

Resource: Familiarization, Internalization, Articulation (Fia)

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Familiarization, Internalization, Articulation (Fia)

JOS

Joshua 1:1–9

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 1:1–9 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 1:1–9 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 Joshua 1:1–9 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

As the story of the book of Joshua begins, the Israelites are going through a time of great change. In the book of Numbers, we hear the story of the Israelites when Moses led them out of Egypt to go to the land that Yahweh had promised their ancestor Abraham. This land was called Canaan. However, the Israelites disobeyed Yahweh and had to travel through the desert for 40 years until all the adult Israelites who disobeyed God had died. Moses had been the Israelite leader for these past 40 years. Now, 40 years later, all the adults who left Egypt and disobeyed Yahweh have died. Moses, who also disobeyed Yahweh, has died. Joshua had become Moses' assistant, or helper, 40 years earlier when the Israelites were at Mount Sinai receiving Yahweh's law for the people. Joshua was Moses' assistant during the 40 years of wandering. Because Joshua had worked so closely with Moses for all these years, Joshua had learned from Moses how to lead the people. Yahweh chose Joshua to be the new leader of the Israelites. Nun was Joshua's father, so people normally called Joshua, "Joshua the son of Nun." Yahweh had told Moses that Joshua would be the leader to replace Moses, so before Moses died, Moses announced to the Israelites that Joshua would be their new leader.

Stop here and discuss: How do you choose a leader to replace a leader who has died or left your area? Pause this audio here.

The Israelites were camping beside the Jordan River, on the eastern side of the country the Israelites were going to enter. Moses spoke a final message to the people and then went up on a mountain nearby where he died. These things happened before the story in the book of Joshua starts.

Stop here and look at the map. Look for Egypt, the Wilderness of Sinai, Moab, and Canaan, the land Yahweh promised his people. Notice the journey from Egypt to the Jordan River. Look at the map and retell everything you remember about the story of the Israelites leaving Egypt together. Pause this audio here.

This story connects to the story that comes immediately before it at the end of the book of Deuteronomy. The book of Joshua begins immediately "after the death of Moses, the servant of Yahweh." Yahweh only calls a few of the people in the Bible his "servant." After the death of Moses, Joshua recognized that Yahweh was talking to Joshua. The passage does not tell us exactly how Yahweh spoke to Joshua.

Stop here and discuss the following question: What specific titles do you have for special people that are only used for people like them? Who decides that a person gets to use this title? Pause this audio here.

First, Yahweh reminds Joshua that Moses is dead, and that Moses is Yahweh's servant. This is the second time in this story that Yahweh calls Moses his servant. This time Yahweh is speaking these words. Yahweh tells Joshua that Joshua must lead the Israelites across the Jordan River and into the land that Yahweh has promised to give the Israelites. Yahweh tells Joshua to get up and cross the Jordan River right away.

Stop here and discuss the following: Imagine you are camped beside a river. You need to get ready to cross the river, but when you do, you take everything you own with you. What would you do to get ready to cross that river? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh talks to Joshua as though the Israelites are also listening and hearing what Yahweh says. Yahweh says that as Joshua and the Israelites walk about in the land, they are walking on land that will belong to them. Yahweh even describes to Joshua the north, south, east, and west boundaries of the land. This is a very big area of land!

Stop here and look at a map that has the land of the Israelites with the boundaries marked. Look for the Negev wilderness or desert to the south, the Lebanon mountains to the north, and the Mediterranean Sea to the west with the Euphrates River showing the northeast boundary. Look for the area where the Hittites live. Pause the audio here.

Yahweh promises Joshua that Yahweh will always be with Joshua. Yahweh tells Joshua that he will never fail him or abandon him and that no enemy will be able to conquer him, or stand against him, during his lifetime. Yahweh reminds Joshua that Yahweh stood with Moses, and in the same way, Yahweh will be beside Joshua, and he will help Joshua in every way. Yahweh tells Joshua to be strong and to have great courage. Yahweh is not telling Joshua that he has to be physically strong. Yahweh is telling Joshua that his attitude, or the way he feels, and the way he thinks, needs to be strong. Yahweh wants Joshua to decide to lead the people as Yahweh instructs him. Joshua will be the person to lead the people to take ownership of the land that Yahweh promised to the Israelite ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Stop here and tell a story about a leader who makes a decision to lead the people and continues even when times are hard. Listen to the words that the storyteller uses to describe the leader. Pause the audio here.

Yahweh tells Joshua to remember all the things that they learned from the law Yahweh gave to Moses. Yahweh says that Joshua must not turn from these instructions, either to the right or to the left. Yahweh is telling Joshua that he should always obey Yahweh's laws.

Stop here and do the following activity: Draw a line on the ground. Have someone walk on the line going across the room or across an open space. When the person steps off the line, stop that person and talk about how stepping off the line causes the person to disobey the instructions. Now discuss, "Why do you think Yahweh wanted Joshua to remain on the path at all times?" Pause the audio here.

It is so important that Joshua follows Yahweh's laws that Yahweh tells Joshua to study and meditate on his law day and night, and the book of the law should not "depart from his mouth." In other words, Joshua should never stop following the law, thinking about it, or reading it to the people every time they meet to worship Yahweh together.

Then Yahweh repeats the command to Joshua. Yahweh tells Joshua to be strong and have courage. This means that Joshua should be determined and confident. Joshua should not be afraid or discouraged. Yahweh will be with Joshua wherever Joshua goes.

Stop here and discuss the following as a group: Talk about how a good leader encourages the people he leads. What kinds of things does he tell them to do, and what kinds of words does he use?

