when a previous generation of Israelites refused to enter the land.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Eleazar the priest, and the community of chiefs, or leaders
- The representatives, or leaders, of the tribes of Reuben and Gad

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

In the previous passage, Israel had just defeated the Midianites in battle, and Moses had distributed the Midianites' animals and possessions amongst the tribes of Israel.

In this passage, the tribes of Reuben and Gad now have a large quantity of livestock, including cattle, sheep, goats, donkeys, and camels. The tribes of Reuben and Gad notice that the land of Gilead and the town of Jazer that the Israelites have conquered are fertile, well-watered, and good for raising these animals.

Stop here and show a map of the plains of Moab, Gilead, and Jazer. Pause this audio here.

Scene two starts in the land of Moab when the leaders, or representatives, of Reuben and Gad come to Moses, Eleazar the priest, and the leaders of the congregation, or community of Israel. The leaders of Reuben and Gad start by listing the names of towns, which include Ataroth, Dibon, Jazer, Nimrah, Heshbon, Elealeh, Sebam, Nebo, and Beon. The leaders say these are towns Yahweh had conquered before, or in the sight of Israel. The leaders of the two tribes tell Moses that they have noticed that the land is good for raising livestock, and that their tribes have livestock. The leaders of Reuben and Gad want to settle in this area instead of getting property on the other side of the Jordan River. The leaders of Reuben and Gad call themselves "servants" of Moses to show the leaders respect. The leaders of Reuben and Gad say, "If we have pleased you..." to show their willingness to submit to the authority of Moses and the other leaders.

Stop here and tell a story about a time when someone asked a leader or elder for something in a very respectful and polite way. Watch closely for what they say and do. In what ways did they show their respect for the people they were asking? Pause this audio here.

The leaders of Reuben and Gad ask Moses not to take the two tribes across the Jordan River. Moses responded to the leaders by asking the leaders two questions that Moses does not expect them to answer. Moses asks the leaders if they are going to sit down while their brothers go to battle. Moses asks this as a way to show Moses' surprise and disapproval, and as a way to rebuke the leaders. Moses shows his disapproval even more when Moses asks why the leaders are discouraging the heart of the Israelites, or making the Israelites change their mind. Moses reminds the leaders of an event that happened 40 ago. It is possible that some of these leaders were youth, or children, when this event occurred.

Stop here and tell a story about a time someone was talking about a situation in the present time, and then suddenly started talking about something that happened in the past. Watch closely how the person describes this. How do they move from what is happening now to what happened in the past? Pause this audio here.

Moses tells the leaders of the tribes of Reuben and Gad that they are behaving like their fathers, or ancestors, when Moses sent their ancestors to explore the land. Moses had sent their ancestors up, or north, from Kadesh-barnea to the valley of Eschol to see the land. The leaders' ancestors had discouraged the hearts of the Israelites, changing their mind or will about going to the land that Yahweh had promised. This action had caused Yahweh's anger to burn. Yahweh's anger is like something burning, or hot—Yahweh is very angry! Moses quotes what Yahweh said 40 years before. Yahweh had said that none of the Israelites who were over 20 years old when they left Egypt could enter the Promised Land, because they did not follow Yahweh wholeheartedly, or fully and completely. Yahweh then says only Caleb, the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite, and Joshua, the son of Nun, wholeheartedly followed Yahweh.

Moses returns to the story of what happened in the past. Moses goes on to say that Yahweh's anger burned against the previous generation of Israel, and that Yahweh made the previous generation wander in the wilderness for 40 years until that entire generation had died. Moses says that by not following Yahweh's instructions, the previous generation of Israel had "done evil in his sight." Moses then starts talking to the present tribes of Reuben and Gad to compare them to the past generations of Israelites.

Stop here and tell a story about a time someone was telling a story from the past, and then suddenly started talking to someone about something happening in the present. Watch closely how the person describes this. How do they move from past events to present events? Pause this audio.

Moses goes on to tell the leaders of Reuben and Gad that they are a brood, or large group, of sinners. Moses explains that the leaders are standing in the place of their fathers, or making the same mistake as their ancestors. Moses tells the leaders this will make Yahweh even more angry with Israel. Moses warns that if the leaders turn away from following Yahweh, then Yahweh will leave the Israelites in the wilderness, and the leaders of Reuben and Gad will be the reason why Israel gets destroyed.

This entire story shows how angry Yahweh is with the tribes of Reuben and Gad for making this suggestion. Over and over Yahweh's anger burns, and Yahweh compares these tribes to their evil ancestors.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 32:1–15 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
- Eleazar the priest, and the community of chiefs, or leaders
- The leaders and people of Reuben and Gad

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, the people of Reuben and Gad have a lot of livestock, or many animals. When the people of Reuben and Gad see the land that Yahweh just conquered for Israel, and they realize that it is fertile and good for raising livestock, the people send representatives to Moses, Eleazar, and the other leaders of Israel.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the people of Reuben and Gad, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- We do not have to go into the Promised Land and fight. There is enough fertile land for our people and cattle here; or
- We are so happy that we can finally settle in fertile land after being in the dry wilderness for 40 years; or
- We feel powerful. No one can defeat us with Yahweh fighting for us.[!end] Continue the drama.

In the second scene, the leaders of Reuben and Gad go to Moses, Eleazar the priest, and the leaders of the congregation to ask if the tribes of Reuben and Gad can live in the land Israel just conquered. Moses tells the leaders that Moses does not approve of the two tribes leaving the rest of Israel to fight without them, as it would discourage the other Israelites from entering the Promised Land.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- I feel so angry that the people of Gad and Reuben are being so lazy! or
- I am scared that if Gad and Reuben do not fight, then the rest of Israel will not fight either; or
- I am scared that Israel will make God angry again if they do not obey!

Ask the people playing the people of Reuben and Gad, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- I did not mean that we did not want to fight. I just meant we really liked the land; or
- I am worried that we have upset Moses; or
- I am angry that Moses is making us fight, and that we cannot just rest in the land we have already conquered.

Moses reminds the people of Reuben and Gad that when the previous generation of Israelites refused to go into the land, Yahweh was very angry and told that generation of Israelites that everyone 20 years old and older in Israel would die before Israel entered into the land.

In the third scene, Moses tells the people of Gad and Reuben that if they do not go into the land of Canaan, like the previous generation of Israel did not go into Canaan, the people of the two tribes will cause Yahweh to leave Israel in the wilderness and destroy them.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- I find it so hard to lead the people of Israel; or
- I feel angry with the people of Israel; or
- I hope Yahweh has mercy on the people of Reuben and Gad.

Ask the people playing the people of Reuben and Gad, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- I am sad that I have so little faith in Yahweh after all Yahweh has done for Israel. Please forgive me, Yahweh; or
- I just want to rest here in this land; or
- I am worried that Yahweh will judge us for not wanting to enter the land.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 32:1–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

This story starts with people from the tribes of Reuben and Gad coming to Moses, Eleazar the **priest**, and the leaders of the congregation, or community, of Israel. The leaders of the tribes of Reuben and Gad ask if the people of Reuben and Gad can settle in the land Israel just conquered in the previous stories. Use the same words or phrases for community and priest that you used in previous passages. For more information on priest, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses responds to this question by telling the people from the two tribes that if the two tribes do not fight, it might discourage the heart of the people of **Israel**. The word Israel here refers to all the descendants of Abraham together. It means the same as **Israelites**, or as "people of Israel." Use the same words or phrases for Israel and Israelite that you used in previous passages. For more information on Israel or Israelites, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses tells the story of when the Israelites refused to go into the land 40 years before. **Yahweh** made the previous generation of Israelites wander in the **wilderness** for 40 years because they did not enter into the land. Use the same words for Yahweh and wilderness that you used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh and the wilderness, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses calls the leaders of Reuben and Gad a brood, or large group, of sinners. A sinner is someone who sins. **Sin** is an act of rebellion against God. Any time that a person disobeys God's laws, that person sins. Use the same word or phrase for sin that you used in previous passages. For more information on sin, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses tells the people of Reuben and Gad that if these two tribes turn against God, then Israel will be left in the wilderness and will die just like the previous **generation** of Israel. In this passage, generation refers to the people who live at the same time as each other. Use the same word or phrase for generation as you used in previous passages. For more information on generation, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 32:1–15

Audio Content

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Numbers 32:16–27

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 32:16–27 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 32:16–27 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 32:16–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, the leaders of Reuben and Gad asked Moses if they could live in the conquered land, but Moses reminded the leaders that Yahweh punished the previous generation of Israel when they refused to enter Canaan.

The current passage continues the conversation between Moses and the leaders of Reuben and Gad. The leaders of Reuben and Gad explain that they are not planning to rebel, but that they want to make a deal with Moses.

The leaders of Reuben and Gad respectfully respond to Moses' concern by making a proposal. The leaders approach Moses as a person in authority as they begin to negotiate with Moses. The leaders of Reuben and Gad tell Moses that they would like to build pens, or walled enclosures, for their livestock. The leaders also want to rebuild and fortify the recently conquered cities for their little ones, referring to their families who were not part of the army—their wives, children, and the elderly.

Stop here and show pictures of a livestock pen and a fortified city from the region. Discuss how you keep livestock in your culture. Pause this audio here.

The tribal leaders of Reuben and Gad describe how the men of their tribes will take up arms, or have weapons ready, to go before the people of Israel and to help the other tribes go into the lands Yahweh has given them. Reuben and Gad are usually the second tribes to enter battle, so by saying that they will go before, or in front of, the other tribes of Israel, the leaders are probably wanting to show Moses that the two tribes are willing to take a leadership position in the conquest. The leaders say that while the men of Reuben and Gad are fighting, their little ones, or women and children, will live in fortified, or secure, cities to keep everyone safe from the other people who live in the land. The leaders say they will not return home to the fortified cities until the Israelites have their inheritance, or possession of the land in Canaan, that Yahweh assigned them.

Stop here and discuss as a group: In your culture, how would men protect women and children when the men go away for a long time? Pause this audio here.

The leaders of Reuben and Gad say they will not inherit, or possess, the land to the west of the Jordan, but that they will take possession of the land to the east.

Moses tells the leaders of Reuben and Gad that they will have to cross over the river ready for battle and conquer the land before they can go back to Gilead and be free of their obligation to Yahweh. Moses says that if they do this, Reuben and Gad will have fulfilled their promise to Israel and Yahweh. Moses says the two tribes will also have their land to the east of the Jordan River as an inheritance, or possession, before the Lord. Moses is making a covenant, or an agreement, between two parties. Moses is saying that if Gad and Reuben do get ready for battle, cross the Jordan River, and help Israel conquer the land of Canaan, then the two tribes will be able to inhabit the land to the east of the Jordan. Moses repeats that Reuben and Gad will do these things "before Yahweh." Moses says this to show that Yahweh will see if the two tribes are keeping the conditions of the covenant they have made to help the other Israelite tribes conquer the land.

Stop and discuss as a group: In your culture, how do gods affect the process of making deals and agreements with other people? Why do people mention the gods in the deals? Pause this audio here.

Moses continues to describe the covenant by warning the leaders that if they do not do what Moses has just asked them to do, the leaders will have sinned against Yahweh. Moses tells the leaders that their sin will find them, and they will face the consequences of their sin. Moses agrees that the leaders should build their cities for their little ones and livestock and do everything the leaders just promised. The leaders of Gad and Reuben respond by telling Moses they will do everything Moses asked of them. The leaders agree that their wives,

children, and livestock will remain in the cities of Gilead as all the armed men cross the river before Yahweh, just like Moses ordered.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 32:16–27 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 three scenes.

In the first scene: The leaders of Reuben and Gad bring a proposal to Moses. The leaders want to secure places for their families and livestock. The leaders say that their men will go before the army of Israel and fight in Canaan. The men of the tribes of Reuben and Gad will not return to Gilead until the land is conquered for the other tribes.

In the second scene: Moses says that Moses will allow the leaders to do this, but Moses warns the leaders that if they do not fight, they will face consequences for that sin before Yahweh.

In the third scene: The leaders of Reuben and Gad agree again that they will go to war with Israel and settle in Gilead afterward.

The characters in this passage are:

- The leaders of Reuben and Gad
- Yahweh
- Moses, Eleazar the priest, and the leaders of the congregation of Israel

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

In the previous passage, the leaders of Reuben and Gad asked Moses if their two tribes could live in the conquered land, but Moses reminded the leaders what happened to Israel's previous generation when they refused to enter Canaan.

In the first scene, the leaders of Reuben and Gad continue to talk with Moses. Although Eleazar the priest and the leaders of the congregation of Israel are not mentioned in this passage, they are probably in this scene too. The storyteller describes the leaders of Reuben and Gad coming to the group of Israelite leaders politely and respectfully. The phrase "they came near" in this passage shows that they approached Moses as a person in authority as they began to negotiate with Moses.

Stop here and tell a story from your culture of a time when a group requested something from a more important, or more powerful, group of leaders. Pay close attention to how the smaller group approaches the more powerful group and how they speak. Pause this audio here.

Reuben and Gad say to Moses that they will build pens, or walls, for their livestock, and cities for their little ones, or women and children.

Stop here and show a map of the Jordan River, the land of Gilead that the tribes of Reuben and Gad want to live in to the east of the Jordan River, and the land of Canaan. Pause this audio here.

The two tribes say they will take up arms, or have their weapons ready for battle. The two tribes say they are ready to go, showing Moses that they are able to leave for battle quickly. The tribes say they will go in front of the rest of Israel until they have brought the tribes of Israel to their places. The tribes of Reuben and Gad were not usually in front of the tribes in war. Bringing "them to their place" means helping the other 10 tribes settle in the specific lands of Canaan Yahweh gave them to possess.

Stop and discuss how someone in your culture would communicate that they are ready to go to battle as soon as their leader asks them. Pay close attention to the words they use and how they communicate with their body. Pause this audio here.

The leaders of the two tribes then go on to say how their little ones, or women and children, will live in fortified, or protected, cities because of the other people groups who live in the land. The leaders of Reuben and Gad say they will not go home until the other tribes of Israel receive their inheritance of land. The leaders say that the two tribes will not inherit land on the same side of the Jordan River as the other Israelite tribes, because the two tribes want to inherit, or possess, the land to the east of the Jordan River. Remember that Yahweh has assigned each tribe land to live in. This land is like an inheritance that a father gives his children.

Moses starts his response by saying, "If you will do this...." Moses is about to make a covenant with Reuben and Gad by listing all the things Moses wants them to do, and by warning the tribes about the consequences of not doing those things and the rewards for doing those things.

Stop and discuss: Tell a story from your culture about someone making a deal with another person. Have the person who is making the deal explain to that other person what will happen if that other person follows the rules of the deal, and also what would happen if they do not follow the rules. Pay attention to how they explain what they want the other person to do. Also pay attention to how they explain the rewards for keeping to the deal and the consequences for breaking the deal. Pause this audio here.

Moses starts telling the leaders all the things Moses wants them to do. Moses tells the leaders to go take up arms, or get weapons ready, for war before Yahweh, or in the presence of Yahweh. Moses repeats the phrase "before Yahweh." Moses probably does this to show Reuben and Gad that Yahweh will be a witness to, or will be watching over, the conditions of the agreement that has just been made between the two tribes and Moses. Moses then says every armed man of the two tribes will pass over the Jordan River before Yahweh, or under the command of Yahweh. Moses states that Moses wants the men of Reuben and Gad to fight until Yahweh drives out the Canaanites, or forces the Canaan people to leave, and Yahweh is in complete control of the land.

Stop here and tell a story about a time when one group of people went and completely conquered the land of another group of people. How did they describe the complete victory? Pause this audio.

Moses stops telling the leaders of the tribes of Reuben and Gad what Moses wants the tribes to do. Instead, Moses now tells the leaders that if they do all these things Moses has asked, then the tribes shall return and be free of obligation to Yahweh and to Israel. Moses says that the land the leaders want will be the two tribes' possession before Yahweh. This statement shows that the two tribes will receive the land from Yahweh, or with Yahweh's approval. Here Moses shifts to warn the tribes what will happen if they do not fulfill the covenant requirements. Moses uses words to make sure they pay attention to what Moses is about to say.

Stop here and discuss: How would you be sure that a group pays attention to a warning that you are about to give them? Pay attention to the words you use and the way you talk. Pause this audio here.

The phrase "your sin will find you out" is a special language that talks about sin as if it were a person who discovers when someone else does something wrong. This phrase describes how the leaders will not be able to escape the consequences of disobeying Yahweh if they refuse to conquer the land of Canaan with Moses.

Stop here and discuss: How will you talk about the people's sin "finding them out?" Pause this audio here.

Some people may mistake Moses' words, "You have sinned against Yahweh," as referring to a past event. When translating, make sure the team knows that Moses is actually saying Reuben and Gad will be sinning against Yahweh in the future if they do not conquer Canaan with the rest of Israel.

Moses tells the leaders of the two tribes to go ahead and build the cities for their families, but Moses warns the leaders to make sure to do as they had promised. The leaders of Reuben and Gad agree to the covenant. The leaders are very respectful. The leaders claim to be servants of the leaders of Israel, and they agree to do the will of their lords or masters, which refers to Moses and the group of Israelite leaders. The tribal leaders agree to keep their children, wives, and livestock in the cities of Gilead. But the two tribes agree that all of their active warriors will cross over the Jordan River to fight before Yahweh. When the leaders say "cross over," they mean cross over the Jordan River.

Stop here and tell a story about a time when someone in your culture talked to an elder or leader in a very respectful and polite way. Watch closely for what they say and do. In what ways did they show their respect for the people they were asking? Pause this audio.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 32:16–27 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:

- The leaders of Reuben and Gad
- Yahweh
- Moses, Eleazar the priest, and the leaders of the congregation 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.