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 1:1–9 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: This scene is the introduction to the book and tells us that Moses has died.

In the second scene: Yahweh speaks to Joshua. Yahweh tells Joshua that Joshua is now the leader of the Israelites and Joshua will lead them into the land that Yahweh promised to Moses. Yahweh gives Joshua the north, south, east, and west boundaries of the land. Yahweh promises to be with Joshua just like Yahweh was with Moses.

In the third scene: Yahweh continues to speak to Joshua. Yahweh tells Joshua to be strong and to have courage. Yahweh tells Joshua to obey all the instructions that Moses gave to Joshua. Joshua should meditate on, or study, these instructions all the time. Yahweh repeats the instruction that Joshua should be strong and courageous.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Joshua
- Moses is mentioned
- The Israelites are mentioned
- The Israelite ancestors—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—are mentioned

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

In scene one, Moses has died. Yahweh speaks to Joshua, son of Nun.

In scene two, Yahweh talks to Joshua. Yahweh tells Joshua that Moses, the servant of Yahweh, is dead. Then Yahweh tells Joshua that Joshua is now the leader of the Israelites. Joshua will lead the Israelites across the Jordan River and into the land that Yahweh promised to Moses. Yahweh tells Joshua to immediately get up and cross the Jordan River. Yahweh says this in a way that means that Joshua is to do this immediately and not delay.

Yahweh uses special language to describe the parts of the land that will belong to the Israelites. At this point, Yahweh is talking to Joshua and to the Israelites. The Israelites are not standing with Joshua and do not hear Yahweh, but Yahweh includes them in his instructions. Yahweh says that every place Joshua and the Israelites put the sole, or bottom, of their feet will belong to the Israelites. This means that as Joshua and the Israelites walk about in the land, they are walking on land that will belong to them.

Stop here and have someone bring a message to a person. The messenger starts with a message just for that one person. But then the messenger gives that person information for a large group of people but only speaks directly to that one person. The other people are not present even though the messenger speaks to them all. Notice how the language changes when the message includes more people. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Joshua the boundaries of the land he will give the Israelites. The southern border will be the Negev Desert. The northern border will be the Lebanon mountains. The western border will be the Mediterranean Sea. The eastern border will be the Euphrates River and the land of the Hittites, which is modern-day Syria.

Stop here and look again at the map if needed. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and review the place names. You may have used some of these place names in previous translations. You will want to use the same words as you used previously, and say them in the same way here. Pause this audio here.

Then Yahweh speaks directly again to Joshua and promises Joshua that Yahweh will stand with Joshua. In other words, Yahweh will never abandon Joshua. Yahweh will defeat anyone who stands against or opposes Joshua.

In scene three, Yahweh continues to speak to Joshua. Now Yahweh tells Joshua that Joshua is to have courage and to be strong to lead the people.

Stop here and talk about a person who is strong and courageous in battle. Then remember how you talked about a person who is a good leader in Setting the Stage. How did you talk about the person who is a good leader? What words do you use to show that the person is strong and has courage, even if they are not fighting in a battle? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh promised the Israelite ancestors that the Israelites would have this land. Yahweh does not tell us the name of the ancestors he gave the promise to, but we know from other passages that Yahweh promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that he would give their descendants this land.

It is important for Joshua to be strong and courageous, so Yahweh says it again. Then Yahweh uses special language to give Joshua instructions. He tells Joshua to follow the laws that Yahweh gave to Moses and to walk in a straight line and not turn "to the right or to the left." Yahweh tells Joshua that if he follows these laws, he will have everything he needs and he will succeed.

Stop here and remember the activity you did in Setting the Stage when you drew the line on the ground. When you talked about walking straight on the line, how did you talk about it? How will you talk about Yahweh telling Joshua to not "turn to the right or to the left"? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh reminds Joshua that Moses has given Joshua a book of instructions. This is the book of the Law that Yahweh gave Moses. Yahweh tells Joshua to keep Yahweh's law "on his lips," and to meditate on the law all day and all night. This means that Joshua should study and follow this law all the time. In fact, Joshua should talk about Yahweh's law, and Joshua should read Yahweh's law to the Israelites, whenever they gather together to worship Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Think about a time when you wanted someone to remember something and think about it all the time. How did you tell them to do that? How will you talk about Yahweh telling Joshua to meditate on his law day and night? Pause the audio here.

Yahweh tells Joshua twice that by obeying the law and meditating on, or thinking about, the law, Joshua will be successful and prosper in all that he does. Joshua will succeed, and in fact he will do even more than succeed, in his leadership. Joshua will prosper, or have more than he needs. Joshua will be very successful. Yahweh repeats the similar ideas of succeeding and prospering to make his point very strongly.

Stop and tell a story about someone who always succeeds in everything he does and, as a result, everyone knows about this person's success. This success is greater than normal, or more than most people would achieve. Listen to the way the storyteller describes this person. Pause the audio here.

As Yahweh talks to Joshua, it becomes clear that Joshua will be successful if he follows Yahweh's instructions exactly as Yahweh has given them. This is such an important point that Yahweh finishes this speech by telling Joshua again to be strong and courageous, and Yahweh repeats Yahweh's promise to be with Joshua wherever Joshua goes.

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 Joshua 1:1–9 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
- Joshua
- Moses is mentioned
- The Israelites are mentioned
- The Israelite ancestors—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—are mentioned

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

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

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

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

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

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

In scene one, Moses has died, and Yahweh speaks to Joshua, son of Nun.

Pause the drama.

Ask Joshua, "How are you feeling now that Moses has died?" You may hear:

- "I am very sad. I loved Moses. He always taught me what to do. He taught me so much. I do not know how I am going to manage without Moses here to tell me what to do and to remind me of how to do things. I knew that Moses was not going to cross the river with us, but it still makes me sad that he died without getting to see the Promised Land," or
- "I am afraid. I do not know if I can lead the people or if they will follow me like they did Moses."

In scene two, Yahweh speaks to Joshua. Yahweh tells Joshua that it is now time for Joshua to lead the people across the Jordan River and into the land that Yahweh has promised to give to them. Yahweh tells Joshua, "I promise you whatever I promised to Moses."

Pause the drama.

Ask Joshua, "How are you feeling right now?" You may hear:

- "I am so overwhelmed. I cannot imagine how I am going to get these people to listen to me like they listened to Moses," or
- "I love it that Yahweh is talking directly to me. I am so happy when I hear that the promises Yahweh gave to Moses are the same promises for me also. I know that I can depend on Yahweh to keep those promises."

Yahweh begins to include the Israelites as Yahweh promises Joshua that wherever they walk or put the soles of their feet, that land will belong to them. Yahweh tells Joshua the borders of the land that will belong to the Israelites. Then Yahweh promises Joshua that Yahweh will always stand with Joshua and that no one who stands against Joshua will succeed.

Pause the drama.

Ask Joshua, "How do you feel when you hear this promise that Yahweh will always stand with you?" You may hear:

- "That promise gives me such hope. I have seen how we have conquered our enemies these last 40 years. This is a new land for us. It is wonderful to know that Yahweh will be with us and certainly with me to help me succeed. I know I cannot do this alone."

Ask Joshua, "How do you think the Israelites will feel when they hear about the borders of your new country?" You may hear:

- "This is amazing. This is going to be a very large nation. I think they will be happy that they have so much territory. I hope that we can conquer all of it and that we will obey Yahweh. Yahweh always keeps his promises."

In scene three, Yahweh continues to talk with Joshua. Now Yahweh tells Joshua to be strong and courageous. Yahweh tells Joshua to obey all the instructions that Moses gave Joshua. Joshua is to keep this law without straying either to the right or to the left. In this way, Joshua will be successful. Joshua should meditate on the law, day and night. Joshua should study the law continuously and make sure that someone reads the law out loud to the Israelites when they come together to worship Yahweh. Joshua must obey everything written in the law. Yahweh says that by doing these things, Joshua will have great success in everything that Joshua does. Yahweh repeats the command that Joshua should be strong and courageous and not be afraid or discouraged. Yahweh will be with Joshua wherever Joshua goes.

Pause the drama. Ask Joshua, "How are you feeling now?" You may hear:

- "I still feel overwhelmed and not able to do what Yahweh wants me to do. But Yahweh has promised to be with me. I saw what Moses was able to accomplish when Yahweh was with Moses. I will do it with Yahweh's help," or
- "I understand that I need to keep those instructions in my mind at all times. I need to meditate and study and make sure I am remembering what the instructions say. I want to do this and I want to do it right. I am going to try to do as Yahweh says. I am going to try to be strong and courageous. I think I can do that because Yahweh is with me."

Ask Yahweh, "How are you feeling about Joshua as a leader?" You may hear:

- "Joshua has worked with Moses for 40 years. Joshua has always obeyed me. I know that Joshua believes in me and worships me. Some people will probably be against Joshua as the leader, but I have chosen Joshua because Joshua can do this."

Ask the ancestors, "How are you feeling?" You may hear:

- "We are so happy that our descendants will see the Promised Land!" or
- "I hope these people really follow Yahweh!"

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 1:1–9 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Yahweh calls Moses a **servant of God**. This means that Moses obeyed God and did the tasks that God assigned to Moses. Servant of God is a special title that Yahweh gave to only a very few people.

Stop here and review the word you have used for **servant** in previous books of the Bible. Use the same word that you have used in other translations and remember that servant is in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

Joshua son of Nun has worked as Moses' helper since the Israelites arrived at Mount Sinai. Nun is the name of Joshua's father. Use the same name that you have been using for Joshua son of Nun.

Yahweh spoke to Joshua. Yahweh is the personal name for God.

Stop here and review the word you have used for **Yahweh** in previous books of the Bible. Remember that Yahweh is in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

The sons of Israel means **Israelites**. The Israelites are the descendants of Jacob.

Stop here and review the word you have used for **Israelites** in previous books of the Bible. Use the same word that you have used in other translations and remember that Israelites is in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Joshua that the people should be ready to cross the **Jordan River**.

Stop here and review the words you have used for **Jordan River** in previous books of the Bible. Use the same words that you have used in other books of the Bible and remember that Jordan River is in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh says that their territory will go from the **wilderness** to Lebanon.

Stop here and review the word you have used for **wilderness** in previous books of the Bible. Use the same word that you have used in other translations and remember that wilderness is in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh says that the people will **inherit** and possess the land that he has sworn to give them.

Stop here and review the way you have described in previous books of the Bible how people **inherit** and possess land from Yahweh like a child inherits wealth from his parents. Use the same words that you have used in other translations. You may refer to heir in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

When people swear, or give a strong promise, they are giving an **oath**. Yahweh has promised the Israelites that he will give them this land. When someone gives an oath, they are saying that God can punish them if they break their oath. When Yahweh makes an oath, he is basically saying that he can punish himself if he does not keep his oath.

Stop here and review the way you have described swearing or making an **oath** in previous books of the Bible. You may refer to oath in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Joshua to obey the whole **Law** or the book of instructions for living that Moses gave Joshua. The Law refers to all the instructions that Yahweh gave Moses on Mount Sinai.