In the first scene, the leaders of Reuben and Gad bring a proposal to Moses. The leaders tell Moses that the people of Reuben and Gad will live in the land to the east of the Jordan River, but the men of Reuben and Gad will go with the rest of the tribes to conquer the land of Canaan on the other side of the river.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- I am so happy that the people of Reuben and Gad have not forgotten what happened the last time Israel refused to enter the land; or
- I feel like the leaders of Reuben and Gad were not going to help Israel fight until I reminded them of the things Yahweh did when Israel did not enter the land before; or
- I am embarrassed for getting so angry at the leaders of Reuben and Gad. Maybe the two tribes were always going to help.

In the second scene, Moses says that if the men of Reuben and Gad will help Israel conquer the land of Canaan, then the two tribes can live in the land of Gilead. Moses then warns the leaders of Reuben and Gad that if they do not help Israel and follow Yahweh, they will have sinned against Yahweh.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the tribal leaders, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- Moses is really serious about this. There is no way that I would be able to trick him; or
- I feel happy that Moses has agreed that we can have the land of Gilead! or
- I am sad that we are going to have to go to war.

In the third scene, Reuben and Gad agree that they will leave their children, livestock, and wives in Gilead and will join Israel to fight in the land of Canaan.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- Thank you, Yahweh, for being kind to Reuben and Gad; or
- I am so grateful that all of Israel will be fighting as one group in Canaan; or
- I am so happy Yahweh is not going to punish Israel again.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- I am thankful I will not have to punish Israel again; or
- I am happy that my good plans for Israel are going forward.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 32:16–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

The leaders of Reuben and Gad approach Moses. The leaders tell Moses that the tribes of Reuben and Gad will live in the land to the east of the Jordan River, but that the men of Reuben and Gad will go with the rest of the tribes of **Israel** to conquer the land of Canaan. The word Israel here refers to all the descendants of Abraham together. It means the same as **Israelites**, or as "people of Israel." Use the same word or phrase for Israelites and Israel as you used in previous passages. For more information on Israelites and Israel, refer to the Master Glossary.

The leaders say that they will not go home to Gilead until Israel has gained its **inheritance** in the land of Canaan. In this story, Yahweh gives each tribe their special part, or inheritance, of land, like a father gives his children part of his wealth. Each tribe will completely own the land Yahweh gives to them.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **inheritance**. 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 that if the tribes of Reuben and Gad will help Israel conquer the land of Canaan, then the two tribes can live in the land of Gilead. Moses then warns the leaders that if they do not help Israel, and follow Yahweh, then they will commit a **sin**. Use the same word or phrase for sin that you used in previous passages. For more information on sin, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses tells the leaders to build cities for their **little ones**. "Little ones" refers to the people who were not part of the army—their wives, children, and the elderly.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for "little ones." 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.

Reuben and Gad agree to leave their children, livestock, and wives in Gilead so they can join Israel to fight in the land of Canaan before **Yahweh**. Yahweh is God's proper name. Use the same word or phrase for Yahweh that you used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

The leaders of Reuben and Gad refer to Moses as their **lord**. A lord is someone who is a master over other people, who has full authority, and who deserves for people to give him respect. When you address someone as "Lord," you are saying that person has authority over you. Use the same word or phrase for lord that you used in previous passages. For more information on lord, refer to the Master Glossary.

The leaders also say they are **servants** of Moses. A servant is a man or a woman who works for another person. The leaders were using this term to show their respect for Moses and to show that they would do what Moses asked. Use the same word or phrase for servant that you used in previous passages. For more information on servant, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 32:16-27

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (12722688 KB)

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Numbers 32:28-32

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 32:28–32 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 32:28–32 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 32:28–32 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, the leaders of the Israelite tribes of Reuben and Gad asked if they could remain in the land of Gilead and Jazer, which Israel had conquered. Moses responded by making a covenant, or agreement, with them that they could settle in the land only if the tribes of Reuben and Gad helped the rest of the tribes of Israel to conquer the land of Canaan.

In this passage, Moses starts by giving two orders to Eleazar the priest, Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers' houses, or family houses, of the tribes of the people of Israel. Moses asks these leaders of Israel to witness the covenant Moses made with the leaders of Reuben and Gad. These leaders of Israel will also be responsible for making sure that everyone does what they promised. Moses tells the leaders of Israel that if the armed people, or warriors, of Reuben and Gad cross over the Jordan River and subdue, or conquer, the land, then these leaders of Israel should allow the two tribes to have possession of, or live in, the land of Gilead. Moses also tells the leaders that if Reuben and Gad do not prepare for battle and pass over the Jordan River, the leaders of Israel should not allow the two tribes to settle in the land of Gilead, and the two tribes must instead have possession of, or live in, their part of the land of Canaan. Moses orders the leaders to enforce the covenant because Moses will not enter the land of Canaan. You will remember that Yahweh told Moses that Moses would die before entering the land.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Moses called witnesses to the covenant between the Israelites and the tribes of Reuben and Gad. In your culture, how do people make and agree to the terms of a covenant, or promise, between two groups of people? Who witnesses the agreement? Who enforces the agreement? Pause this audio here.

The leaders of Reuben and Gad agree to the covenant by saying that they are Moses' servants and they will do what Yahweh has said. The leaders of Reuben and Gad were not servants of Moses, but the leaders use this term as a way to show respect in their culture. The leaders of the two tribes tell Moses and the leaders of Israel that the warriors of Reuben and Gad will help Israel conquer the land of Canaan before Yahweh. The leaders say that after the conquest, they will claim their own inheritance, or portion of the land, "on the other side," or east of the Jordan River. The leaders of Reuben and Gad know that they will help conquer the land before Yahweh, or in the sight of Yahweh. In other words, the tribes of Reuben and Gad know that Yahweh will be watching to see if they follow the covenant.

Stop and show a map of the Jordan River, the land of Gilead they want to inhabit to the east of the Jordan, and the land of Canaan. Point out the land the tribes of Reuben and Gad will possess, and the land the other tribes of Israel will possess. Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 32:28–32 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 visualize this passage.

This passage has one scene.

In the first scene: Moses explains the covenant Moses made with the leaders of Reuben and Gad to Eleazar the priest, Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers' houses, or family houses, of the tribes of the people of Israel. Moses asks the leaders of Israel to enforce the covenant and make sure the people of Reuben and Gad help Israel conquer the land of Canaan. The leaders of Reuben and Gad accept the covenant and agree to send armed men into the land of Canaan.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Eleazar the priest
- Joshua the son of Nun
- Heads of the tribes of the people of Israel
- Leaders and people of Reuben and Gad

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

In the previous passage, the leaders of Reuben and Gad asked if they could remain in the land of Gilead and Jazer, which Israel had just conquered. Moses responded by making a covenant, or agreement, with the leaders that Reuben and Gad could settle in the land only if the two tribes helped the rest of Israel conquer the land of Canaan.

Scene one starts with Moses giving two orders to Eleazar the priest, Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers' houses, or family houses, of the tribes of the people of Israel. The first order is to ask the leaders of Israel to reward Reuben and Gad for keeping the covenant. The second order is that the leaders should make sure that both tribes faced bad consequences if they did not keep their promise. Moses needed to give clear instructions on how to enforce this agreement, because Moses knew that he would not be there when the Israelites entered the Promised Land.

Stop and tell a story from your culture about a time that a leader gave instructions about how to continue following his instructions after he leaves or dies. Pay close attention to the way that the leader talks about the future and about how to follow the instructions well. Pause this audio here.

The first order that Moses gives is to repeat the agreement Moses made with the tribes of Reuben and Gad in the previous passage. Moses repeats the terms of the covenant, as was the custom in Israelite culture, so that everyone understood clearly. The second order Moses gives the leaders is that if Reuben and Gad do not arm themselves and pass over the Jordan River, then the leaders of Israel should not allow the tribes of Reuben and Gad to settle in the land of Gilead. Instead, the two tribes must have possession of, or live in, the land of Canaan.

The leaders of Reuben and Gad then agree to and accept the covenant by saying that they are Moses' servants and they will do what Yahweh has said. The leaders of Reuben and Gad were not servants of Moses, but this term is used as a way to show respect in their culture. The leaders of the two tribes tell Moses and the leaders of Israel that the armed people of Reuben and Gad will help Israel conquer the land of Canaan in the sight of, or before, Yahweh and will have their inheritance, or possession, "on the other side," or east of the River Jordan. The leaders of Reuben and Gad again repeat the terms of the covenant as a way to accept their part in the agreement.

Stop here and discuss as a group: When you make agreements in your culture, how do the two groups talk to each other? What words or phrases do they use? How will you show in your translation that the leaders of Reuben and Gad are formally agreeing to the terms of the covenant?

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 32:28–32 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:

- Moses
- Eleazar the priest
- Joshua the son of Nun
- Heads of the tribes of the people of Israel
- Leaders and people of Reuben and Gad

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, Moses explains the covenant Moses made with the leaders of Reuben and Gad to Eleazar the priest, Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers' houses, or family houses, of the tribes of the people

of Israel. Moses orders the leaders of Israel to enforce the covenant and make sure the people of Reuben and Gad help them conquer the land of Canaan.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Eleazar the priest, Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the tribes of the people of Israel, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- I am sad that Moses will not be alive when we conquer the land of Canaan; or
- I will honour Moses and make sure I follow his orders; or
- I am happy that Moses has managed to get the armed men of Reuben and Gad to come help us conquer the land of Canaan.[!end] Continue the drama.

The leaders of Reuben and Gad accept the covenant and agree to send armed men into the land of Canaan.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the leaders of Reuben and Gad, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- If we want the land of Gilead, the only choice we have is to fight in the land of Canaan; or
- I am sad that we are going to have to go war; or
- I am happy that we will get the land of Gilead![!end] Continue the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 32:28–32 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

This story starts with Moses explaining the covenant Moses made with the leaders of Reuben and Gad to Eleazar the **priest**, Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the tribes of the people of Israel. Use the same word or phrase for priest that you used in previous passages. For more information on priest, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses says that if the tribes of Reuben and Gad are armed for battle before **Yahweh**, then they will receive the land of Gilead. Use the same word or phrase for Yahweh that you used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

The leaders of Reuben and Gad accept the covenant and agree to send armed men into the land of **Canaan** to help **Israel** conquer the land. The word Israel here refers to all the descendants of Abraham together. It means the same as **Israelites**, or as "people of Israel." Use the same words or phrases for Canaan, Israelites, and Israel that you used in previous passages. For more information on Canaan, Israelites, and Israel, refer to the Master Glossary.

The leaders also say they are servants of Moses. A **servant** is a man or a woman who works for another person. The leaders are using this term to show their respect for Moses and to show that they will do what Moses asks. Use the same word or phrase for servant that you used in previous passages. For more information on servant, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 32:28-32

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (8127358 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Numbers 32:33-42

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 32:33-42 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 32:33-42 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 32:33–42 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This passage is a narrative account in which Moses tells which lands Moses gave to the tribes of Gad and Reuben. Moses tells us that the half-tribe of Manasseh also settled on the other side of the river Jordan. You will remember that Joseph, one of the twelve sons of Jacob, had two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. These two sons each became the ancestors of a "half-tribe" of the people of Israel.

In the last passage, the tribes of Gad and Reuben asked Moses to give them land on the other side of the river Jordan from Canaan, the Promised Land. The men in these tribes agreed to cross the Jordan River to fight with the rest of the tribes of Israel, and so Moses agreed to their request for this land. Moses did not mention the half-tribe of Manasseh in the last passage, but Moses starts this passage by adding the half-tribe of Manasseh to the group of tribes to whom Moses will give this land. Moses probably did this as a way of linking the stories of Gad and Reuben to the story of Manasseh, which Moses tells us in this passage.

The Israelites had recently conquered the kingdom of Sihon, king of the Amorites, and the kingdom of Og, king of Bashan. This is the land that Moses gave to the tribes of Gad, Reuben, and Manasseh. Moses tells us that Moses gave the tribes of Gad, Reuben, and Manasseh the cities and the lands surrounding the cities.

Stop here and look at a map of the Jordan Valley showing the kingdom of Sihon and the kingdom of Og. Pause this audio here.

Moses lists the towns that the tribe of Gad built again, or made stronger. We do not know exactly where all of these towns were, but they were probably in both the north and south of the Jordan River Valley. Later in the Old Testament, other writers like Joshua give a different list of the cities that belonged to the tribe of Gad. It is likely that the people of Gad gave some of their towns to the tribe of Reuben at a later point.

Stop here as a group and look at a map of the Jordan Valley with the likely locations of the cities Moses gave to the tribe of Gad. Pause this audio here.

The men of Gad would leave their families in these towns when they went to fight in the Promised Land with the rest of the Israelites, so they wanted the towns to be strong enough that enemies could not conquer them while the men were away fighting. Moses tells us that the towns that the people of Gad rebuilt were fortified towns, or towns that they made stronger to defend against attackers. Fortification included sheep pens, or closed in spaces for their flocks. These pens were either caves in the rocky hills, or walls that the people built with stones and thorny branches on top of the walls. The people of Gad would have built these pens to keep their animals safe.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you keep your animals in your community safe from other animals that want to harm them. Pause this audio here.

Moses then tells us about the towns that Moses gave to the tribe of Reuben. Again, we do not know for certain the location of these towns, but it is likely they were gathered around the area called Heshbon. Heshbon was in the middle of the towns that the people of Gad had rebuilt.

Stop here as a group and look at a map of the Jordan Valley with the likely locations of the cities Moses gave to the tribe of Reuben. Pause this audio here.

Moses says that the people of the tribe of Reuben renamed some of their cities. It is not clear how many of their towns they renamed. The towns of Nebo and Baal Meon include the names of a foreign god, so this is probably why they renamed their cities.

Moses then tells us which places the people of the tribe of Manasseh captured. Originally, this was probably a separate story that Moses told. However, here Moses combines it with the explanation of which land Yahweh gave to the people of Gad and Reuben to give us a complete explanation of what happened to the land on the east side of the river Jordan.

We are only told about some of the people of Manasseh conquering towns in the land on the east side of the Jordan. The descendants of Machir captured the area known as Gilead from the Amorites who lived there. It is likely that the descendants of Machir were just one group of people, or clan, in the tribe of Manasseh, although we do not know for certain.

Moses does not tell us which towns in Gilead the descendants of Machir captured. It is possible that Moses was only referring to the northern part of Gilead, but we do not know for certain. Moses also does not tell us when the descendants of Machir conquered Gilead.

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

Next, Moses tells us about the cities Jair conquered. Jair was another descendant of Manasseh, and also a descendant of Machir through Jair's mother. We do not know why Jair was connected with his mother's tribe, rather than his father's tribe. It is unclear whether Moses is referring to the person, Jair, or a clan or group of people named Jair.

Jair captured villages, possibly also in Gilead, or in Argob. Again, Moses does not tell us which towns Jair captured. Jair renamed the land they captured "Havvoth Jair," which means, "the tent villages of Jair."

Stop here as a group and look at a map of the Argob region and Gilead. Pause this audio here.

Finally, Moses tells us about Nobah who went and captured Kenath and its villages. It is likely that Nobah was also part of the tribe of Manasseh. Again, it is unclear whether Moses is referring to an individual named Nobah, or a clan or group of people called Nobah. Nobah renamed Kenath to Nobah, after their own name.

Kenath was probably on the northeastern side of the land the people of Manasseh had conquered, but we do not know for certain.

Stop here and look at a map of the likely location of Kenath as a group. Pause this audio here.

Now look at a map showing all of the land conquered by the people of Manasseh, as well as the land Yahweh gave to the people of Reuben and Gad.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 32:33–42 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 four scenes.

In the first scene: Moses summarises the land that Moses gave to the tribe of Gad, the tribe of Reuben, and the half-tribe of Manasseh.

In the second scene: Moses tells us which cities the tribe of Gad rebuilt.

In the third scene: Moses tells us which cities the tribe of Reuben rebuilt.

In the fourth scene: Moses tells us which cities the half-tribe of Manasseh captured. Moses gave these cities to the people of Manasseh.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Tribe of Gad
- Tribe of Reuben
- Descendants of Machir, part of the half-tribe of Manasseh
- Jair, part of the half-tribe of Manasseh
- Nobah, part of the half-tribe of Manasseh

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

At the start of the first scene, Moses uses an introductory word to show that the speech in the previous passage has finished, and the next event in the story is starting.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about what you did yesterday. The rest of the group should listen for words you use to show that the story is moving on to the next event. Pause this audio here.

Moses then summarises the land that Moses gave to the tribe of Gad, the tribe of Reuben, and the half-tribe of Manasseh. In the previous passage, Moses only told us about the tribes of Gad and Reuben. In this passage, Moses starts by adding the half-tribe of Manasseh to the list, probably as a way of linking the stories of Gad and Reuben to the story of Manasseh, which Moses tells us in the fourth scene of this passage.

Stop here and look at a map showing all of the land conquered by the people of Manasseh, as well as the land given to the people of Reuben and Gad. Pause this audio here.

Moses tells us that Moses gave the tribes of Gad, Reuben, and Manasseh the whole of the land with its cities and the lands surrounding the cities. Moses repeats that Moses gave these tribes all of the cities in the land of that region. Moses wants to emphasize that Yahweh gave the entire area of land to these tribes.

In the second and third scenes, Moses lists the towns that the tribes of Gad and Reuben rebuilt. The towns would have already existed, but had perhaps been damaged or destroyed when Israel captured them. The people of Gad and Reuben would have rebuilt or strengthened all of these towns. Perhaps they added walls or strengthened and repaired the city walls around the towns that were already there.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about an old house that was falling down. Tell the group about repairing the house to make it strong against the wind and rain. The rest of the group should listen to what words you use to describe rebuilding, repairing, and strengthening the house. Pause this audio here.