Stop here and discuss as a group what you will say for **Law**. Review the words you have used for law in previous books of the Bible. Use the same words that you have used in other translations and remember that law is in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

People wrote down the Law on a **scroll**, or a long strip of papyrus or parchment. Papyrus is a thin sheet that people make from the fibers of a certain plant, and parchment is made from the skin of an animal. On both ends of the scroll, people attached a narrow wooden handle, like a round stick. When people were reading from a scroll, they would unroll one side of the scroll, and roll up the other end around the stick.

Stop here and look at a picture of a **scroll** as a group as needed. Pause this audio here.

Discuss as a group how you will talk about the **Book of the Law**. If you have talked about scrolls or "books" in previous books of the Bible, use the same words here. Pause this audio here.

In his final promise, Yahweh says that **Yahweh, your God**, will be with you. Yahweh is reminding the Israelites that he is the special God for the Israelites. God is the general name for God.

Stop here and discuss as a group what you will say for **Yahweh your God**. Use the same title that you have used in previous books of the Bible and remember that God 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.

Joshua 1:1–9

Audio Content

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Joshua 1:10–18

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 1:10–18 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 1:10–18 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

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

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 1:10–18 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

After Yahweh had finished talking to Joshua in the previous passage, Joshua went to the officials, or tribal leaders, who were each responsible for telling Joshua's orders to their own tribes. The Israelites were 12 tribes—each tribe had descended from one of the 12 sons of Jacob. The tribe of Levi descended from Jacob's son Levi, but they became the priestly tribe responsible for leading worship. Therefore, the tribe of Levi was

not counted among the 12 tribes. Joseph, one of Jacob's twelve sons, was also not counted as one of the tribes of Israel. Instead, Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, were each counted as a tribe, so that there were still 12 tribes of Israel. Each of the 12 tribes had a share in the inheritance. We do not know how the people chose leaders, and we do not know what their responsibilities were. Joshua knew who these leaders were and gave each leader the task of getting their tribe ready to cross the Jordan River.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you choose your leaders? What are their responsibilities? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh told Joshua to get ready to cross the Jordan. Now Joshua tells the tribal leaders, or officers, that they will cross the Jordan River three days from now. This really means that they will cross after the sun has set twice, or the day after tomorrow.

Joshua tells the tribal leaders to prepare their provisions, or the food they will need to take with them. This food would not include the manna they had eaten in the wilderness because they could not keep manna for more than one day. Joshua gives the people time to buy and prepare the food they will need for this trip. Joshua says that the people are going to take possession of the land that Yahweh, their God, is giving to them. The people had ownership of the land because Yahweh had promised it to them. Now they are going to move onto the land and take ownership of it.

After Joshua makes this announcement to all the leaders, he calls the leaders of three tribes to come forward. These are the leaders of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half of the tribe of Manasseh. In an earlier story, the leaders of the three tribes had asked Moses for the land on the east side of the Jordan River to be their inheritance. Moses had agreed. The tribe of Manasseh had divided into two halves. One half takes possession of the land on the east side of the Jordan River, and the other half takes possession of the land on the west side of the Jordan River. We hear that these three tribes take possession of the land "beyond the Jordan," which means that they will take the land on the east side of the Jordan River. This story does not tell us the boundaries of those lands.

Stop here and look at a map that shows where the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half of Manasseh plan to live. All of the Israelites are currently camped next to the Jordan River on the east side, because they have not yet entered the Promised Land. Pause the audio here.

Joshua reminds the three tribal leaders that Yahweh spoke through Moses and has promised to give the Israelites a place of rest. Rest means much more than stopping activity or lying down in the afternoon. At the creation of the world, Yahweh had set aside the seventh day to be a holy day of rest or free from all work. Here the place of rest was the place where these people could live in peace without fear of their enemies. Their time of wandering was over. They were going to live in a good land with all they needed to live. Although they need to work their land and take care of their animals, the journey is over. They are now able to rest in security knowing that they do not have to move anymore.

When the three tribes had asked Moses for the land on the east side of the Jordan River, they had also made a bargain with Moses. Now Joshua reminds the leaders of the three tribes of their bargain, or what they had promised Moses that they would do. The women and children of these tribes can move into the towns and villages on the east side of the Jordan River and live there. The livestock or domestic animals will remain with the women. The old men and boys will remain with the women. But all of the men of these three tribes who are over the age of 20, and able to fight, must go ahead of the rest of the tribes across the Jordan and help conquer that land. The Israelites do not have an army. Rather, any man who is 20 years old and able to fight will be part of the fighting force. Joshua tells the tribal leaders that the fighting men of these three tribes must remain with the other tribes on the west side of the Jordan River until Yahweh gives all of the tribes rest. Once every tribe has its land on the west side of the Jordan River, then the fighting men of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh can return to their families and their land. All of the tribes will be at rest when they are living in the land in peace and without fear of their enemies.

The leaders of the three tribes promise Joshua that they will do everything that they had promised to Moses. They will go ahead of the others across the Jordan River. These leaders promise to obey Joshua just like they had obeyed Moses. Then the leaders pray a blessing over Joshua in the form of a prayer. They say, "May Yahweh, your God, be with you like Yahweh was with Moses." These leaders say that anyone who disobeys or rebels against Joshua or does not want to follow the orders of Joshua, should be put to death. Then the tribal leaders

say something interesting—they say the same thing that Yahweh has already said to Joshua! The tribal leaders tell Joshua to be strong and courageous! In this way, the tribal leaders confirm again that Joshua is truly the new leader of the Israelites.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 1:10–18 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 two scenes.