In the fourth scene, Moses tells us which places the people of Manasseh captured. Originally, this was probably a separate story that Moses told. However, here Moses combines this story with the explanation of which land Yahweh gave to the people of Gad and Reuben to give us a complete explanation of what happened to the land on the east side of the Jordan River. It is not clear when the events in the fourth scene took place. These events may have occurred at the same time as the rest of the events of this passage and the previous passage, or they may have taken place earlier.

The descendants of Machir captured the area known as Gilead from the Amorites who lived there. The word Moses uses to describe the capture tells us that the Amorite people were forced to leave their cities and towns.

Moses pauses the story about the people of Manasseh conquering Gilead to tell us that it was Moses who gave Gilead to the descendants of Machir. Although it was the people of Manasseh who conquered the land, Moses is showing us that Moses was still the person who was in charge of giving the land to each tribe.

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

Moses then resumes the story to tell us about the land that Jair and Nobah captured. Although Moses tells us first about the people of Machir, then about Jair, and finally about Nobah, it does not necessarily mean that the events happened in this order. We do not know in which order they took place.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 32:33–42 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
- Tribe of Gad
- Tribe of Reuben
- Descendants of Machir, part of the half-tribe of Manasseh
- Jair, part of the half-tribe of Manasseh
- Nobah, part of the half-tribe of Manasseh

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 last passage, the tribes of Gad and Reuben had asked Moses to give them land on the other side of the river Jordan from Canaan, the Promised Land. The men in these tribes agreed to cross the river Jordan to fight with the rest of the tribes of Israel, and so Moses agreed to their request for this land.

Moses gave land to the tribes of Gad and Reuben, and Moses also gave land on the same side of the river to the half-tribe of Manasseh. Together Moses gave them the land of King Sihon of the Amorites and the land of King Og of Bashan. Moses gave them the whole of this land with its cities and surrounding lands.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- I hope the people honour their promise to fight with us; or
- These lands are good for looking after animals. I hope the people will be happy here.[!end]
Continue the drama.

The people of Gad built the towns known as Dibon, Ataroth, Aroer, Atroth Shophan, Jazer, Jogbehah, Beth Nimrah, and Beth Haran. The people made these towns strong and protected, and they made pens for their flocks.

The people of Reuben rebuilt the towns of Heshbon, Elealeh, Kiriathaim, Nebo, Baal Meon, and Sibmah. The people changed the names of some of these towns.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the people of Reuben, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- We have worked hard to prepare these cities for our families. We are so happy that we have found our home; or
- This land is good for us. We must now honour our promise to fight with the other Israelites.[!end] Continue the drama.

The descendants of Machir, who were part of the half-tribe of Manasseh, went to the place called Gilead and conquered it. So Moses gave Gilead to the descendants of Machir, and the descendants of Machir settled there.

The people of Jair, another part of the half-tribe of Manasseh, captured many of the villages in Gilead. The people named that area Havvoth Jair, which means, "the tent villages of Jair."

The people of Nobah captured the town called Kenath and its surrounding villages. They named that area Nobah after their own name.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing Nobah, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- I am proud to have captured this area; or
- This will be a good place for my family and my descendants.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 32:33–42 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

In this passage Moses talks about the tribes of Gad, Reuben, and Manasseh. You should use the same word or phrase for the tribes that you used in previous passages.

The people of the tribe of Gad rebuilt their cities, and they built sheep pens for their animals.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will talk about the sheep pens that the people built for their animals. Pause this audio here.

Moses also talks about the **descendants** of Manasseh and Machir. Use the same word or phrase for descendants that you used in previous passages. For more information on descendants, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 32:33-42

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (14030144 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Numbers 33:1–15

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 33:1–15 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Number 33:1–15 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 33:1–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This passage summarizes the narrative of the book of Numbers in the form of a list of many of the places where the Israelites journeyed, from Egypt to the desert of Sinai. It is probable that this is a list of only the "most important" stations in their journeys. This section gives more attention to some of the campsites by referring to what took place at those camps. Remember that Yahweh told the Israelites that none of the first generation to leave Egypt would make it into the Promised Land. The Israelites were always under the direction of the pillar of cloud and fire. God led them to wander. Yet God also led them the right way so that the Israelites went through the desert and the wilderness until that first generation died.

This passage is the only passage in Numbers that makes it clear that Moses is the author. Yahweh commands Moses to write down the stages, or marches, of the Israelites from Egypt to Moab, just outside the borders of the land of Canaan. Firstly, Moses and Aaron led the Israelites as they marched out of Egypt in divisions, or troops, similar to an army or groups of fighting men.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Share stories about your warriors, or armies, invading surrounding communities. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at the map of the journey of the Israelites together as a group. Follow along the map as you listen to the passage. Pause this audio here.

The Israelites had helped build the city of Rameses, in Egypt, while they were slaves there. The Israelites left Rameses on the 15th day of the first month, which is the day after Passover, in mid-March to mid-April. The Israelites left with a "high hand," or left defiantly. This means that the Israelites left triumphantly, like they had just won a battle. The Israelites left, and none of the Egyptians tried to stop them. Meanwhile, the Egyptians were burying their firstborn whom Yahweh killed during the Passover.

Before Yahweh brought the Israelites out of Egypt, Yahweh performed several signs for the Egyptian Pharaoh to convince Pharaoh that Yahweh was the one true God. Most of these signs had a direct connection to the gods that the Egyptians worshipped at the time. These signs were Yahweh's proof that Yahweh was the true God, and that the Egyptian gods were not powerful. This is how Yahweh acted in judgment on the Egyptian gods and defeated them. Yahweh defeated the gods when Yahweh led the Israelites out of Egypt after the final sign of the Passover.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about how you have seen God overcome some of the false gods or supernatural beings that people in your culture believe in. Pause this audio here.

The rest of the passage is a list of the places the Israelites left, and then where they camped next. The passage does not list how long the Israelites stayed at each camp. Moses describes some camping sites by including descriptions of things around the camping sites. Etham is at the edge of the desert, or wilderness. Pi Hahiroth is along the Red Sea, where Yahweh parted the seas and the Israelites crossed on dry land. While Moses does not mention any specific characteristics at Marah, it is the place where the Israelites could not drink the water because the waters were bitter. Elim was most likely an oasis, or a place of fertile ground in the desert, since it had 12 springs of water and 70 palm trees. Oases were very unusual in a desert.

Stop here and look together as a group at a picture of an oasis with water and palm trees. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What types of landscape, or land formations, are unusual in your area where you live? Pause this audio here.

The next campsite with a description is Rephidim where the Israelites had no water to drink. From there they went to the wilderness of Sinai. This is where Yahweh took Moses up Mount Sinai and gave Moses the Ten Commandments to show Yahweh's covenant with the Israelites.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 33:1–15 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: The introduction to the passage explains that the Israelites journeyed in stages when they came out of Egypt. Moses and Aaron led the Israelites in their troops, or groups of fighting men. Yahweh commanded Moses to write down the stages of the journey. Moses recorded the stages of their journey.

In the second scene: The Israelites left the city of Rameses on the day after the Passover. The Israelites marched out of Egypt defiantly while the Egyptians watched them. At the same time, many of the Egyptians were burying their firstborn that Yahweh had killed during the Passover. Yahweh brought judgment on the Egyptian gods. The Israelites left Rameses and went to Sukkoth.

In the third scene: The Israelites journeyed through the wilderness until they came to the Desert of Sinai.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- The Israelites
- The Egyptians
- Firstborn sons
- False gods

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

Remember that this passage is looking back at Israel's journey out of Egypt, to the wilderness of Sinai. This passage records several of the places where the Israelites camped, but not necessarily all of the places. We do

not know where many of these places are today. Moses stops his list in some places to describe what the land was like. Pay attention to the characteristics of the land.

Stop here as a group and look again at the map of the Israelites' journey. Discuss how your group has decided to name places in the Bible. Is it better to just say the name of the place in your pronunciation, or is it better to describe the meaning of the name? Pause this audio here.

This passage is also written similarly to military campaign itineraries at the time. Most translations of this passage use language that refers to army marches. The Israelites marched out of Rameses, Egypt, by troops, or groups of fighting men. Moses and Aaron led the Israelites. Moses is possibly referring to the Israelites as a well-organized army marching to take possession of the land of Canaan.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you talk about a large military group that marches from one land to another? Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss whether or not you will use words that will also imply that the Israelites were like an army, or a military, rather than just a large group of people moving through the wilderness. Pause this audio here.

The itinerary is broken up into stages, starting with places of departure. The Israelites left Rameses, the city in Egypt, with a "high hand," or defiantly. The Israelites left triumphantly like they had just won a battle. The Israelites left in the sight of all of the Egyptians, which means none of the Egyptians tried to stop them.

After the Israelites left Egypt, they journeyed by stages to the Desert of Sinai. Moses described the places where the Israelites left and then where they stopped. The place they stopped is repeated in the next stage as the place the Israelites left.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How will you describe each stage of the Israelite journey in a way that people in your culture will easily understand? How do you describe a journey with many stages? 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

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Number 33:1–15 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
- The Israelites
- The Egyptians
- Firstborn sons
- False gods

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 introduction to the passage explains that the Israelites journeyed in stages when they came out of Egypt. Moses and Aaron led the Israelites in their divisions, or troops. Yahweh commanded Moses to write down the stages of the journey. Moses recorded the stages of their journey.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking as you are remembering your journey?" The person might answer things like:

- I am thankful that someone wrote it down, because I do not remember much of it! I was so young! or
- There was a lot of walking, and it was a hard journey. I am thankful that it is over; or
- Looking back, it feels like so long ago. But our parents did not seem to trust Yahweh very much.[!end] Continue the drama.

The Israelites left the city of Rameses on the day after the Passover. The Israelites marched out of Egypt defiantly while the Egyptians watched them. At the same time, many of the Egyptians were burying their firstborn that Yahweh had killed during the Passover.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Egyptians, "What were you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- I was so glad they were leaving! What a horrible God they serve who killed our children! or
- How will our city progress anymore since our labor is leaving? or
- Why did this happen to us? Why did these people come to stay here only for us to lose our children?[!end] Continue the drama.

Yahweh had brought judgment on the Egyptian gods. The Israelites left Rameses and went to Sukkoth.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Israelites, "What were you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- I could not believe that we were really free; or
- I was wanting to know who this amazing God is that is taking us out of Egypt. I am amazed at how he conquered those Egyptian gods! or
- I was afraid to leave Egypt; or
- I have heard that there are only deserts out this way. What if we die before we reach our destination?[!end] Continue the drama.

The Israelites journeyed through the wilderness. At one point the Israelites passed through the sea to the desert. This is where Yahweh parted the Red Sea so they could cross on dry land. They went to Elim where there were 12 springs of water and 70 palm trees.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelites, "What were you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- At least there is water to drink here; or
- This place is beautiful compared to the rest of the desert; or
- I wonder where we are going exactly. This seems like it is in a different direction from where Yahweh said the Promised Land was.[!end] Continue the drama.

In Rephidim there was no water for the Israelites to drink.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- Where is the water? We are going to die here! or
- Why would Yahweh bring us here to make us die without water? We should go back to Egypt![!end] Continue the drama.

The Israelites continued their journey, making several stops along the way. Eventually the Israelites came to the Desert of Sinai.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 33:1–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Moses and Aaron led the **Israelites** out of Egypt by **troops**, or groups of fighting men. **Yahweh** commanded Moses to record the stages of their journey. Use the same words you have used for Israelites, groups of fighting men, and Yahweh in previous passages. For more information on Israelites and Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Israelites left Rameses, in Egypt, on the 15th day of the 1st month, which was the day after the **Passover**. The Passover, at this time, was the day that Yahweh killed the firstborn of the Egyptians in order to convince Pharaoh that Yahweh was the one true God. Because of this, Pharaoh also let the Israelites leave Egypt. Use the same word for Passover that you used in previous passages. For more information on the Passover, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Israelites marched defiantly, or triumphantly, without the Egyptians stopping them. At the same time, many Egyptians were burying their firstborn that Yahweh had struck down, or killed. Yahweh had brought judgment on the Egyptian **gods**. These gods were supernatural beings that people worshiped, but which were not the one true God. Use the same word for gods that you have used in previous passages. For more information on gods, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Israelites left Rameses and camped at Succoth. To camp is to pitch a tent or live in a land for a period of time. The Israelites left Succoth and camped at Etham on the edge of the desert, or **wilderness**. The wilderness is a lonely place without water and where plants do not grow well. Use the same words for camp and wilderness that you have used in previous passages. For more information on wilderness, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses writes the journey in a repetitive way where the Israelites leave one place and go to camp at another. At one point the Israelites passed through the sea to the desert. This is where Yahweh parted the Red Sea so they could cross on dry land. They went to Elim where there were 12 springs of water and 70 palm trees. In Rephidim there was no water for the Israelites to drink. Eventually the Israelites came to the wilderness of Sinai.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 33:1–15

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (12720599 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Numbers 33:16-36

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 33:16–36 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Number 33:16–36 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 33:16–36 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this passage, Moses continues to list the places on the journey where the Israelites camped, from the wilderness of Sinai to Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin. It is probable that this itinerary is a list of only the "most important" places in this part of their journey. The wilderness of Sinai, where the Israelites are leaving from, was the place where Yahweh gave Moses the Ten Commandments to show Yahweh's covenant with the Israelites.

Stop here and look together as a group at the map of the journey of the Israelites from the wilderness of Sinai to the wilderness of Zin. Follow along the map as you listen again to the passage. Pause this audio here.

The rest of the passage is a list of the places the Israelites left and then where they camped next. The passage does not list how long the Israelites stayed at each camp. The first camp in Kibroth Hattaavah is the place where Yahweh provided a lot of quail for the Israelites. Yahweh provided the quail because the Israelites complained about not having enough meat.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: When someone in your culture complains, how do other people react? Pause this audio here.

Many of the campsites are not mentioned elsewhere in the Bible, so we do not know the exact location of those campsites.

Jotbathah is mentioned elsewhere to be a land with brooks of water. Ezion Geber is a port city that was located on the north end of the Gulf of Aqaba. The Israelites leave Ezion Geber to go to Kadesh. Kadesh is a border area between the wilderness of Zin and the wilderness of Paran. The Israelites probably traveled back and forth between some areas during their 40 years of wandering in the desert. This may explain why Kadesh is only mentioned once in this list even though the book of Numbers seems to say that the Israelites camped there once early in their journey, and then again near the end of their journey. It was in Kadesh, early in the Israelites' journey, that the explorers went to see the Promised Land and brought back the fruit from the land.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 33:16–36 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 two scenes.

In the first scene: The Israelites leave the wilderness of Sinai and begin their wilderness wandering at Kibroth Hattaavah. This is the area where the Israelites began complaining about leaving Egypt.

In the second scene: The Israelites journeyed through the wilderness and camped at many different towns or sites. In this passage, the Israelites camped at an additional 20 sites after Kibroth Hattaavah, until they came to Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin.

The characters in this passage are:

- The Israelites
- Yahweh
- Moses

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

Remember that this passage is looking back at Israel's journey from the wilderness of Sinai to the wilderness of Zin. This passage records several of the places where the Israelites camped, but not necessarily all of the places. Many of these places are not known today.

Stop here and look again at the map of the Israelites' journey as a group. Pause this audio here.

The itinerary is broken up into stages, starting with places of departure. Moses describes each stage by the place the Israelites left and then where they stopped. In the next stage, Moses repeats the place they stopped as the place the Israelites left.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How will you describe each stage of the Israelite journey in a way that people in your culture can easily understand? How will you continue to describe a journey with many stages? Pause this audio here.

Stop here and complete this activity together as a group. Gather together objects that will represent each place in the Israelites' journey. Lay each object on the ground in the order of the places in this passage, and practice naming each place. 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

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Number 33:16–36 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:

- The Israelites
- 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.

The Israelites left the wilderness of Sinai and went to Kibroth Hattaavah.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelites, "What were you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- That was just the beginning of such a long journey; or
- I am still upset at the people who complained about not having any meat. We had more quail than we knew what to do with![!end] Continue the drama.

The Israelites journeyed through the wilderness and camped at many different towns or sites. In this passage, the Israelites camped at an additional 20 sites after Kibroth Hattaavah, until they came to Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelites, "What were you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- I remember thinking that we were walking forever, and I did not understand why; or
- It is hard to think about that time, since we lost so many people to death; or
- I felt like I might die in the wilderness!

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 33:16–36 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

The Israelites left the **wilderness** of Sinai and **camped** at Kibroth Hattaavah. Use the same words for wilderness and camp that you have used in previous passages. For more information on wilderness, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Israelites continued through the wilderness in stages until they came to the Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 33:16-36

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (7030075 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Numbers 33:37–49

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 33:37–49 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 33:37–49 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 33:37–49 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This passage concludes the list of the places through which the Israelites journeyed from Kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin, to the plains of Moab, before they entered the Promised Land.

Stop here and look together as a group at the map of the journey of the Israelites from Kadesh to Moab. Follow along the map as you listen again to the passage. Pause this audio here.

This passage begins with the Israelites leaving Kadesh and going to Mount Hor. It is at Mount Hor where Yahweh commands Aaron the priest to go up Mount Hor. So Aaron went up Mount Hor and died. This was on the 1st day of the 5th month of the 40th year after the Israelites left Egypt. From the time the Israelites left Rameses, until the day Aaron the priest died, the Israelites had journeyed through the wilderness for 40 years. Aaron was 123 years old when Aaron died.

While the Israelites were at Mount Hor, the Canaanite king of Arad heard that the Israelites were coming to Canaan. You will remember that right after Aaron died, the Israelites fought with the king of Arad and won. The Israelites at this point were close to Canaan, but still continued their journey from Mount Hor until they came to the plains of Moab by the Jordan River, across from Jericho. The Israelites camped here at the end of their journey before they crossed into the land that Yahweh had promised to them. There the Israelites' camp spread from Beth Jesimoth to Abel Shittim. The distance between the two cities is approximately 8 kilometers.

Stop here and look at the map of the plains of Moab and note where Beth Jesimoth and Abel Shittim are located.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 33:37–49 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 Israelites left Kadesh and went to Mount Hor. At Mount Hor, Yahweh instructed Aaron to go up to the mountain. Aaron died up on the mountain at the age of 123. Aaron died on the 1st day of the 5th month of the 40th year of the Israelites' journey.

In the second scene: The Canaanite king of Arad, who lived in the Negev area of Canaan, heard that the Israelites were coming towards Canaan.

In the third scene: The Israelites left Mount Hor and continued their journey in stages until they came to the plains of Moab by the Jordan River across from Jericho. The Israelites camped on the plains of Moab along the Jordan River from Beth Jesimoth to Abel Shittim.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Aaron
- The Israelites
- The Canaanite king of Arad

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

Remember that this passage is looking back at Israel's journey out of Kadesh to Moab. This passage records several of the places where the Israelites camped, but not necessarily all of the places. We do not know where many of these places are today.

Stop here and look again at the map of the Israelites' journey as a group. Pause this audio here.

In the 40th year, at Mount Hor, Yahweh commanded Aaron to go up Mount Hor. Aaron obeyed, and there Aaron died at the age of 123.

In the middle of the Israelites' journey, while the Israelites were still at Mount Hor, the king of Arad, who was a Canaanite, heard that the Israelites were coming towards Canaan.

When the Israelites left Mount Hor, they continued their journey until they came to the plains of Moab near the Jordan River across from Jericho.

Moses breaks up the itinerary into stages, starting with places of departure. Moses describes each stage by the place the Israelites left and then where they stopped. In the next stage, Moses repeats the place they stopped as the place the Israelites left.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Number 33:37–49 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
- The Israelites
- The Canaanite king of Arad

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 is writing down the journey of the Israelites that happened many years before. The Israelites journeyed through the wilderness for 40 years and camped at many different towns or sites. After 40 years, the Israelites came to Mount Hor on the border of Edom. Yahweh commanded Aaron, the priest, to go up Mount Hor, and so Aaron did. There Aaron died at the age of 123.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- I am so sad that my brother, Aaron, died. That was a hard day for all of us; or
- I am tired. Remembering this journey has brought back some of the frustration I felt then; or
- Yahweh was so faithful throughout all of these stages, and yet we still continue to doubt Yahweh.[!end] Continue the drama.

The Canaanite king of Arad, who lived in the Negev area of Canaan, heard that the Israelites were coming towards Canaan.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the king of Arad, "What were you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- I wondered why they were coming to take my land; or
- I was worried! I wondered how many people were with them and were coming to live here; or
- There was no way I was going to give up my land![!end] Continue the drama.

The Israelites left Mount Hor and continued their journey in stages until they came to the plains of Moab by the Jordan River across from Jericho. The Israelites camped on the plains of Moab along the Jordan River, and their camp spread from Beth Jesimoth to Abel Shittim.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelites, "What were you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- Are we there yet? or
- I think we are close. Can we just stay here? I am tired; or
- We have almost made it, though I think we took the long way to get here; or
- As I remember, if our parents had just listened to Yahweh, they would have made it here too.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 33:37–49 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Moses explains the Israelites' journey in a repetitive manner, where the Israelites leave one place and go to camp at another.

When the Israelites camped at the foot of Mount Hor, **Yahweh** commanded Aaron, the **priest**, to go up the mountain. There Aaron died. This happened in the 5th month of the 40th year after the Israelites left Egypt. Use the same words for Yahweh and for priest that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh and priest, refer to the Master Glossary.

While the **Israelites** were at Mount Hor, the king, who was a Canaanite, heard that the people of Israel were getting close to his land. **Canaan** was the land that Yahweh promised to the Israelites. The people who lived in that land were called Canaanites. Use the same words that you have used for Israelites and for Canaanites in previous passages. For more information on Israelites and Canaan, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Israelites continued from Mount Hor until they came to the plains of Moab next to the **Jordan River** across from Jericho. There the Israelites camped in the plains of Moab. The Jordan River is a river that runs through Israel from north to south and stops at the Dead Sea. Use the same word for Jordan, or Jordan River, that you have used in previous passages. For more information on the Jordan River, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 33:37–49

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (8591401 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Numbers 33:50–56

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 33:50–56 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 33:50–56 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 33:50–56 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This passage is the beginning of the third and final part of the book of Numbers. Yahweh instructs Moses to command the Israelites on how to conquer the people of Canaan and settle in the Promised Land. This passage introduces Moses' final encouragement to the Israelites to live faithfully in the land and to obey all of Yahweh's commands.

This passage follows immediately from the last passage, where the Israelites were camping in the plains of Moab east of the Jordan and the land of Canaan. The plains of Moab are the flat and fertile areas of the country, around 5 to 6 miles wide, north and east of the Dead Sea.

Stop here and look at a map of the plains of Moab as a group. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh speaks to Moses. Yahweh commands Moses to then give the message to the Israelites. Yahweh gives Moses four instructions. Yahweh tells Moses that the Israelites should start obeying Yahweh's commands as soon as they cross over the Jordan River.

Yahweh first commands the Israelites to drive out all the people who live in the land of Canaan. You will remember that earlier, Yahweh told the Israelites exactly which nations are living in the land of Canaan. Yahweh also said that Yahweh will destroy all the nations because they are evil. You will remember that the seven large and mighty nations are the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. Now Yahweh commands the Israelites to start conquering and destroying the people of Canaan as soon as they cross the Jordan. And Yahweh says to then continue until the Israelites kill or chase out all the people of Canaan.

Yahweh gives a second command to the Israelites. Yahweh instructs Moses to command the Israelites to fully destroy all the idols and places of pagan worship in the land of Canaan. The people of Canaan had many idols that they worshiped in special places. The people of Canaan carved images out of stone or wood. People decorated carved images with remarkable stones or mosaics for others to admire. The Canaanites also melted and cast metal to build statues, probably in the shapes of their gods and goddesses. The high places were raised stone shrines dedicated to the worship of these carved stones and metal statues. People usually built the shrines on top of hills, but high places also referred to any site where they performed religious rites and sacrifices to their gods.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you describe special places of worship in your culture? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh gives a third command to the Israelites. Yahweh instructs Moses to command the Israelites to take possession of the land and settle down to live there permanently. Yahweh tells Moses that Yahweh has already given the land to the Israelites for them to possess. Yahweh emphasizes that Yahweh has given the land to the Israelites as a gift. The land belongs to the Israelites.

Yahweh gives a fourth and last command to the Israelites. Yahweh instructs Moses to command the Israelites to divide the land of Canaan as an inheritance based on the size of the tribes. The Israelites separated and assigned the land by casting lots. The cast lots determined that a large tribe received a big inheritance and that a small tribe received a small inheritance. In this culture, casting lots was a method of decision-making that people used to finalise outcomes or make choices. People threw objects with markings such as stone, straw, or dice to make decisions. People often cast lots in religious, legal, or community situations to assign land, select leaders, or divide plunder after war. The Israelite leaders separated the land first by tribe, and then by the clans within each tribe. Yahweh commanded the people of Israel to live within their tribes while wandering in the wilderness, and now Yahweh commands them to live permanently in their tribes in the Promised Land. In this case, we know that although the Israelite leaders cast, or threw, the lots, it was Yahweh who decided how the lots fell. And ultimately it was Yahweh making the decision.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How do people in your culture assign land to groups of families or people? In this story the people cast, or threw, lots. What do you do in your culture? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh then warns the Israelites of the consequences they will experience if the Israelites do not obey Yahweh's command to drive out, or chase out, the people of Canaan. This confirms that everything Yahweh just said is a command and instruction. These are not suggestions that the Israelites can choose to obey or ignore. If the Israelites obey Yahweh, he will not punish the Israelites. Yahweh says that the inhabitants of Canaan are before the Israelites. This means that Yahweh has gathered all these nations to live in Canaan, and now all the nations are within the Israelites' reach to destroy. Yahweh says that the Israelites will disobey Yahweh's command. Yahweh says that the Israelites will deliberately choose to keep some people of Canaan alive and allow them to remain in the land. Yahweh says that the people of Canaan, whom the Israelites will choose to leave alive, will be like a splinter in their eyes and thorns in their side. In other words, the people of Canaan will attack, hurt, destroy, and cause pain to the Israelites.

Stop here and tell a story of a time when a small quantity of something ruined a very large quantity of the same thing. For example, maybe a few pieces of rotten fruit ruined a big pile of fruit. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses that if the Israelites disobey Yahweh, not only will the people of Canaan attack the Israelites constantly, but Yahweh will also punish the Israelites. Yahweh tells the Israelites that the things Yahweh has planned for the people of Canaan, such as driving them out of the land, destroying them, and destroying the land, will happen to the Israelites instead if they disobey Yahweh.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 33:50–56 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 give the Israelites four instructions. First, Yahweh instructs Moses to command the Israelites to chase out the people of Canaan. Yahweh gives the second command to the Israelites. Yahweh instructs Moses to command the Israelites to destroy all the idols, images, and temples of the Canaanites' evil religion.

In the second scene: Yahweh gives the third instruction to the Israelites. Yahweh instructs Moses to command the Israelites to take possession of the land and settle down to live there permanently.

In the third scene: Yahweh gives the fourth instruction to the Israelites. Yahweh instructs Moses to command the Israelites to divide the land of Canaan as an inheritance based on the size of the tribes and by casting lots. A large tribe is to receive a large inheritance, and a small tribe is to receive a small inheritance.

In the fourth scene: Yahweh then warns the Israelites that if they do not obey Yahweh's commands to drive out the people of Canaan, then the people of Canaan will cause them great pain and trouble. Yahweh will also be against the Israelites. Yahweh will punish the Israelites with the same punishment Yahweh intends for the people of Canaan.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Israelites
- The people of Canaan

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

In the first scene, Moses and the Israelites are still in the plains of Moab, as they were at the end of the last passage. Some translations begin this passage with, "There Yahweh spoke to Moses." This phrase shows that the Israelites are still living in the plains of Moab. This phrase is also used regularly throughout Numbers to

show when Yahweh is giving Moses instructions for the Israelites. Yahweh tells Moses to give the Israelites four instructions. Yahweh gives the first command to the Israelites. Yahweh instructs Moses to command the Israelites to drive out, or chase out, the people of Canaan. This means that Yahweh wants the Israelites to kill, or chase out, all the Canaanites so there are no Canaanites left in the land. The wording of this command shows that it is Yahweh's direct command, not a prophecy about what shall happen in the future. Yahweh gives the second command to the Israelites. Yahweh tells the Israelites that they should destroy all the carved stones, all the metal images, and all the high places of the people of Canaan. It is important to remember that Yahweh commands the Israelites to destroy "all" the carved stones, metal images, and high places, and to leave nothing of the idol worship of the people of Canaan. Again, the wording of this command means that it is a direct command from Yahweh, not a prophecy about what will happen in the future.

In the second scene, Yahweh gives the third instruction to the Israelites. Yahweh instructs Moses to command the Israelites to take possession of the land and settle down to live there permanently. Yahweh always planned for the Israelites to live permanently in this land. Yahweh promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that their descendants would one day live in the Promised Land. Again, the wording of this command shows that it is Yahweh's direct command, not a prophecy about what will happen in the future.

In the third scene, Yahweh gives the fourth instruction to the Israelites. Yahweh instructs Moses to command the Israelites to divide the land of Canaan as an inheritance based on the size of the tribes and by casting lots. A large tribe receives a big inheritance. A small tribe receives a small inheritance. This passage talks about "clans" and "tribes," but here both words probably refer to the same group of people. A clan or tribe are two general terms used to describe a large group of people who are related to each other. You may use a more general term to talk about a group of people, if needed.

In the fourth scene, Yahweh warns the Israelites that if they do not obey Yahweh's commands to drive out the people of Canaan, Yahweh will punish the Israelites. Yahweh wants to make it clear that the Israelites should obey Yahweh's instructions. If the Israelites do not, Yahweh will punish the Israelites in two ways. Firstly, the people of Canaan will cause great pain and trouble to the Israelites' lives, like barbs or splinters in their eyes and thorns in their sides. It is very painful for a person to have a splinter in their eye or thorns in their side. The storyteller is comparing these painful things to the Canaanites whom the Israelites will leave in Canaan. The storyteller says this to show how the people of Canaan will cause great pain and problems to the Israelites. The Canaanites who remain will always fight against the Israelites in order to remove the Israelites from the land and to take back their lands. Yahweh then says that the people of Canaan will also be trouble for the Israelites. The Canaanites will "attack," "harass," and "fight against" the Israelites. Yahweh's second punishment is that Yahweh will do to the Israelites what the Israelites planned to do to the Canaanites. Yahweh will be against the Israelites, and Yahweh will drive the Israelites out of the Promised Land.

Stop here and discuss a time when a small group of people caused a big problem. Pay attention to the way you talk about the problems that the small group of people caused. 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

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 33:50–56 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
- The people of the land of Canaan

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 give the Israelites four instructions. Yahweh gives the first command to the Israelites. Yahweh instructs Moses to command the Israelites to drive out the people of Canaan. Yahweh gives the second command to the Israelites. Yahweh instructs Moses to command the Israelites to destroy all the idols, images, and temples of the Canaanites' evil religion.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- I want the best for the Israelites. Destroying all the nations of the land of Canaan will be good for the Israelites in the future; or
- The people of Canaan are so evil. I am going to execute my justice to them through the Israelites; or
- I am joyful that the Israelites are finally moving into and conquering the Promised Land I promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- I want to obey Yahweh in giving Yahweh's message to the Israelites; or
- I want to encourage this generation of Israelites for the task of conquering the Promised Land.

Yahweh gives the third instruction to the Israelites. Yahweh instructs Moses to command the Israelites to take possession of the land and settle down to live there permanently.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- I need to command the Israelites to first fight and conquer the land to remove all the wickedness before they can rest; or
- The Israelites will rest and enjoy this land in a short while, because I will fight their battles for them.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- I hope that this generation of Israelites will be strong in the battles ahead; or
- Yahweh has been so faithful whilst we were wandering the wilderness. And even now Yahweh is guiding and instructing us towards this new land; or
- I hope these Israelites will be able to rest in the land in a short time.

Ask the person playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- We have heard stories about how our fathers rejected the land, causing us to wander in the wilderness. So now we are eager to obey Yahweh and conquer the Promised Land; or
- Conquering the Promised Land will take a lot of effort, but God is with us, and we will then be able to rest.

Yahweh gives the fourth instruction to the Israelites. Yahweh instructs Moses to command the Israelites to divide the land of Canaan as an inheritance based on the size of the tribes and by casting lots. A large tribe receives a big inheritance. A small tribe receives a small inheritance. Yahweh warns the people of Israel that if they do not obey Yahweh's commands to drive out the people of Canaan, then the people of Canaan will cause great pain and trouble to the Israelites. Yahweh will also be against the Israelites. Yahweh will punish the Israelites with the punishment Yahweh intends to give to the people of Canaan.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- I only want the best for the Israelites. It will go well for the Israelites if they hear my warning and obey. But they kept disobeying me in the wilderness; or
- I am giving the Israelites a choice as to whether they obey me or disobey me.

Ask the person playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- I have heard stories about the people of the land. I am afraid that we will not be able to drive them all out, because there are many of them and they are strong; or
- Yahweh is being just in his instructions for dividing the land; or
- I am excited to finally settle in the Promised Land and have my own house and land; or
- I want to obey Yahweh. I do not want to experience Yahweh's punishment.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 33:50-56 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Yahweh speaks to Moses in the **plains** of Moab by the **Jordan River**. A plain is a large, flat area of land that has no trees and not many plants. Use the same words or phrases for Yahweh, Jordan River, and plains that you used in previous passages. See the Master Glossary for more information about Yahweh and Jordan River.

Stop here and look at a picture of plains as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells the Israelites, through Moses, that the Israelites should drive out, or chase out, all the people who live in the land of **Canaan**. Use the same word for Canaan that you have used in previous passages, and remember that Canaan is in the Master Glossary.

To **drive out**, or dispossess, is to force someone away from what they own, and to become the new owner of that land or item. Use the same phrase for "drive out" someone that you have used in previous passages.

Yahweh tells the Israelites that they should destroy all their carved stone and metal images, or **idols**. People would make an object—sometimes called an image—of a god, and then worship that object as if it was that god. People could make such an object out of stone, wood, or metal. The people would melt metal and shape it into an image. Such an object could look like a person, or like an animal, or just have any different shape. The images could be very large, or they could be small and be easy to carry. In this passage, you could say "carved stone" and "metal idols."

Stop here and discuss how you will talk about the carved stone and metal **idols**, or images. If you have translated idols in another book of the Bible, use that word here. See the Master Glossary for more information about idols. Pause the audio here.

Yahweh tells the Israelites to destroy the **high places**. Remember that the high places were raised stone shrines dedicated to the worship of these carved stones and metal statues. People usually built the shrines on top of hills. However, high places also referred to any site where people performed religious rites and made sacrifices to their gods.

Stop here and discuss how you will talk about the **high places**. If you have translated high places in another book of the Bible, use that word here. Pause the audio here.

Yahweh tells the Israelites that they shall **take possession** of the land and settle in it. They shall inherit the land by lot, with a large tribe receiving a large inheritance, and a small tribe receiving a small inheritance. To take possession is to take something that was someone else's, and to become the new owner. Generally, people take possession of something by buying and selling, or through warfare.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for "take possession." 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 each tribe or clan will receive their **inheritance**. For the people who lived in this time, when a father died, that father's property went to the father's son. We say that the son inherits his father's property; the son receives his father's inheritance. Use the same word or phrase for inheritance that you used in previous passages.