In the first scene: Joshua talks to the tribal leaders of the 12 tribes of Israel. Joshua tells the leaders to tell their tribes to get ready. In three days, they are going to cross the Jordan River and take possession of the land that Yahweh has promised to give to the people of Israel.

In the second scene: Joshua talks to the tribal leaders of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh. These tribes are going to make their homes in the lands on the eastern side of the Jordan. Joshua reminds the leaders of the three tribes that their fighting men must go with the other tribes and help conquer the land with them. When they have conquered the land, the men of the three tribes can return to the eastern side of the Jordan River and live with their families.

The characters in this passage are:

- Joshua
- Officers of the tribes
- Officers of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh
- Women, children, and old men of the three tribes
- Moses is mentioned
- And Yahweh is mentioned

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

Before acting out the story, it might help to visualize the scene. Look at the map of the area again. Place a string or rope on the floor or ground to represent the Jordan River. Place something to represent the Mediterranean Sea. The land between the river and the sea is the land of Israel that the Israelites must conquer. This area is west of the Jordan River. The Israelites have already conquered the land on the east side of the Jordan River, and the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh will live there. The land on the east side is the land "beyond the Jordan." Show the 12 tribes camped beside the Jordan on the east side, before they move into the land. Move the women and children and the old men of the three tribes out to live in the land on the east side of the Jordan River. Now have the men from these three tribes come to lead the rest of the tribes as they cross the Jordan River. You are not crossing the river yet. You are simply understanding the positions of everyone.

In scene one, Joshua tells all the leaders of the 12 tribes to go through the camp and tell everyone to get ready to cross the Jordan River. Everyone will go, which means that the women and children and all their possessions will go across the river. We will discover later in this story that the women, old men, and children from the three tribes that have land on the east side of the Jordan River will remain. The Israelites are to prepare their food to take with them. Joshua tells them that the people will cross the Jordan River in three days, which means the day after tomorrow. They are going to take possession of the land that Yahweh has given them.

Stop here and talk about how you announce an event that will take place the day after tomorrow. Tell a story in which a leader makes such an announcement. Listen to the way the leader describes when the people will depart. Now, decide the best way to translate when the people will cross the river. Pause the audio here.

In scene two, Joshua calls the leaders of the tribes of Reuben and Gad and half of the tribe of Manasseh. These tribes plan to take the land on the east side of the Jordan as their inheritance. We hear that these tribes take possession of the land "beyond the Jordan," which means the land on the east side of the Jordan River. Joshua is speaking as if he is standing in the Promised Land on the west side of the Jordan River and talking about the land across the river. When the Israelites take the land on the west side, they will consider the land of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh as "beyond the Jordan," or on the other side. However, Joshua is talking to these leaders while they are still on the east side of the Jordan River. Joshua asks the leaders of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh to "remember" what Moses had already told them. When Joshua says "Remember," he is trying to get the people's attention.

Stop here and discuss the following question: How does your leader get your attention when he wants to tell you something important? Pause the audio here.

Joshua reminds these leaders that the men of fighting age from their tribes must go with the other tribes across the river to help with conquering the land. This was the bargain that these tribes had made with Moses. Joshua also tells the leaders that their tribes' women and children may remain on the east side of the river. Yahweh has given these tribes the east side of the river as their place of rest, or the place where they will live in safety and security. Before Moses died, the Israelites conquered this part of the land. The fighting men, or men over the age of 20 who are able to fight, must take their weapons. They must lead the other tribes as they cross the river. Joshua tells these leaders that they must remain with the other tribes until everyone has found their place of rest. Then the fighting men can return to the east side of the Jordan River, in the direction of the rising sun, and live with their families. People in Joshua's time sometimes talked about directions in terms of the sun. Because the sun rises in the east, they sometimes talk about the east as the direction of the sun rising.

After Joshua tells the leaders of these three tribes what the fighting age men must do, they answer Joshua. The men promise to obey Joshua just like they obeyed Moses. The men promise to go anywhere Joshua commands them to go. Then the men speak a prayer of blessing over Joshua. They say, "May Yahweh, your God, be with you just like he was with Moses." They say that anyone who refuses to obey Joshua should be put to death. They repeat what Yahweh has already told Joshua: "Be strong and courageous!"

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 Joshua 1:10–18 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has two scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Joshua
- Officers of the tribes
- Officers of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh
- Women, children, and old men of the three tribes
- Moses is mentioned
- And Yahweh is mentioned

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

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

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

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

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

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

In scene one, Joshua tells all the leaders of the 12 tribes to go through the camp and tell everyone to get ready to cross the Jordan River. They are to prepare their food to take with them. Joshua tells them that the people will cross the Jordan River the day after tomorrow. They are going to take possession of the land that Yahweh has given them.

Pause the drama.

Ask the leaders, "How do you feel when you hear that you are going to cross the Jordan River the day after tomorrow?" You may hear:

- "I am excited. This means that we are nearly home at last. This journey has been so long. It is going to be so great to set up a place to live permanently and pass it on to our children," or
- "I am scared. I do not know what the people who already live there are like. I know they will not be happy with us coming to take the land. Are we going to have to fight them? I know that Yahweh has promised this land to us, but can I trust Yahweh to keep this promise?"

Ask Joshua, "What are you feeling as you give this message to the leaders?" You may hear:

- "I am excited that we are going to go into the land. I am also nervous. Are the people going to follow my leadership? Can I lead them when they rebel like Moses did? Will I know what to do? I hope I can hear Yahweh clearly as we go forward."

In scene two, Joshua calls the leaders of the tribes of Reuben and Gad and half of the tribe of Manasseh. These tribes plan to take the east side of the Jordan River as their inheritance. Joshua reminds the leaders that the men of fighting age must go with the other tribes across the river to help with conquering the land. Joshua tells the leaders that their women and children may remain on the east side of the river. Yahweh has given these tribes the east side of the river as their place of rest, or the place where they will live in safety and security. The fighting men must take their weapons and lead the other tribes as they cross the river. Joshua tells these leaders that they must remain with the other tribes until everyone has found their place of rest. Then the fighting men can return to the east side of the Jordan River and live with their families.

Pause the drama.

Ask these leaders, "How do you feel when you hear that you are to go and fight and leave your families on this side of the river?" You may hear:

- "I promised Moses I would do this, and I am ready to keep my promise. I think our families will be okay," or
- "I am a bit nervous to leave my wife and children here, but we have already conquered the villages and towns where the people will live, so I think they will be okay. Yahweh has promised that this will be a safe and secure place for us. I know we must go and fight also. We promised."

Ask the wives, "How do you feel when you hear that you are to remain here when your husband goes across the river?" You may hear:

- "At first I was afraid, but then I remembered that Yahweh has protected us for the last 40 years as we have traveled. My husband and the others have already taken control of the land and emptied the towns and villages. This place is ours now. I think we will be okay. Yahweh will be with us."

After Joshua told the leaders what the fighting age men must do, they answered, "We will obey you just like we obeyed Moses." The men promised to lead as Joshua commanded them. The men promised to go anywhere Joshua commanded them to go. Then the men prayed a blessing over Joshua. They said, "May Yahweh, your God, be with you just like he was with Moses." Then they said that anyone who refused to obey Joshua should be put to death. They finished by telling Joshua to be strong and courageous.

Pause the drama.

Ask Joshua, "How do you feel when you hear this blessing from these leaders?" You may hear:

- "It makes me feel humble. I do need Yahweh to be with me just like Yahweh was with Moses. I am not Moses, but I will try to lead them well just like Moses did. Wow! They have reminded me to be strong and courageous, just like Yahweh did!"

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 1:10–18 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Joshua commanded the **officials**, or tribal leaders, of the people. We do not know how many tribal leaders there were, how these people became leaders, or their exact responsibilities. You want to select a general word for leader that does not imply a specific kind of job such as mayor or general.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word you will use for **officials** or tribal leaders. If you have translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word here. Pause this audio here.

The **Jordan River** is a place name and is the eastern boundary of the Promised Land. The Jordan River is still the name of this river today. You should use the same name you used in previous passages. Jordan River is in the Master Glossary.

Joshua says that **Yahweh**, your **God**, is giving you this land. Yahweh is the personal name for God. Sometimes, both the personal name Yahweh and the general name God are used in the same passage. Yahweh and God are both discussed in the Master Glossary. Use the same names you have been using.

Moses is the **servant** of Yahweh. A servant is a person who works for another person. Use the same title that you used in the previous passage and remember that servant is in the Master Glossary. This title occurs twice in this passage.

Moses called the leaders of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh. You used these names in the book of Genesis.

Stop here and review the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. Use the same names in this passage as you have used in previous books of the Bible. Pause this audio here.

Moses said that Yahweh is going to give the people **rest**. Rest can mean a time of no activity, but in this passage it means much more than that. Rest can mean peace and refreshment. Rest can also mean safety and freedom from fear. The Israelites were slaves in Egypt, and then traveled for 40 years through the wilderness. This means they have experienced many years of hardship. Now, they will be able to live in their new homes without fear. They will work their land and raise their children in peace and security. Choose your word for rest so that your readers will understand that rest is much more than lack of activity or sleeping in the afternoon.

Stop here and discuss what word you will use for **rest**. Pause the audio here.

"Beyond the Jordan River" refers to the east side of the river. Joshua uses this description even though the people are still on the east side of the river. Whenever these words are used, the author is speaking from the idea that Israel is the land west of the river, and beyond the Jordan means east of the river. To avoid confusion, some Bible translations simply say the east side of the river.

The Israelites did not have a permanent army. The Israelites expected any man who was over the age of 20 and capable of fighting to serve in the army. When Joshua talks about the strong warriors, Joshua is talking about all men over the age of 20 who are able to fight. Joshua said that the men from these tribes were to lead the others. Joshua means that they will march in military formation with their weapons.

The leaders tell Joshua to be **strong** and **courageous**. Strong does not mean physical strength. The word strong refers to Joshua's attitude. Joshua must be confident when he leads. Use the same words for strong and courageous you used in the previous passage.

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.

Joshua 1:10–18

Audio Content

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Joshua 2:1–14

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 2:1–14 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 2:1–14 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 Joshua 2:1–14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

As this passage begins, the Israelites are camped at a place called Shittim, near the Jordan River. The name Shittim means Acacia trees. Acacia trees grow in the wilderness area where the Israelites camped.

Jericho was a large city of about 2,000 people on the west side of the Jordan River, near the Dead Sea. Jericho would be the first place where the Israelites would start to fight the people to conquer the land. In those days, most big cities like Jericho had a wall around them to protect the people in it.

Joshua sent two men to learn about the land and people around the city of Jericho. Some translations describe these two men as spies, or people who go into an area to secretly discover information about it. Joshua wants the two men to find out about the water supply and food supply for Jericho, how many fighting men are in Jericho, and how prepared Jericho is for defense against attack.