Most translations talk about dividing the land both by **clans** and by **tribes**. However, it is unclear if the clans referred to here are smaller groups within the tribe, or the tribe itself. You may use your words for clans and tribes here, or you may use a general word for a group of families or relatives.

Moses divided the land by **casting lots**. Use the same word or phrase for casting lots as you have used in previous passages.

Yahweh tells the Israelites that the inhabitants that they do not drive out will be like **splinters** in the Israelites' eyes and **thorns** in the Israelites' sides.

A splinter is a thin piece of metal or wood that generally is split lengthwise from the main article and becomes long, thin, and sharp like a needle.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **splinters**. 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.

Thorns are the hard, sharp points on the stems of some plants.

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

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **thorns**. 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

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.

Numbers 33:50-56

Audio Content

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Numbers 34:1-15

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 34:1-15 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 34:1–15 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 34:1–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This passage continues the previous story when Yahweh spoke to Moses in the plains of Moab. In that story, Moses was to command the Israelites to drive out the inhabitants of the land of Canaan and to destroy all their Canaanites' places of worship. Moses told the Israelites that the larger tribes would receive a larger inheritance.

In this story, Yahweh is describing the borders of the land that Yahweh promised to give the Israelites in a previous story. Yahweh is not describing the sections of land that the individual tribes will inherit, but rather, the whole land west of the Jordan River. The Promised Land is the land of Canaan. Yahweh often describes the land of Canaan as the Israelites' inheritance. An inheritance is a piece of land, property, or items that someone receives lawfully from an ancestor, and that people can not sell or steal from the owner.

Stop here and look at a map of the Promised Land, or Canaan, as a group. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh commands Moses to tell the Israelites where Yahweh has set the boundaries of the Promised Land. Yahweh describes in detail the boundaries of the whole territory of the land of Canaan, which is west of the Jordan River. This is the land that Yahweh has given to the Israelites as an inheritance. Remember that Yahweh has already given the land to the Israelites, but the Israelites must remove the nations who are already living in the land of Canaan.

Yahweh begins by outlining the southern border, then the western border, then the northern border, and finally the eastern border. This is the second time that Yahweh has described the borders of the Promised Land to the Israelites. Remember that around 40 years before this story, Yahweh described the borders of the land to the Israelites who had fled Egypt. Now Yahweh describes the same borders of the Promised Land for the new generation of Israelites who grew up wandering in the wilderness.

Yahweh says that the south border starts in the east at the Salt Sea by the wilderness of Zin, and continues westward along the side of the land of Edom. The land of Canaan was separated from the land of Edom by the wilderness of Zin. The Salt Sea is a salty, large sea at the southern end of the Jordan River. The Salt Sea is also called the Dead Sea, because 25 percent to 30 percent of the sea is salt, meaning no plants or fish can survive in it. The Salt Sea is the saltiest body of water on the earth.

Stop here and look again at a map of the Promised Land as a group and note the locations of the Desert of Zin and the Salt Sea. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh says the southern border will dip south at the ascent of Akrabbim. Ascent means to go up, and here it refers to a road through the mountain. The ascent of Akrabbim is also called the heights of Akrabbim. The heights of Akrabbim are probably the tall white cliffs, which cross the Arabah valley. The white cliffs are 60 to 80 feet tall. The ascent of Akrabbim is around 8 miles away from the Salt Sea.

Stop here and look at a picture of the white cliffs as a group. Pause this audio here.

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

Yahweh says that after the heights of Akrabbim, the southern border will continue through the wilderness of Zin until the village of Kadesh Barnea. From Kadesh Barnea, the southern border will continue to the city of Hazar Addar, then to the city of Azmon, followed by the Brook of Egypt, and then it will end at the sea. The brook of Egypt is also called the River of Egypt. The Brook of Egypt is actually a dry river valley, or a wadi. In the dry season it is dry, and in the rainy season it is full of water. The sea mentioned here is also called the Great Sea, or the Mediterranean Sea.

Stop here and look at a map of the Promised Land as a group and note the location of the River of Egypt. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh says that the Mediterranean Sea will be the western border.

Stop here and look at a map of the Promised Land as a group and note the location of the Mediterranean Sea. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh then describes the northern border. Yahweh tells the Israelites to make lines between the different locations making the northern border. This means that the Israelites will mark their northern border. Yahweh lists six locations along the northern border. The northern border begins in the west at the Mediterranean Sea, then goes eastward to the mountain of Mount Hor. This is probably a different Mount Hor than the one where Aaron died. The third location is the town of Lebo Hamath, and the fourth location is the village of Zedad. The fifth location is the village of Ziphron, but the exact location of Ziphron is unknown as this is the only passage in the Bible that mentions Ziphron. The sixth and final location is the village of Hazar Enan in the east.

Stop here and discuss how a community can mark territory borders in areas that do not have natural borders like mountains and rivers. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh then describes the eastern border. The eastern border starts at the village of Hazar Enan, then it goes to the village of Shepham. The border then descends from the high ground of the village Shepham to the lower ground of the village of Riblah. Then it descends again to the shoulder of the Sea of Chinnereth, also called the Sea of Galilee. The shoulder of the Sea of Chinnereth refers to mountain slopes, or hills, next to the sea. The eastern border goes down again to the Jordan River and finishes at the Salt Sea.

If needed, stop here and look at a map of the Promised Land as a group. Note the location of the Sea of Chinnereth and the Salt Sea. Pause this audio here.

These borders are the territory of the land of Canaan west of the Jordan River. These borders do not include the lands Yahweh gave to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh. You will remember that these two-and-a-half tribes chose to live on the east side of the Jordan River, which is outside the land of Canaan. When Yahweh finishes describing the borders of the land, Moses speaks to the Israelites. Moses confirms to the Israelites that the territory within Canaan will only be for the nine-and-a-half tribes of Israel who have not yet received their inheritance. Moses tells the Israelites to divide the land between the nine-and-a-half tribes by casting lots.

You will remember that in this culture, casting lots was a method of decision-making that finalised outcomes or choices. People threw objects with markings, such as stones, sticks, or dice, and they made decisions based on the way the marked stones or sticks landed. In religious, legal, or community situations, people often used the casting of lots to assign land, select leaders, or divide plunder after war.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 34:1–15 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 two scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh starts by commanding Moses to tell the Israelites to understand the borders of the Promised Land. Yahweh describes the Promised Land in relation to its southern border, western border, northern border, and eastern border.

In the second scene: Moses tells the Israelites that the land west of the Jordan River is for the nine-and-a-half tribes of Israel, because the tribe of Reuben, the tribe of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh chose the land east of the Jordan River. Moses tells the Israelites to divide the land west of the Jordan River between the remaining nine-and-a-half tribes of the Israelites by casting lots.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- The Israelites

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

In the first scene, it is important to be clear that these boundaries surround the entire land of Canaan. The areas east of the Jordan River, where the two-and-a-half tribes will live, is not part of the land of Canaan. Yahweh begins by giving instructions to Moses. Moses has not yet explained these land boundaries to the Israelites.

In the second scene, Moses begins speaking directly to the Israelites. Moses tells the Israelites twice that the two-and-a-half tribes living in the land east of the Jordan River will not receive an inheritance within the land of Canaan. Moses repeats this information to emphasize that these tribes will not receive an inheritance within the land of Canaan. The land east of the Jordan River is described as "towards the sunrise," because the sun rises in the east.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How do you talk about directions like east, west, north, and south? What do you think of the way Yahweh chose to talk about directions here? 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

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 34:1–15 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 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 starts by commanding Moses to tell the Israelites to understand the borders of Canaan, the Promised Land. Yahweh describes Canaan, the Promised Land, in relation to its southern border, western border, northern border, and eastern border.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- I am giving the Israelites a clear description of the borders of the land so that they know how much land I am giving to them as a gift.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- I hope that the Israelites and the Israelite leaders will conquer all this land like Yahweh has commanded them to.

Ask the person playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- That is a lot of land to conquer. It is going to be hard and take time; or
- That is a lot of land that Yahweh has given to us. I am looking forward to soon having a permanent home and settling down.

Moses tells the Israelites that the land west of the Jordan River is for the nine-and-a-half tribes of Israel, because the tribe of Reuben, the tribe of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh chose the land east of the Jordan River. Moses tells the Israelites to divide the land west of the Jordan River between the remaining nine-and-a-half tribes of the Israelites by casting lots.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- I want all the Israelites to understand what land each tribe is receiving as their inheritance; or
- I want the Israelites to remember to divide the land by casting lots as Yahweh told us to.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 34:1–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Yahweh tells Moses to command the Israelites on how to separate the land of **Canaan**. Yahweh tells the Israelites that the land of Canaan will be given to them as an **inheritance**. Yahweh tells the Israelites the **borders** that define the land of Canaan. A border is the outer part, or edge. In this case, it is the edge of the land of Canaan. Use the same words or phrases for Yahweh, Canaan, inheritance, and the border as you used in previous passages. Yahweh and Canaan are in the Master Glossary.

The south side starts from the **wilderness** of Zin alongside Edom, and the southern border runs from the Salt Sea. Use the same word or phrase for wilderness that you used in previous passages. For more information on wilderness, refer to the Master Glossary.

If needed, stop here and look at a picture of a desert wilderness as a group. Pause this audio here.

A **sea** is a great body of saltwater that covers a large part of the land. Use the same word or phrase for the sea that you used in previous passages.

The southern border will pass the brook, or river, of Egypt. This is a dry river valley, or **wadi**. Use the same word for "dry river valley" that you used in Numbers 21:14.

The western border will include the Great Sea and its coast and lead to Mount Hor.

A coast is the land where the sea and a big landmass touch.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for the **coast**. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. If needed, stop here and look at a picture of a coast as a group. Pause this audio here.

The eastern border of the Promised Land will follow the **Jordan River**. Use the same title for the Jordan River that you have used in previous passages, and remember that the Jordan River is in the Master Glossary.

Moses commanded the people to **inherit** the Promised Land by **casting lots**. To inherit something is to receive and come into possession of the items or titles that an ancestor chose to give to you. Use the same words or phrases for inherit, or inheritance, and for casting lots, that you used in previous passages.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 34:1-15

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (13528369 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Numbers 34:16–29

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 34:16–29 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 34:16–29 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 34:16–29 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

As you remember, Moses and the Israelites are in the plains of Moab. Yahweh has just given Moses specific instructions for the boundaries of the land of Canaan. In this passage, Yahweh chooses 10 tribal leaders for the Israelites who will help mark these boundaries and help settle their tribes in the Promised Land.

Yahweh speaks to Moses. Yahweh gives Moses the names of the new Israelite leaders. These leaders will be responsible for dividing the land of Canaan as an inheritance between the nine-and-a-half tribes who will live there. As you remember, the tribes of Reuben and Gad chose to remain on the east side of the Jordan River and to not enter the Promised Land.

Stop here and look at a map of the land of Canaan, including the plains of Moab and the Jordan River, as a group. Pause this audio here.

An inheritance is a piece of land, property, or items that someone receives lawfully from an ancestor. People cannot sell or steal an inheritance from the owner. Yahweh often describes the land of Canaan as the Israelites' inheritance.

Yahweh says that Eleazar the priest, and Joshua, the son of Nun, will be over all the tribal leaders and will oversee the division of the Promised Land. As you remember, Eleazar was the son of Aaron. Eleazar was also the high priest. This means Eleazar worked in the tabernacle making sacrifices on behalf of the people and helping them have a good relationship with Yahweh.

Yahweh says there will be one leader, or highly respected chief, from each of the nine-and-a-half tribes that will enter the Promised Land. These tribal chiefs will help Eleazar and Joshua to divide the land of Canaan among their people.

Stop here and discuss how you would describe different levels of leadership in your language. What term would you use for someone who is highly respected by everyone? Pause this audio here.

As you know, this is not the first time Yahweh has listed tribal leaders to help Moses. Unlike the earlier list of leaders, there are only 10 men listed here, and the only name that is the same is Caleb of the tribe of Judah. As you remember, Caleb believed in Yahweh when Moses sent Caleb as a spy into the land of Canaan. Caleb was the only tribal leader who survived the Israelites' time of wandering in the wilderness. There are only 10 men listed instead of 12, because the leaders of Gad and Reuben are not included. Also, in this list, Eleazar and Joshua replace Aaron and Moses as the leaders of the Israelites. This is because Aaron has already died and Moses is unable to cross into the Promised Land.

These are the names of the 10 men Yahweh chose, one man from each tribe:

- For the tribe of Judah: Caleb the son of Jephunneh.
- For the tribe of Simeon: Shemuel the son of Ammihud.
- For the tribe of Benjamin: Elidad the son of Chislon.
- For the tribe of Dan: Bukki the son of Jogli.
- For the tribe of Manasseh: Hanniel the son of Ephod.
- For the tribe of Ephraim: Kemuel the son of Shiphtan. As you remember, Manasseh and Ephraim were the sons of Joseph.
- For the tribe of Zebulun: Elizaphan the son of Parnach.
- For the tribe of Issachar: Paltiel the son of Azzan.
- For the tribe of Asher: Ahihud the son of Shelomi.
- For the tribe of Naphtali: Pedahel the son of Ammihud.

Stop here and discuss how you remember long lists of names in your language. What order do you put names in, and why? Pause this audio here.

We do not know why Yahweh chose to list the 10 tribal leaders in this order. It is possible that this is the order in which the tribes will conquer the Promised Land.

Moses summarizes that these men were the men who Yahweh chose and commanded to help divide the land of Canaan as an inheritance among their people.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 34:16–29 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 the first scene: Yahweh speaks to Moses. Yahweh chooses Joshua and Eleazar as the new leaders of the Israelites. Joshua and Eleazar will oversee the division of the Promised Land. Yahweh also chooses one tribal chief from the 10 tribes that will enter the Promised Land to help Joshua and Eleazar divide the Promised Land.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Joshua son of Nun
- Eleazar the priest
- The Israelites
- For the tribe of Judah: Caleb the son of Jephunneh
- For the tribe of Simeon: Shemuel the son of Ammihud
- For the tribe of Benjamin: Elidad the son of Chislon
- For the tribe of Dan: Bukki the son of Jogli
- For the tribe of Manasseh: Hanniel the son of Ephod
- For the tribe of Ephraim: Kemuel the son of Shiphtan
- For the tribe of Zebulun: Elizaphan the son of Parnach
- For the tribe of Issachar: Paltiel the son of Azzan
- For the tribe of Asher: Ahihud the son of Shelomi
- For the tribe of Naphtali: Pedahel the son of Ammihud

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

Moses and the Israelites are on the plains of Moab near the Jordan River.

Moses uses the phrase "Yahweh spoke to Moses" to emphasize that all of Moses' orders for the Israelites came directly from Yahweh.

Yahweh appoints two new leaders who will oversee the division of the land of Canaan as the Israelites' inheritance. Eleazar will replace Aaron, and Joshua will replace Moses.

It is important to remember that Eleazar was the son of Aaron. Eleazar was a priest, so he represented the people before Yahweh in the tabernacle. This means Eleazar was the religious leader of the Israelites. Up until now, Joshua has been Moses' assistant and would watch over the tent of meeting when Moses met with Yahweh. Now Joshua will be the new leader of the Israelites as they cross the Jordan River into the Promised Land.

Yahweh tells Moses that Moses should choose one leader from each tribe that will enter the Promised Land to help divide and settle the Promised Land. It is important to notice that the word for leader refers to a distinguished tribal chief. These 10 leaders were highly respected by their tribes.

It is possible that Yahweh's direct speech ends here, but most scholars agree that Yahweh also gave the names of the 10 tribal leaders.

Moses then lists the names of the chiefs from each tribe. There are only 10 tribes listed, because the tribes of Gad and Reuben previously decided to stay behind and not enter the Promised Land. It is important to note that Caleb is the only leader who is still the same.

One way to show this is by dividing objects, such as rocks or shells, into 12 groups. Two-and-a half groups stay behind, while one object is chosen from each of the 10 remaining groups. These 10 objects can represent the 10 tribal leaders.

It is most likely that Yahweh's direct speech ends after Yahweh lists the 10 tribal leaders.

Moses then gives a summary saying that those 10 men were chosen by Yahweh to help divide the land of Canaan.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 34:16–29 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:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- Joshua son of Nun
- Eleazar the priest
- The Israelites
- For the tribe of Judah: Caleb the son of Jephunneh
- For the tribe of Simeon: Shemuel the son of Ammihud
- For the tribe of Benjamin: Elidad the son of Chislon
- For the tribe of Dan: Bukki the son of Jogli
- For the tribe of Manasseh: Hanniel the son of Ephod
- For the tribe of Ephraim: Kemuel the son of Shiphthan
- For the tribe of Zebulun: Elizaphan the son of Parnach
- For the tribe of Issachar: Paltiel the son of Azzan
- For the tribe of Asher: Ahihud the son of Shelomi
- For the tribe of Naphtali: Pedahel the son of Ammihud

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. Yahweh chooses Joshua and Eleazar as the new leaders of the Israelites. Joshua and Eleazar will oversee the division of the Promised Land.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- I am glad our family will still help lead the Israelites into the Promised Land; or
- Yahweh is wise to choose Joshua. Joshua has been at my side for so long. I am sure Joshua will humble himself and lead the people well; or
- Sad. My time of leading the Israelites is coming to an end. I am sad I cannot see the Promised Land after such a long journey.[!end] Continue the drama.

Act out Yahweh choosing one tribal chief from the 10 tribes that will enter the Promised Land to help Joshua and Eleazar divide the land.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- Caleb has been faithful to me. I am happy for Caleb to see my promise fulfilled; or
- This is a new beginning for my people; or
- I know Joshua will need help. These will be faithful men to help Joshua with each tribe.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 34:16–29 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Yahweh speaks to Moses. Yahweh lists tribal leaders who will help divide the land of Canaan for the Israelites. 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 Joshua and Eleazar the **priest** will oversee all of the Israelites and the division of the land of Canaan. Use the same word for priest that you have used in previous passages. For more information on priest, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh refers to the land of Canaan as the Israelites' **inheritance**. An inheritance is a piece of land, property, or items that someone receives lawfully from an ancestor. People cannot sell or steal an inheritance from the owner. Yahweh often describes the land of Canaan as the Israelites' inheritance. Use the same word or phrase for inheritance that you have used in previous passages.

Moses says the list of 10 men are the men who Yahweh chose to help divide the land of **Canaan** for the sons of Israel, or the **Israelites**. Israelites refers to the people who are descendants of Abraham. In this case, the 10 leaders will help divide the land of Canaan between the remaining 10 tribes of Israel. Use the same words for

the Israelites and Canaan that you have used in previous passages. For more information on the Israelites and Canaan, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 34:16-29

Audio Content

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Numbers 35:1–8

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 35:1–8 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 35:1–8 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 35:1–8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This passage continues the theme of the previous passages when Yahweh established Israel's territory boundaries within Canaan and appointed leaders to divide the land amongst the tribes. In that story, Yahweh did not include the tribe of the Levites in the list of tribes who would receive an inheritance of land.

The Levites are one of the twelve tribes of Israel. In previous passages, Yahweh chose the Levites for the special work of taking care of the tabernacle. At that time, Yahweh gave specific instructions for the Levites to camp all around the tabernacle and keep guard over it. In this story, Yahweh will give new instructions about where the Levites are to live once Israel enters Canaan.

This story begins as Yahweh speaks to Moses on the plains of Moab, by the Jordan River, across from Jericho. The plains of Moab are flat, fertile lands situated to the east of the Jordan River, opposite the ancient city of Jericho.

If needed, stop here and look at a map showing the plains of Moab, the Jordan River, and Jericho. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Moses to command the tribes of Israel to give some of the land they inherited from Yahweh as cities, or towns, for the Levites to live in. In this culture, inherited land could not be sold or taken away from the tribes that owned it. This meant that the Levites would not own the land, but they could live in it. Some Bible scholars think that Yahweh purposefully wanted to scatter the Levites throughout the tribes of Israel so that the Levites could maintain the religious unity of the nation as it grew larger.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Are there any people groups in your area who do not own any land? Where do they live, and how do people treat them? Now, if possible, tell a story about a family who did not own any land to live and work in, and another family who gave them somewhere to live. Pause this audio here.

In addition to the cities, the Israelites must give pastureland to the Levites for grazing their animals and other livestock. Pasturelands are open spaces of land where herds of cattle and flocks of sheep and goats can feed on grass. Measuring outward from the city walls surrounding each town, the pasturelands are to extend to 1,000 cubits, or 1,500 feet. People in ancient times often built stone walls around their cities to protect the inhabitants

from enemy invasions. A cubit is about the length of a male adult's arm, from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger.

Yahweh gives Moses precise measurements for the size of the pasturelands. This shows how Yahweh carefully planned sufficient provision for the Levite families. The Israelites need to be careful to measure the pastureland around the cities. The Israelites need to make sure that the Levites will receive the exact area that Yahweh has designated to them. The Israelites will measure and mark off 2,000 cubits in every direction from the outside of the cities as pasturelands for the cities, with the city in the centre.

The Israelites must give a total of 48 cities, and their surrounding pasturelands, to the Levites. Six of these 48 cities will be special cities in Israel. Yahweh calls them "cities of refuge, or safety." The cities of refuge are places of protection where a manslayer, or anyone who has killed someone, can flee. We know from the next passage that, once there, the manslayer will wait for a public trial to determine if the killing was intentional, or accidental.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What kinds of people need to seek refuge or protection in your culture? Where do they go when they seek refuge? Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What happens in your culture to a person who kills another person? Where do your community leaders hold trials? Pause this audio here.

Each tribe of Israel is to give the number of cities according to the size of the land it owns. The larger tribes are to give more towns, and the smaller tribes are to give fewer towns.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 35:1–8 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 two scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh tells Moses to instruct the people of Israel to give some of the land Yahweh gave them as cities for the tribe of the Levites to live in, and the surrounding pastureland for the Levites' livestock to graze in.

In the second scene: Yahweh tells Moses to instruct the people of Israel to assign 48 cities, in total, to the Levites. Yahweh specifies that 6 of the cities will be cities of refuge for manslayers to flee to. The larger tribes are told to give more, and the smaller tribes are told to give less, each in proportion to the size of land each tribe will inherit.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- The people of Israel
- The tribe of the Levites

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

In the first scene, Yahweh begins by telling Moses to, "Command the people of Israel...." This shows that Yahweh is about to give the Israelites an important instruction for them to obey. The Israelites are told to give some of the "inheritance of their possession" to the Levites. This refers both to the land the Israelites will inherit once they settle in Canaan, and also to the land which the tribes of Gad, Reuben, and the half-tribe of Manasseh had received on the other side of the Jordan River. Your version of the Bible may simply say that they should give some of their "property."

The Israelites are to give cities, or towns, to the Levites as places for them to live in. Additionally, the Israelites must give the surrounding pastureland for the Levites' herds and flocks. The text says that the pasturelands must reach, or extend, 1,000 cubits from the wall of the city in every direction.

Then Yahweh instructs Moses to command Israel to measure the pasturelands from outside the city: 2,000 cubits on the east side, 2,000 cubits on the south side, 2,000 cubits on the west side, and 2,000 cubits on the north side, with the city in the middle.

Stop here and discuss as a group: When you talk about directions like this, which direction do you say first? How do you describe the directions on each side of an area of land? Pause this audio here.

These two measurements seem to be different. We do not know if the 2,000-cubit measurement means that the pasturelands were 2,000 cubits long and wide, but with the city in the middle in addition to these measurements. Or perhaps the outer boundaries of the pastureland measured 2,000 cubits wide on each side. Or the 2,000-cubit area included a smaller, 1,000-cubit pastureland. Although the measurements seem to be different, what is important to note here is that Yahweh is assigning a specific area to a specific group of people, the Levites. Yahweh is making sure the Levites will have what they need in order to accomplish the plans Yahweh has for them to live and work amongst the tribes of Israel.

Stop here and look at the diagram of a possible layout of the cities and their pasturelands. Pause this audio here.

In scene two, Yahweh says to Moses that the Israelites must give a total of 48 cities to the Levites. Yahweh does not specify where those cities must be or how many cities each tribe must give. Yahweh says that each tribe must give "in proportion" to the size of land they own, meaning that the tribes with more land must give more cities and pasturelands to the Levites, and the tribes with less land must give fewer cities and pasturelands.

Yahweh wants the Israelites to choose 6 of the 48 cities to be "cities of refuge" where any manslayer can flee. A manslayer is a person who has killed another person, either accidentally or intentionally. Yahweh does not specify the locations of the cities of refuge, but the Israelites will probably need to evenly space them throughout the land so that any manslayer can escape to somewhere near him. The manslayer will find safety if they go to one of these cities of refuge.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 35:1–8 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 people of Israel
- The tribe of the Levites

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 tells Moses to command the people of Israel to give some of the land Yahweh will give them to the Levite tribe. This land will be for the Levites to live in. The land will include pastureland for their livestock and other animals. The pasturelands are to measure 2,000 cubits from the city walls to the north, east, south, and west.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- I have chosen the Levites to do special work for me. I do not want them to live in one area, like the rest of the tribes. I want them to spread out and live amongst all the other tribes so that they can do this special work; or
- I did not give the Levites an inheritance in the land, but I am giving Moses these specific instructions to ensure that they have what they need to live and work for me in the Promised Land.[!end] Continue the drama.

In scene two, Yahweh tells Moses that the Israelites must give a total of 48 cities to the Levites. Israel will choose 6 of these cities to be cities of refuge, where a manslayer can flee for protection. The tribes who will receive a larger portion will give more cities and land to the Levites than the tribes who will receive a smaller portion.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- I need to be careful to tell the Israelites all that Yahweh has commanded them to do, so that they can fully obey Yahweh; or
- I hope the Levites can see that Yahweh has provided for their needs.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 35:1–8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Yahweh spoke to Moses in the plains of Moab, by the **Jordan River**, at Jericho. Yahweh is God's personal name. Use the same word you have used before for Yahweh and Jordan River, and remember that Yahweh and Jordan River are in the Master Glossary. The plains of Moab is a flat and fertile strip of country, about 5 to 6 miles wide. The plains of Moab is east of the Jordan River, just slightly north of the Dead Sea, and opposite an ancient Canaanite city called Jericho.

Yahweh instructs Moses to give orders to the tribes of Israel to give cities, or towns, and pasturelands to the Levites to dwell in and to keep their livestock and other animals. Pasturelands are areas covered with grass or other plants that are good for livestock to feed on. These towns are medium-sized settlements where people live, smaller than a capital city, but bigger than a small village.

Stop here and look at a picture of herds of cattle in pasturelands as a group. Then discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for pasturelands and for towns. Pause this audio here.

The pasturelands of the cities will extend 1,000 **cubits** from the city wall. A cubit is the distance between the elbow and the tip of the middle finger of an adult male's forearm. Use the same word for cubit that you have

used in previous passages. For more information on cubit, refer to the Master Glossary. A city wall is a thick, solid structure that surrounds a city on all sides with the purpose of protecting the citizens from enemy attack. In this culture, the people built city walls with stone and bricks that people made from mud.

Stop here and look at an example of an ancient walled city as a group. Then discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **city wall**. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh gives instructions for the people of Israel to give the Levites a total of 48 cities with their pasturelands. Yahweh says that 6 of the 48 cities should become **cities of refuge** for the **manslayer** to flee to. A city of refuge was a place of protection where anyone who accidentally killed another person could go to find safety from someone who would want to unjustly punish the manslayer because they killed a person. A manslayer can refer to any person who has killed another person, either accidentally or intentionally. A manslayer would later become a murderer if a judge found them to be guilty of intentionally killing someone. A murderer could not stay in the city of refuge.

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

The tribes of Israel had to give the Levites land that was in proportion to the size of land Yahweh would give them as an inheritance once they entered and possessed the Promised Land, Canaan. Yahweh gave the bigger tribes more land than the smaller tribes. Therefore, the bigger tribes had to give more land to the Levites than the smaller tribes did. An inheritance is something that is passed on to an heir when someone dies. An inheritance is often wealth or property. In this case, the Israelites would inherit the land of Canaan which Yahweh promised many years before to give to Abraham's descendants. Use the same word or phrase for inheritance that you used in previous passages.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 35:1–8

Audio Content

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Numbers 35:9–29

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 35:9–29 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 35:9–29 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 35:9–29 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Yahweh instructed the people of Israel to give 48 cities and surrounding pasturelands to the tribe of Levites for them to live in. Six of the 48 cities were "cities of refuge," which were places where a manslayer, or someone who kills a person accidentally, could go to for safety.

In this passage, Yahweh explains the purpose of the cities of refuge and indicates who will benefit from them. Yahweh also gives detailed instructions about how the Israelites are to deal with a manslayer once he or she flees to a city of refuge.

The Israelites are probably still in the plains of Moab in this story, because Yahweh says the Israelites must choose the cities of refuge after they have crossed over the Jordan River and entered the land of Canaan.

The cities will be places of safety, or asylum, from the dead person's relative wanting to avenge the death. This person is called an avenger. Asylum is the ancient custom of fleeing to sacred or safe places to seek the protection of a king or god. You may remember a previous story from the book of Exodus where Yahweh told Moses he would provide a place of refuge, or asylum, for a manslayer to escape to. The cities of refuge are in addition to the asylum of the altar mentioned in Exodus, but the concept of protection is the same.

The family of the dead person chooses someone from within the family to impose a punishment on the manslayer as a type of payment for the suffering or loss the manslayer caused the family. The manslayer needs protection from the avenger, because the avenger will seek to punish the manslayer by killing them. Yahweh does not want the avenger to kill the manslayer before the manslayer stands trial before the community. In this culture, standing trial is a legal process where people, probably male leaders, from the community gather to hear testimonies and judge the actions and intentions of the people involved in a problem. In the case of a manslayer, the community must decide whether the manslayer intended to kill the person, or whether it was an accident.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do your community leaders deal with someone who accidentally kills another person? What does a trial look like in your culture? Pause this audio here.

The Israelites had to choose three cities on either side of the Jordan River. The area to the east of the Jordan River is sometimes called Transjordan; this is where Yahweh gave land to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh. The land to the west of the river Jordan is called Canaan.

Bible scholars think that Yahweh probably wanted the Israelites to distribute the cities like this to make sure that a manslayer can easily access refuge from anywhere in Israel. Yahweh says that any manslayer, even if he or she was not a native of Israel, could seek asylum in one of the cities of refuge. The Israelite leaders must apply the same rules to non-native people, who live either temporarily or permanently in Israel, and to native Israelites. Yahweh says they must both receive the same treatment. Yahweh offers protection to all manslayers who flee to a city of refuge, but only until he or she can stand trial before the community who will determine their intentions.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How would your community leaders treat visitors from other villages if they accidentally caused the death of someone from your community? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh lists the criteria by which the community must judge a manslayer's intentions and decide the difference between a manslayer, who is someone who kills another person accidentally, and a murderer, who is someone who kills another person intentionally. Yahweh insists that a murderer must be put to death. A murderer can no longer receive protection in the city of refuge. This underlines the principle and punishment that Yahweh established in the book of Genesis when Yahweh said if someone kills a person, someone else will kill the one who killed.

Yahweh says that if the manslayer hits a person, either with a heavy metal object or a stone tool used for cutting and shaping, or even a wooden object, and it causes the person to fall and die, then the manslayer is a murderer. Hitting another person with an object that is capable of harm and could kill them is evidence that the person wanted to kill the other person, or has wicked intentions. With this information, the community can determine that the murderer intentionally killed another person, and Yahweh says the murderer must die.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What punishment do murderers receive in your culture? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh gives the task of applying justice, and putting the murderer to death, to the avenger of the dead person. In this culture, an avenger, or redeemer, has various duties to perform, depending on the type of loss that a family suffered from someone else. When the duty requires the avenging of murder, the term for the avenger

becomes "avenger of blood." If the community decides a killer has murdered someone, the community has the responsibility to give the murderer to the avenger of blood. The avenger of blood must execute the murderer.

The same procedure applies if the community determines that a past hostility or hatred existed between the manslayer and the dead person. It may be that the hatred caused the manslayer to make a plan to unexpectedly attack the dead person by pushing or hitting that person, or by throwing something at that person. When someone makes a plan to harm another person, that plan is proof that they had wicked intentions. Yahweh says that this person is also a murderer, and the avenger of blood must execute the murderer.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Who is responsible for punishing wrongdoers in your culture? Is it the responsibility of the community leaders, or of the victim's family? Pause this audio here.

However, Yahweh instructs the community to protect the manslayer from the avenger of blood if the manslayer caused an unintentional death. This would apply if the manslayer pushed another person without having shown beforehand that they hated that person. It would also apply if the manslayer accidentally dropped a big stone on someone who was not their enemy. If the manslayer did not use a weapon that could kill someone, and if he did not show evidence of past hostility, the community must decide in favour of the manslayer. Yahweh says they must safely escort the manslayer back to the city of refuge. This shows that the community probably held the trial at the city gates, just outside the city of refuge.

If the manslayer caused an accidental, or unintentional, death, Yahweh says the manslayer's life will not be taken as payment for that death. Yahweh emphasizes that the community must protect the life of the manslayer. This is probably to avoid more killing in the land of Israel. If the avenger of blood were to seek revenge and kill the manslayer, though the manslayer was not guilty of murder, then the avenger of blood would themselves become guilty of murder. Then another avenger of blood would have to put that person to death.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you protect people in your community if they cause an accidental death? Pause this audio here.

For the manslayer to continue to receive protection from the avenger of blood, the manslayer must continue to live inside the city of refuge until the high priest, who was anointed with sacred oil, dies. Remember again that Yahweh previously said in the book of Genesis that if a person kills someone, someone else will kill that killer. Because the manslayer caused an unintentional death, Yahweh provides the natural death of the high priest as a substitute, or swap, on behalf of the manslayer so that the manslayer does not need to die. The high priest is the only person to receive the anointing of sacred oil. This anointing sets the high priest apart from all other people to serve Yahweh in a unique way. Only the death of the high priest could redeem, or free, the manslayer. No one else could do this.

However, if the manslayer ever goes beyond the limits of the city of refuge before the death of the high priest, the manslayer will lose all protection from the avenger of blood. In these circumstances, the avenger will not be guilty of murder if he finds and kills the manslayer, because the manslayer did not obey the terms of the manslayer's refuge.

Once the high priest dies, the manslayer is free to return to their own property, because the manslayer's guilt has ended. Nobody knew when the high priest might die, which means that no one knew how long the manslayer's penalty would last.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Are there any special circumstances like this in your culture that allow prisoners to be set free? If possible, tell a story about a time when this happened. Pause this audio here.

The Israelites must observe these statutes and ordinances throughout all the generations to come, wherever they may live in all the land of Israel.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 35:9–29 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 four scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh gives Moses instructions for the people of Israel to choose six cities of refuge within the boundaries of the land that Yahweh will give to the Israelites. Yahweh says there should be three cities on the east side of the Jordan River, and three cities on the west side, so that any manslayer can flee to one for safety from an avenger.

In the second scene: Yahweh gives rules to help the community leaders identify a murderer, or someone who kills another person intentionally. Yahweh explains the consequences for murder. Yahweh also assigns the task of punishing the murderer to the avenger of blood.

In the third scene: Yahweh gives rules to help the community leaders decide who is a manslayer and who is a murderer. Yahweh commands the community leaders to protect the manslayer from the avenger of blood by taking the manslayer back into the city of refuge. Yahweh says the manslayer must remain in the city of refuge until the high priest dies.