Stop here and look at a map that shows where Jericho, the Jordan River, the Dead Sea, and the camp of the Israelites are located. Pause the audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of the ancient wall of Jericho that shows a defensive tower. Notice how the wall and tower were built of stone. Pause the audio here.

The two men cross the Jordan River and go into the town of Jericho during the daytime when the city gate in the wall was open. The two men go into a house where a woman named Rahab lives. Rahab is a prostitute, a woman who sold sex for money. Sometimes men paid a prostitute to have sexual relations as an act of worship of a local god or idol. The two men go to Rahab's house and stay at her house that night. However, since many men went to her house, it is unlikely that others in the town would notice anything unusual about these two men. The men went to Rahab's house to sleep that night, but they did not have sex with Rahab.

At this time, each city acted almost like its own country in that each city usually had its own king and its own army for the city and surrounding smaller villages. Some men told the king of Jericho that some Israelites had come to Jericho. This means that the king and people of Jericho knew that the Israelites were camped by the Jordan River and probably planned to invade the land. The king sent men with a message to Rahab's house to tell Rahab to bring out the Israelites because they were spying on the area.

Rahab had already hidden the two Israelite spies. Rahab already knew what the men were doing and that they were in danger because of what they were doing. Rahab lied to the king's messengers. Rahab said that she did not know where the men had come from. Rahab also told the messengers that the men had already left her house and the city before, or about the time of sunset. This was about the time when they shut the gates to the city. A walled city would have a large gate that opened during the day so that people could enter and leave the city. At night, the people closed the gate to protect the city from any enemy entering. Rahab told the messengers to hurry and catch the two men before they had gone very far.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story about a time when someone lied to protect someone else. When other people found out that the person had lied, how did they feel about that person? Pause this audio here.

We do not know if the men searched Rahab's house before they left the city to chase the Israelite spies. The king's men thought that the two Israelites would return to their camp across the Jordan, so the king's men went towards the Jordan to the place where the water was shallow enough to allow people to cross the river by walking across. As soon as the king's men left the city, the people shut the city gate.

After the king's messengers left her house, Rahab went up to the roof. Rahab's house was built into the wall that surrounded the city. This means that one wall of Rahab's house would be part of the wall that surrounded the city of Jericho. A house in that area would have an open courtyard with rooms arranged around it. People made the outside walls of larger stones piled up with smaller stones in the cracks between the big stones. People covered the outside of the wall with mud and the inside with plaster. The roof would be flat. People made the roof with wooden beams that they laid across the walls and covered with twigs and straw. They would then cover the top with mud. People used the roof of the house for many different activities, including drying plants in the sun. Rahab had taken the two Israelites to her roof and hidden them under some stalks of flax. Flax is a plant that people used to make into cloth. The flax was drying, which means that it was still wet and would have had a very bad odor. That would make it unpleasant for the two men while they were hiding under the flax.

Stop here and look at a picture of stalks of flax drying on a flat roof. Pause the audio here.

Stop here and look at a picture of a house that people have built into a wall. Pause the audio here.

Rahab told the two men, "I know that Yahweh has given you this land." Rahab then says that the people in Jericho are trembling with fear because they know the Israelites want to conquer them. Their legs are trembling in fear so that they walk like someone who is lame. Rahab knows all of the things that Yahweh has done for the Israelites. The people in Jericho must have heard about how Yahweh rescued the Israelites from slavery in Egypt and even dried up the Red Sea for them! The people have also heard about how the Israelites conquered the Amorite kings Sihon and Og east of the Jordan River. Rahab knows that the Israelite God, Yahweh, is the highest and most powerful of all the gods and helps the Israelites. She knows that Yahweh rules in heaven and on earth. At this time, people's idols or local gods had a territory. Rahab is saying that Yahweh has authority everywhere. When Rahab says this, it does not mean that Rahab has now decided to give up her gods and worship only Yahweh. It does mean that Rahab has recognized that Yahweh is the most powerful of all gods.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story about a time when your people were afraid of someone else because of the stories you heard about them. Pause this audio here.

Rahab then asks the two men to strongly promise, or swear, that the Israelites will save Rahab, her mother and her father, her brothers and her sisters, and their families when they come to conquer Jericho. Rahab wants the Israelite spies to swear in the name of Yahweh that they will do as Rahab asks. Rahab says that because Rahab has been kind to the Israelite men, Rahab wants the Israelite men to be kind to her. Then Rahab asks for a guarantee, or some sign, that shows that the Israelite men will keep their promise, or their oath.

The two men offered their own lives as the sign, or guarantee, that they would keep their promise, or oath. However, Rahab had to promise not to betray the two men to the king. Then two men promised that if Rahab kept her promise, they would make sure that Rahab and her family would be safe when Yahweh gave the Israelites the land.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 2:1–14 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 five scenes.

In the first scene: Joshua sends two spies to Jericho.

In the second scene: The two men go to Rahab's house, and Rahab hides them on her roof.

In the third scene: Someone tells the king of Jericho that the two Israelite spies are in the city.

In the fourth scene: The king sends men to Rahab's house to find the men. Rahab tells the men that the Israelite spies have left the city. The men go towards the Jordan River to search for the two spies. The people shut the gate of the city after the king's men leave.

In the fifth scene: Rahab goes to the roof of her house to talk with the two men. Rahab tells the men about how afraid all the people of Jericho are. Rahab tells the two men of the things that the people have heard about what Yahweh has done for the Israelites. Rahab asks that the two men make a solemn promise that Rahab's family will be safe when the battle comes to Jericho. The two men make a promise based on the condition that Rahab keep them safe.