In the fourth scene: Yahweh explains the conditions that the manslayer must follow to receive protection from the avenger of blood. Yahweh says Yahweh will not hold the avenger of blood accountable if the manslayer fails to obey Yahweh's instructions. Only after the high priest dies is the manslayer allowed to return to their own property.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Moses
- People of Israel
- Manslayer
- The dead person, or victim
- Avenger, or avenger of blood
- Congregation or assembly of elders
- Murderer
- High priest

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

In scene one, Yahweh speaks to Moses for the second time about the cities of refuge the Israelites must assign once they cross over the Jordan River and enter the land of Canaan. It is not clear if this story is a continuation of the previous story, or if Yahweh spoke to Moses on a different day. It is likely that this story occurs in the same place as the previous story. This is likely because we do not hear that the Israelites had moved camp again. It is also likely because Yahweh is speaking about what must take place in the future, once the Israelites cross over the Jordan River into Canaan.

These six cities will be places where a manslayer, who killed someone accidentally, can flee to and find safety from the avenger. The avenger is the dead person's relative who is seeking to avenge the death. The family of the dead person appoints a person from within the same family to be the avenger. The avenger is the person who gives a punishment, or penalty, to the person responsible for the death of their family member. The purpose of the avenger is to bring justice on behalf of the victim and the victim's family. The avenger should give a punishment that is as harsh as the crime that the guilty person did. This is not the same as revenge, which is when a person does something to repay the wrongdoer even worse suffering than is fair. A person who takes revenge often does so because they feel angry. But a person who avenges wrongdoing does so because it is right that the wrongdoer receives punishment for their actions. Your version of the Bible may say that the dead

person's relative seeks revenge, but remember that an avenger is not punishing the guilty person because they are angry or want to be unfair.

Stop here and discuss as a group which words or phrases from your language you will use for "avenger," and how you will describe what an avenger does. Pause the audio here.

Yahweh makes it clear that the cities of refuge are not only for native Israelites. Yahweh also makes this system of protection for unintentional killings available to non-native people who are living in Israel, either temporarily or permanently. Your version of the Bible may say the "stranger," or "foreigner." These are all references to different types of non-native people living amongst the Israelites.

In scene two, Yahweh gives very specific guidelines for the community leaders to follow when the manslayer stands on trial before them. Yahweh lists items that people often use to kill others—a heavy metal object, a stone tool, or a wooden object. All of these objects are objects that people use when they are hostile towards someone else. All of the objects are by nature weapons that could kill someone. If the manslayer strikes, or hits another person with these things, they are guilty of wanting to cause harm. Yahweh says they are murderers. A murderer is different from a manslayer, because a murderer kills someone intentionally. It is important to use different terms for these two types of people in your translation.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will describe a "manslayer" and a "murderer." Pause the audio here.

Yahweh says the murderer "shall be put to death." This means that someone must kill the murderer for the murder's wrongdoing. This phrase occurs five times in this scene. The repetition highlights the seriousness of the wrongdoing and the importance of carrying out the necessary punishment.

Yahweh places the responsibility of punishing the murderer in the hands of the victim's avenger. Yahweh does not give this responsibility to Israel's community of leaders, as is the custom in some cultures. When the avenger's duties require them to avenge the wrongful bloodshed, or death, of their family member, the name avenger changes to "avenger of blood." Yahweh commands the avenger of blood to execute the murderer. The execution is not optional. It is important to make that clear in your translation.

Yahweh continues to describe the circumstances when the community can judge if a manslayer is guilty of being a murderer. Yahweh says that if a manslayer kills another person with hatred by pushing, or throwing something at someone, having planned a surprise attack, or if he hits the victim with his own hands, that person is also a murderer and must die. Hatred is an intense dislike of, and hostility towards someone so that you want to cause them harm. Here, Yahweh is highlighting the wicked intentions of the murderer towards the victim. This is proof that the death was not accidental but intentional.

Stop here and discuss as a group which words or phrases from your language you will use for "hatred." Pause the audio here.

In scene three, Yahweh outlines the conditions by which the community leaders can judge, or decide if a manslayer caused an accidental or unintentional death. According to Yahweh, the difference between a manslayer and a murderer is their intentions or attitude. In both cases, a person has died. But if the manslayer did not hate the victim, and did not intend to hurt the victim, Yahweh says the manslayer is not a murderer.

Yahweh commands the community to protect the manslayer from the avenger of blood by returning the manslayer to the city of refuge. The manslayer must stay until the death of the anointed high priest. Yahweh makes a special reference to the anointing of sacred, or holy, oil on the high priest. There were other priests serving Yahweh at that time, but there was only one high priest, and the high priest alone received the anointing of sacred oil. It is like Yahweh is saying the manslayer must remain within the limits of the city of refuge "until the death of the high priest, and only the high priest." Through this repetition, Yahweh is giving clear instructions to the community leaders about the length of time the manslayer had to remain in the city of refuge.

In scene four, Yahweh repeats the rules that the manslayer must follow to continue receiving protection, as well as the conditions for the manslayer's release. The manslayer must stay within the limits of the city of refuge until the death of the high priest. At that time, the manslayer may return to their home. If the manslayer leaves the city before the appointed time, and the avenger of blood finds the manslayer and kills them, Yahweh says that the avenger of blood will not be guilty of murder.

Yahweh wants all future generations throughout all the land of Israel to follow these rules. Your version of the Bible may say statutes, or legal requirements, which means they are unchangeable, official laws created by Yahweh. Yahweh uses repetition in his instructions because it was very important for the Israelites to fully understand Yahweh's instructions to avoid making harmful mistakes in the future. The use of repetition also shows that justice for the dead, protection of the innocent, and punishment for murder are important issues to Yahweh.

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

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 35:9–29 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
- People of Israel
- Manslayer
- The dead person, or victim
- Avenger, or avenger of blood
- Congregation or assembly of elders
- Murderer
- 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.

In scene one, Yahweh gives instructions to Moses about the six cities of refuge, in preparation for when the Israelites cross over the Jordan River and enter Canaan. Yahweh says that the cities of refuge are to be places of safety where any native or non-native manslayer can flee to and receive the opportunity to stand trial before the community leaders.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- I am giving my people special rules to follow when they go to live in the land of Canaan so that they will live differently from all the other nations. I want to teach my people to do what is right and good; or
- Accidents that cause another person to die may lead to someone taking revenge on the killer. I love my people and feel mercy for them. I want to protect the life of anyone who accidentally kills another person, not only the Israelites, but also people from other places. It is important for all people to have a fair trial.

In scene two, Yahweh explains how the community can tell if a person is a murderer. A murderer is a person who killed another person intentionally. Yahweh says the murderer must die for his wrongdoing. Yahweh appoints the victim's avenger of blood to implement the punishment.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- I am the creator of life. No one has the right to take another person's life unless I appoint them to do it. Murder is a serious wrongdoing that requires a severe punishment. I want the punishment for murder to stop other people from wanting to kill; or
- A murderer does not deserve to live, because that person has taken the life of another person who I made in my image and likeness.

Now ask the person playing the avenger of blood, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- Yahweh has given me a difficult responsibility. I do not want to kill another person, but it is necessary in order for justice to happen.

In scene three, Yahweh explains how the community can tell if the killer is not a murderer. Yahweh says the community must protect the life of a manslayer who caused the death of another person accidentally. The community must take the manslayer back to the city of refuge where they must live until the death of the high priest.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the manslayer, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- I never hated the person that died. I never intended to hurt him. I am very sorry that this has happened, but I am very grateful that Yahweh appointed cities of refuge for people like me to escape to. I am very grateful that Yahweh gave me the opportunity to stand trial before the community and prove my innocence.

In scene four, Yahweh says that the manslayer must remain in the city of refuge until the death of the high priest. Then the manslayer may go back to their own property. If the manslayer goes beyond the city limits before the death of the high priest, the manslayer risks being found and killed by the avenger of blood. If this happens, Yahweh says the avenger of blood will not be guilty of murder, because the manslayer broke the rules and went out from Yahweh's protection.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- Even though the manslayer did not murder anyone, a life has been taken. And I have commanded that every human life taken by a person must be paid for, or redeemed, by the life of another person. The natural death of my anointed servant, the high priest, will fulfil this requirement. But the manslayer must wait in the city of refuge for that day to come. Otherwise, I will accept the manslayer's own death at the hand of the avenger of blood as payment for the life that the manslayer unintentionally took.

Ask the person playing the manslayer, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- This is a difficult penalty for me to pay, because I do not know when I will go home to my family. But it is better for me to wait in the city of refuge than to risk my life by leaving before the high priest dies.

Yahweh establishes his instructions as legal requirements that must be observed forever throughout all the land of Israel.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 35:9–29 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Yahweh tells the Israelites to choose 6 **cities of refuge** from amongst the 48 Levite cities. Yahweh is God's personal name. Use the same word or phrase for Yahweh that you used in previous passages, and remember that Yahweh is in the Master Glossary. A city of refuge is a place of protection where anyone who accidentally kills another person can go. In a city of refuge, a manslayer can find safety from someone who may want to unjustly punish them because they killed a person. Use the same word or phrase for city of refuge that you used in previous passages.

The cities of refuge will be places of protection for a non-native or a native Israelite **manslayer**. A non-native person is the same as a **foreigner**, or someone from a different country. Look up foreigner in the Master Glossary for more information. A manslayer refers to any person who has killed another person accidentally.

The manslayer needs protection from the **avenger of blood**. The "avenger of blood" is a close family member of the victim who has the responsibility of avenging the loss or suffering experienced by a family because of the harmful actions of another. It is an act of justice to punish the wrongdoer with the same level of punishment as their wrongdoing. The avenger of blood specifically refers to the duty of the avenger when a person has been killed by a murderer. The avenger of blood is required to execute the murderer. In the Hebrew language, the word used for avenger is the same word used for redeemer, which is the person who redeems or frees a person. In Yahweh's law, when someone kills another person, the payment must be another life. In a way, both a redeemer and an avenger pay a debt that someone owes.

Stop here and discuss as a group what words or phrases you will use for "avenger of blood." Pause this audio here.

If a manslayer flees to a city of refuge, the community leaders are responsible for judging the manslayer through a legal process called a **trial**. At a trial, the people in authority ask the manslayer questions about why they killed the other person. The people in authority must then judge, or decide, if the manslayer is guilty of the wrongdoing that people accuse them of.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will describe the legal trial. Pause this audio here.

Once the congregation, or community leaders, have heard testimonies about the circumstances of the death, they must decide if the manslayer killed the person unintentionally or not. If the manslayer used a weapon that could kill someone, had shown that they hated the victim, or had planned to attack the victim, the community will judge the manslayer and say that the manslayer is guilty of murder. A murderer is someone who commits murder.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will describe a **manslayer** and a **murderer**. Pause this audio here.

The avenger of blood must execute the murderer, and the manslayer must remain living within the boundaries, or limits, of the city of refuge until the **high priest**, who was anointed with sacred oil, dies. Priests were people who worked for Yahweh in the tabernacle. Yahweh set one of the priests apart by anointing him with sacred oil. This special anointing made him the high priest. The high priest had important functions that only he could perform. For more information, refer to priest in the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for high priest as you used in previous passages.

Yahweh's instructions about manslayers and murderers are **statutes** and **ordinances**, or **laws**, for the Israelites to follow forever. Statutes are often rules that show people what tasks to do, and ordinances are customs or legal decisions. Using the two words together shows that Yahweh is making a legal requirement to handle future cases in the same way. Refer to statute, ordinance, and law in the Master Glossary for more information. Use the same words or phrases for statutes and ordinances that you used in previous passages.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 35:9-29

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Numbers 35:30-34

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 35:30–34 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 35:30–34 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 35:30–34 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the book of Exodus, Yahweh commanded the Israelites not to kill one another. And in the previous story, Yahweh gave instructions to Moses concerning what to do if the Israelites broke that commandment. This passage concludes Yahweh's instructions about how the community must treat a manslayer or a murderer who has taken the life of another person.

In this story, Yahweh highlights the absolute value of human life. Yahweh explains how bloodshed defiles the land, making the land impure or unclean. Yahweh also explains why it is necessary for the Israelites to observe these rules throughout all their generations and wherever they may live in the Promised Land.

Remember, Yahweh previously gave the community leaders guidelines to follow during a trial when they decided if a person was guilty of murder or not. Now Yahweh says the community can only condemn a murderer to a punishment of death if there is more than one witness who can provide evidence, or proof, of the murderer's intention to kill the victim deliberately. A witness is someone who provides information about what they have seen or heard to other people.

The penalty for murder is the death, or execution, of the murderer. The testimony of more than one witness in a trial should reduce the likelihood of mistakenly executing someone who is not guilty of murder. Mistakenly executing someone would cause even more bloodshed in the land of Israel.

Stop here and discuss these questions as a group: What might your community leaders do in a murder trial if there is only one witness? How might they make a just, or good, decision? Pause this audio here.

A person who is guilty of murder cannot escape the punishment of death. Under no circumstances can the community leaders allow the murderer to live. Yahweh does not allow the murderer to pay a ransom, or money, in exchange for their life so as to escape the death penalty. This command contrasts with the laws of other communities that allowed for the payment of a ransom to buy back the life of a murderer. In those other communities, sometimes the dead person's family had the option of executing the murderer or accepting a ransom. Yahweh did not allow this practice.

By making this rule, Yahweh is saying that no amount of money is worth the life of a person. Some people think Yahweh does not allow people to pay a ransom in order to teach people who have lots of money that they cannot avoid the consequences of murder simply because they have enough money to pay a ransom fee. Human life is so valuable to Yahweh that murder demands justice.

Stop here and discuss these questions as a group: How do people react when someone murders someone else? How do they treat the murderer? Why do they treat the murderer this way? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh considers even the accidental loss of human life to be a very serious matter. You will remember in the previous story that a manslayer who unintentionally kills another person could not return to their own property until the natural death of the high priest. Here, Yahweh does not allow the people of Israel to accept a ransom from a manslayer who wants to pay to leave the city of refuge before the death of the high priest. This rule would probably stop the families of victims from trying to gain money when someone else accidentally killed someone. Yahweh then tells Moses the reason why it is so important for the Israelites to follow Yahweh's instructions about dealing with bloodshed. Yahweh says that bloodshed pollutes, or defiles, the land, meaning that the land itself becomes unclean, or unfit for Yahweh. The Promised Land, as a gift of the covenant, is sacred, or holy. Bloodshed can pollute the land, because blood is the source of life. Blood is a sacred gift of God. Defilement of the land would make all the Israelite people unclean before Yahweh.

This is very significant, because Yahweh himself lives among the Israelites. If the Israelite people allowed the land to become defiled, then Yahweh, who is holy, would no longer live among them.

In the book of Genesis, Yahweh said he would require the blood of those who kill another person. The only way to atone for bloodshed, or to purify the land and make it clean again, is through the execution of the murderer or the natural death of the high priest in place of the manslayer.

You will remember from the previous story that Yahweh appointed the natural death of the high priest to remove the guilt of the manslayer. The manslayer must remain within the boundaries of the city of refuge to keep the manslayer safe from the avenger of blood. This will also keep the land isolated from the pollution of the bloodshed until the death of the high priest atones for the shed blood and removes the bloodguilt.

Yahweh wants the Israelites to keep the Promised Land pure, or holy, by observing Yahweh's commandments. This will mean that Yahweh can fulfil his covenant promise to live amongst them.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 35:30–34 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 four scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh says the community leaders must not allow the execution of a murderer based on the testimony of only one witness.

In the second scene: Yahweh says all people who are proven to be murderers must die. The Israelites cannot receive any ransom to free them from the punishment of death.

In the third scene: Yahweh says all manslayers must remain in the city of refuge until the death of the high priest. The Israelites cannot receive any ransom to allow the manslayer to leave the city of refuge.

In the fourth scene: Yahweh says bloodshed makes the land unclean. Yahweh lives amongst the Israelites; therefore, the Israelites should obey these instructions to keep the land pure.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Murderer
- Witnesses
- Manslayer
- High priest
- The people of Israel

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

In scene one, Yahweh commands the Israelites to put all murderers to death. Yahweh then uses a type of repetition to emphasise that this can only happen if the community leaders receive evidence from more than one witness. First, Yahweh says the murderer shall die on the evidence of more than one witness. Then Yahweh says no one shall die based on the evidence of only one witness. This is a very serious matter. By repeating the commandment, Yahweh makes sure people understand it clearly, and Yahweh reduces the chance of unjust executions among the Israelites.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will highlight Yahweh's commandment in your translation. Pause the audio here.

In scene two, Yahweh then repeats the commandment that a murderer must die. A murderer cannot escape the punishment for his actions. A murderer cannot pay a ransom, or a fee, to avoid punishment. Yahweh's justice demands that a murderer must die. Allowing a murderer to live would lead to serious consequences for Israel.

In scene three, Yahweh deals with the matter of the penalty that a manslayer must receive. The manslayer must remain confined within the boundaries of the city of refuge until the high priest dies. The Israelite people must not accept a ransom to allow the manslayer to leave the city of refuge before the high priest dies.

In the first three scenes of this story, Yahweh gives commandments for Israel to observe. Now, in scene four, Yahweh explains the reason for the commandments. It is important to follow this chronological order of action in your translation.

Yahweh tells the Israelites that bloodshed pollutes the land. Your version of the Bible might say that bloodshed defiles the land. This means the land becomes ceremonially unclean, which then means that the people of Israel also become ceremonially unclean, or unfit to worship Yahweh.

Yahweh says that the only way to atone for, or restore, the land to a state of ceremonial purity is through the blood of the person who killed another. Therefore, the murderer must die. For this reason also, the manslayer must wait for the high priest to die naturally. Otherwise Yahweh will require the manslayer's life to atone for the life which the manslayer ended.

Yahweh also uses repetition in this scene. Yahweh says twice that the Israelites must not pollute the land, meaning that they must follow the rules about purifying the land of all human bloodshed.

Then Yahweh uses repetition to end this story and emphasizes the reason why the Israelites must be careful to follow Yahweh's commandments regarding bloodshed. Twice Yahweh makes the important statement that Yahweh lives amongst the people of Israel. If bloodshed pollutes the land, then Yahweh can no longer live amongst the people of Israel.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 35:30–34 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
- Murderer
- Witnesses
- Manslayer
- High priest
- 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 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 that the Israelites should not put a person to death if there is only one witness to testify that they killed someone intentionally.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- Every life is precious to me. I do not want anyone to die unfairly; or
- I want justice to prevail. One witness might hate the person who is on trial and speak lies to the community leaders so that the person is unfairly condemned to death.[!end] Continue the drama.

Yahweh says that a murderer must die. Yahweh says that a murderer cannot pay a ransom to buy their right to live.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- No amount of money is worth the gift of life which I alone can give. No amount of money is enough to pay the penalty for taking the life of another person. I want the punishment to match the crime. I hope this will be a warning to stop people from ending someone else's life.[!end] Continue the drama.

Yahweh says that the Israelites must not accept a ransom from a manslayer who wants to leave the city of refuge and return to their own property before the appointed time. The manslayer must not return before the death of the high priest.

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 valuable human life is. My people need to learn to be careful not to cause accidental death. Their bloodguilt will remain upon them until the death of the high priest.[!end] Continue the drama.

Yahweh says that bloodshed pollutes the land and makes the land unclean. The only thing that can atone for, or pay for, bloodshed is the blood of the person who shed that blood. Yahweh commands the Israelites not to pollute or defile the land, because Yahweh, who is holy, lives with the Israelites.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- We want Yahweh to live with us forever, so we must be careful to observe these rules about keeping the land pure; or
- We are happy that Yahweh punishes murder so severely. This punishment will keep people from hurting one another. This means we can live in peace, without fear of harm from our fellow Israelites.[!end] Continue the drama.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 35:30–34 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Yahweh tells Moses that a **murderer** must die, but only if more than one **witness** can provide evidence. Yahweh is God's personal name. Refer to Yahweh in the Master Glossary for more information. A murderer is a person who deliberately kills another person. A witness is a person who provides information about what they have seen and heard. Use the same words or phrases for Yahweh, murderer, and witness that you used in previous passages.

A murderer must die for their wrongdoing. The people of Israel may not accept any payment of **ransom**, or money, for a murderer's life. A ransom is when someone pays money, land, or belongings in exchange for the freedom of a prisoner or slave.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word you will use for **ransom**. If you have translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word here. Refer to ransom in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

The people of Israel must not accept a ransom for a **manslayer** either. A manslayer refers to any person who has killed another person accidentally. Use the same word or phrase for manslayer that you used in previous passages.

A manslayer must remain inside the **city of refuge** until the death of the **high priest**. Then the manslayer may return to their own property. A city of refuge was a place of protection where anyone who accidentally killed

another person could go to find safety. For more information on priests, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same words or phrases for "city of refuge" and high priest that you used in previous passages.

By obeying these rules, Yahweh says the Israelites will ensure that murder does not pollute the land. Pollute means to make ritually impure. A similar idea is to **profane** or defile the land. See profane in the Master Glossary for more information.

The Israelites must not allow bloodshed to pollute the land, because Yahweh is holy. Yahweh is set apart from all evil, and Yahweh lives with the Israelites. Only the blood of the murderer, or the natural death of the high priest in place of the manslayer who accidentally killed a person, can **atone** for the land, or make the land pure again for Yahweh to live in. Refer to atonement in the Master Glossary for more information, and use the same word for atone that you have used in previous passages.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 35:30-34

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Numbers 36:1–13

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Numbers 36:1–13 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 36:1–13 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

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 36:1–13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The previous passage talks about how Yahweh gave special portions of land to the Levites, including the cities of refuge. This passage starts by reminding us of an earlier story about the daughters of Zelophehad who were from the clan of Gilead of the tribe of Manasseh. You will remember that Zelophehad's daughters asked for an inheritance among the children of Israel, even though their father died without having a son. In the culture of that time, only sons inherited land from their fathers. However, Yahweh agreed to Zelophehad's daughters' request. This passage tells the story of some concerns that the leaders of the clans of Gilead have about that request. It also shows how Yahweh resolves those concerns. Yahweh finishes Numbers by focusing again on one of Number's main themes—how Yahweh gave each tribe a special inheritance of land.

The family heads of the clan of Gilead, son of Makir, the son of Manasseh, who are from the clans of the descendants of Joseph, come and speak before Moses and the leaders who are the heads of the Israelite families. The family heads of the clan are the leaders of large families. You will remember that Joseph's descendants are two tribes, and one of the tribes is the tribe of Manasseh.

Moses and the leaders are an important group of people who would make the decisions when people had a request.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Who is responsible for settling family problems in your culture? What are some ways people solve family problems in your culture? Pause this audio here.

The head of the clans respectfully reminds Moses of the time the Lord commanded Moses to give portions of land as an inheritance to the daughters of Zelophehad by drawing lots. People cast lots in ancient times as a method of making decisions and to decide outcomes or make choices. When people cast lots, they would throw objects such as stones, dice, or marked sticks to make a decision about something. People cast lots to make religious, legal, or community decisions. Sometimes they cast lots to decide who received which land, which leaders to select, or how to divide the property they gathered during a war.

The heads of the clans of Gilead are worried. They said that if the daughters of Zelophehad marry into other Israelite tribes, their inheritance will be added to that of the tribe the daughters marry into. And even when the Year of Jubilee comes, the inheritance will be added to that tribe that they marry into, and their property will be taken from the tribal inheritance of their ancestors.

The Year of Jubilee was the 50th year after a 49-year cycle. During that year, land that people had sold was supposed to go back to its original owners. However, this was not the case for inherited land. Therefore, if Zelophehad's daughters were to marry outside their own tribe, the land they inherited would still remain attached to their husbands' tribes, even after the Year of Jubilee. This is because in the culture of that time, a woman's inheritance becomes her husband's possession as soon as she is married to him. If Zelophehad's daughters married, their husbands would own the land by inheritance, not because they bought it. Therefore, the land would become part of the land of the husbands' tribe. So the property could not be returned even during the Year of Jubilee.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Describe how people in your culture buy and sell land. Who owns land? How do people pass land to their descendants? Pause this audio here.

Then Yahweh commands Moses to give this order to the Israelites. Yahweh says that what the tribe of the descendants of Joseph said is right. Yahweh says that the daughters of Zelophehad may marry anyone they please as long as they marry only from within one of the clans of their father's tribe.

After Yahweh gives the command about the case of Zelophehad's daughters, Yahweh now applies the same command generally to all the Israelites. Yahweh says that no inheritance in Israel is to pass from one tribe to another. Every Israelite shall keep the tribal inheritance of their ancestors. Also, every daughter who inherits land in any Israelite tribe must marry someone within one of the clans of their father's tribe. In this way, every Israelite will possess the inheritance of their ancestors. Yahweh also commands that no inheritance may pass from one tribe to another, because each Israelite tribe is to keep the land it inherits.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Discuss how different tribes or groups of people in your culture own land. Where do different tribes live, and how do you decide where they live? What happens when one person marries someone from a different tribe or people group? Pause this audio here.

So Zelophehad's daughters did as Yahweh commanded Moses. Zelophehad's daughters—Mahlah, Tirzah, Hoglah, Milkah, and Noah—married their cousins on their father's side. Zelophehad's daughters married within the clans of the descendants of Manasseh, son of Joseph. In this way, their inheritance remained in their father's tribe and family group.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How are new rules created in your culture? Tell a story of a time when a special situation led people to create a new rule in your culture. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh ends the book of Numbers by reminding his people that Yahweh has given them special commands and ordinances about the Promised Land that he is about to give them. Yahweh's people are ready to enter the Promised Land—they are on the plains of Moab, next to the Jordan River. The city of Jericho is just across the river, and they are preparing to enter and conquer the land to claim the inheritance that Yahweh is giving them. These are the commands and ordinances Yahweh gave through Moses to the Israelites on the plains of Moab, by the Jordan, across from Jericho.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 36:1–13 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 five scenes.

In the first scene: The family heads of the family group of Gilead, son of Makir, the son of Manasseh, who are from the clans of the descendants of Joseph, come and speak before Moses and the leaders who are the heads of the Israelite families.

In the second scene: The leaders of the Israelite family groups bring a concern about the land Yahweh gave to the daughters of Zelophehad.

In the third scene: Moses gives the family heads a reply from Yahweh and a new command for the children of Israel.

In the fourth scene: The daughters of Zelophehad obey the Lord's command.

In the fifth scene: Moses concludes the book of Numbers.

The characters in this passage are:

- The family heads of the clan of Gilead
- Moses
- Yahweh
- The leaders, or heads, of Israelite families
- The daughters of Zelophehad
- Cousins of Zelophehad's daughters from their father's side

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

The family heads of the clan of Gilead, son of Makir, the son of Manasseh, who were from the clans of the descendants of Joseph, came and spoke before Moses and the leaders, who are the heads of the Israelite families. Remember that the heads of the clans refer to leaders of extended families among the clans of the descendants of Joseph.

Note that the head of clans spoke to Moses in a respectful manner by referring to Moses as "my lord" or "my master." The clan leaders of Gilead spoke as if they were one person. In other words, the leaders were united in their request to Moses.

Remember that the head of clans reminded Moses of the time Yahweh commanded Moses to give portions of land as inheritance to the daughters of Zelophehad by drawing lots. The head of clans points out that if the daughters of Zelophehad marry into other Israelite tribes, their inheritance will be added to that of the tribe the daughters marry into. And even when the Year of Jubilee comes, the inheritance will be added to that tribe that they marry into. In this way, their property will be taken from the tribal inheritance of their ancestors.

The leaders of the clan of Gilead repeat a lot of information in their question to Moses. The repetition may mean that they are nervous about the content of their request. They seem anxious that part of their tribal inheritance might go away from them and be taken by another tribe, unless Moses takes immediate steps to rectify the situation.

This repetition by the leaders of the clan of Gilead may also be a way, or style, that people talk about formal issues or things during public discussions at that time. Be careful to translate this part in a way that shows Moses brought his reply back from Yahweh. Then Yahweh commands Moses to give this order to the Israelites.

Yahweh says that what the tribe of the descendants of Joseph said is right. Just like Yahweh had said before that the daughters of Zelophehad were right to ask for an inheritance for themselves, now Yahweh is also saying that the clan of Gilead is right to worry that their tribe's inheritance will go to another tribe. Yahweh commands that the daughters of Zelophehad may marry anyone they please as long as they marry within their father's tribal clan. This means that the daughters of Zelophehad should marry only from within one of the clans of their father's tribe.

After Yahweh gives the command about the case of Zelophehad's daughters, Yahweh now applies the same command generally to all the Israelites that no inheritance in Israel is to pass from one tribe to another. This is because every Israelite shall keep the tribal inheritance of their ancestors. Also, every daughter who inherits land in any Israelite tribe must marry someone within one of the clans of their father's tribe. This ensures that every Israelite will possess the inheritance of their ancestors. Yahweh also commands that no inheritance may pass from one tribe to another, for each Israelite tribe is to keep the land it inherits.

It is important to remember that Zelophehad's daughters did as Yahweh commanded them through Moses. So Zelophehad's daughters—Mahlah, Tirzah, Hoglah, Milkah, and Noah—married their cousins on their father's side, or the sons of their father's brothers. Ensure to keep the order that the name of Zelophehad's daughters were listed in your translation.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people describe how they relate to each other from either the father's or the mother's side in your culture? Pause this audio here.

Zelophehad's daughters married within the clans of the descendants of Manasseh, son of Joseph, and their inheritance remained in their father's tribe and clan.

The last part of this story moves on to say that these are the commands and ordinances Yahweh gave through Moses to the Israelites. The Israelites are on the plains of Moab, by the Jordan, across from Jericho. This location is important. The Israelites are close to Jericho, which is a town inside the land that Yahweh had promised them. Now that Yahweh has given them all the instructions for how to live, the Israelites are ready to enter the Promised Land. The next books in the Bible will describe what happens when the Israelites enter the Promised Land.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What are some ways people end one part of a story in order to set up the beginning of 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

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 36:1–13 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:

- The family heads of the clan of Gilead
- Moses
- Yahweh
- The leaders, or heads, of Israelite families
- The daughters of Zelophehad
- Cousins of Zelophehad's daughters from their father's side

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 family heads of the clan of Gilead, son of Makir, the son of Manasseh, who were from the clans of the descendants of Joseph, came and spoke before Moses and the leaders who are the heads of the Israelite families.

The head of clans reminds Moses of the time Yahweh commanded Moses to give portions of land as inheritance to the daughters of Zelophehad by drawing lots. The head of clans of Gilead points out that if the daughters of Zelophehad marry into other Israelite tribes, their inheritance will be added to that of the tribe the daughters marry into. And even when the Year of Jubilee comes, the inheritance will be added to that tribe that they marry into. As a result, their property will be taken from the tribal inheritance of their ancestors.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the family heads, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- We are hopeful that Yahweh will agree to our request; or
- We feel an urgent need to address this issue before Moses; or
- We feel a need to protect our ancestral property so we don't lose it.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- Hmm, I must present this matter before Yahweh; or
- I am confident that Yahweh will give a solution to this problem.

Ask the people playing the leaders who are the heads of the Israelite families, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- We will wait to know the solution that Yahweh will bring to this problem; or
- We are confident that Yahweh will bring a lasting solution to this problem.

Then Yahweh commands Moses to give this order to the Israelites. Yahweh says that what the tribe of the descendants of Joseph said is right. Yahweh commands that the daughters of Zelophehad may marry anyone they please, as long as they marry within their father's tribal clan.

After Yahweh gives the command about the case of Zelophehad's daughters, Yahweh now applies the same command generally to all the Israelites. Yahweh commands that no inheritance in Israel is to pass from one tribe to another, for every Israelite shall keep the tribal inheritance of their ancestors. Also, every daughter who inherits land in any Israelite tribe must marry someone within one of the clans of their father's tribe. In this way, every Israelite will possess the inheritance of their ancestors. Yahweh also commands that no inheritance may pass from one tribe to another. Each Israelite tribe is to keep the land it inherits.

So Zelophehad's daughters did as Yahweh commanded Moses. Zelophehad's daughters—Mahlah, Tirzah, Hoglah, Milkah, and Noah—married their cousins on their father's side. Zelophehad's daughters married within the clans of the descendants of Manasseh, son of Joseph, and their inheritance remained in their father's tribe and clan.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- The daughters of Zelophehad are right; or
- I will give a lasting solution to this problem; or
- I will answer every need my people have.

Ask the people playing the family heads of the clan of Gilead, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- We feel great relief to know the solution Yahweh has brought to our concern; or
- We are glad that our land will not be lost to another tribe; or
- We are grateful to Yahweh for this lasting solution.

Ask the people playing the daughters of Zelophehad, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- We are willing to obey all the instructions given to us through Moses; or
- We are thankful to our family heads for taking the right steps to deal with this situation; or
- We feel great relief to hear the solution Yahweh has given to our situation.

These are the commands and regulations Yahweh gave through Moses to the Israelites on the plains of Moab, by the Jordan, across from Jericho.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Numbers 36:1–13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

The family heads of the **clan** of Gilead, son of Makir, the son of Manasseh, who were from the clans of the descendants of Joseph, came and spoke before Moses and the leaders who are the heads of the **Israelite** families. A clan is a group of several families. Use the same words or phrases for clan and for Israelite leaders that you used in previous passages, and remember that Israelites is in the Master Glossary.

The heads of the clan spoke to Moses in a respectful manner by referring to Moses as "my lord." A **lord** is someone who is a master over other people, who has full authority, and who deserves for people to give him respect. When you address someone as "lord," you are saying that the person has authority over you. Use the same word or phrase for lord that you used in previous passages. Lord is in the Master Glossary.

The heads of the clan remind Moses of the time **Yahweh** commanded Moses to give portions of land as **inheritance** to the daughters of Zelophehad by **drawing lots**. Use the same words for inheritance and Yahweh that you have used in previous passages, and remember that Yahweh is in the Master Glossary. A lot is a method of decision-making used in ancient times to determine outcomes or make choices. People cast lots in ancient times as a method of decision-making and to determine outcomes or make choices. When people cast lots, they would throw objects such as stones, dice, or marked sticks to make a decision about something. People cast lots to make religious, legal, or community decisions. Sometimes they cast lots to decide who received which land, which leaders to select, or how to divide the property they gathered during a war. Use the same word or phrase for lots as you used in previous passages.

The heads of the clan point out that if the daughters of Zelophehad marry into other Israelite tribes, their inheritance will be added to that of the tribe the daughters marry into. And even when the Year of Jubilee comes, the inheritance will be added to that tribe that they marry into. In this way, their property will be taken from the tribal inheritance of their ancestors.

The Year of Jubilee was the 50th year after a 49-year cycle. During that year, land that had been sold was supposed to revert to its original owners. This was a sacred year for Israel, traditionally called the "Year of Jubilee."

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **Year of Jubilee**. Look up Year of Jubilee 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 ends the book of Numbers by reminding his people that Yahweh has given them special **commands** and **ordinances** about the Promised Land that Yahweh is about to give them. Commands refers to general laws that Yahweh gave his people. Ordinances refer to more special laws about rituals and festivals. Use the same words for commands and ordinances that you have used in previous passages, and see the Master Glossary for more information about commandments and ordinances.

The book ends by reminding us that the Israelites are in the plains of Moab, by the **Jordan River**, and across from Jericho. The Israelites are nearly in the Promised Land. Use the same words for the place names that you have used throughout the book, and remember that Jordan River is in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

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.

Numbers 36:1-13

Audio Content

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