The characters in this passage are:

- Joshua
- The two men Joshua sent to spy on Jericho
- Rahab
- The people who tell the king about the men
- The king of Jericho
- The king's men
- Yahweh
- The people of Jericho
- Rahab's family
- And Sihon and Og, the Amorite kings, are mentioned

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

Before acting out the story, stop here and review the previous stories you have translated from the Book of Exodus and the Book of Numbers about Yahweh drying up the Red Sea and about the Israelites conquering the

Amorite kings Sihon and Og. Rahab mentions events that you have probably already translated in previous books of the Bible. Pause the audio here.

The Israelites were camped at a place called Shittim, which means Acacia trees.

In scene one, Joshua decides to send two men to go in secret and spy out the land around Jericho. Joshua wants to know how strong the Jericho defenses are.

Stop here and review the map. Trace the route where the men went. Pause the audio here.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you talk about people who go in secret to a place to learn about the place so that you can conquer it. Pause this audio here.

In scene two, the two men leave the camp, cross the Jordan River, and go into Jericho to the house of Rahab. The two men plan to remain at Rahab's house all night, but they do not have sexual relations with her. Rahab is a harlot, or prostitute, which means that she sells sex for money. It would be normal for men to go to her house.

Pause here and discuss what you will say about Rahab. Some translations prefer to describe her as a woman rather than use the word prostitute, or harlot. In your culture, how can you talk about a woman like this appropriately? Pause the audio here.

In scene three, someone went to the king of Jericho and told the king that two Israelites had come to the city. Somehow, Rahab knew that the men were in danger, so she took the two Israelite spies up to her roof and hid them there. We do not know how Rahab knew they were in danger or exactly when she hid them.

In scene four, the king sends some men to Rahab. The men tell Rahab to bring out the two men who are staying at her house. Rahab lies and tells the men that the men did come but have gone. Rahab says that she did not know that the men were Israelites. Rahab says that she does not know where the men have gone. Rahab says that they left at dusk before they shut the gates of the city. The men went out of the city and headed towards the Jordan River looking for the two Israelites. The people shut the gates to Jericho after the men left. This is where we hear that Rahab had already, or earlier in the evening, hidden the two Israelites on the roof of her house. They had been hiding under some flax that was drying on the roof.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How do you talk about an action that happened before the current actions are happening? Pause this audio here.

In scene five, sometime later, or before the two men go to sleep for the night, Rahab goes up to her roof and begins to talk with the two Israelites. Rahab says, "I know that Yahweh has given you this land." Rahab means that Yahweh has given the land to the Israelites, not just to the two men. Rahab tells the men what the people in Jericho have heard about how Yahweh helped the Israelites when they left Egypt. Rahab tells the two men that the people of Jericho are very frightened. Rahab uses special language to describe their fear. Rahab compares being afraid to something heavy falling on a person. She says that great fear has fallen on top of the people.

Then Rahab says that the people have melted away, and that their hearts have melted in fear. They are so afraid that it is even difficult for them to walk.

Stop here and get something frozen, if possible, such as an ice cube or ice cream. If you do not have ice, find a solid thing that turns to liquid when it gets too hot. Put it on a plate and watch it melt or turn into liquid. Rahab says that this is what is happening to the hearts of the people in Jericho. Now discuss how you will describe being so afraid. Tell a story about something that your people were very afraid of that was about to happen. What special language did the storyteller use to describe being afraid? Pause the audio here.

Then Rahab admits something very important. She says, "Yahweh is the supreme God of the heavens and the earth." Because the other gods that the people in Jericho worshiped only had control over certain areas, Rahab was saying that she knew that Yahweh had power over everything, everywhere.

Then Rahab asks the two men to save Rahab's family. Rahab wants the two men to make a solemn oath, or binding promise, that they will be kind to Rahab's family. Rahab lists out her parents, and all her brothers and sisters, and their families when she talks about who the men will save.

Stop here and discuss your family. How would you describe a family that includes all the people that Rahab mentions? Rahab is talking about a large group of people. Pause the audio here.

Rahab asks for a sign, or a guarantee, that the men will keep their promise. The two men make a promise to save Rahab's family. The two men say, "Our lives for your lives!" In other words, the men offer their own lives as the guarantee that they will keep their promise. However, they tell Rahab that they will only keep their promise if she keeps her part of the promise. Rahab must not tell anyone about the two men.

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 Joshua 2:1–14 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:

- Joshua
- The two men Joshua sent to spy on Jericho
- Rahab
- The people who tell the king about the men
- The king of Jericho
- The king's men
- Yahweh
- The people of Jericho
- Rahab's family
- And Sihon and Og, the Amorite kings, are mentioned

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

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

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

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

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

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

In scene one, Joshua sends two spies to learn as much as they can about the land around Jericho.

Pause the drama.

Ask the two men, "How are you feeling about this task? You have never been to this place before." You may hear:

- "I am afraid, but I know that we need to know what is there before we go. We need to learn about their defenses, how big their army is, and where they get their water. I think Yahweh will be with us and take care of us."

Ask Joshua, "How are you feeling?" You may hear:

- "We really need to know how strong the people of Jericho are," or
- "I am afraid to try to conquer the land—Jericho is a big city with a strong wall!"

In scene two, the two men arrive in Jericho and go to the house of a woman named Rahab. Rahab is a prostitute. Rahab hides the men.

Pause the drama.

Ask Rahab, "How do you feel about having these two strangers at your house?" You may hear:

- "I know they are Israelites coming from that huge camp across the Jordan. I know the Israelites are going to attack us. I am hoping that if I help these men, they will be kind to me and my family when they come back. Maybe, I can save us. Right now they seem like decent men. They have treated me with kindness so far."

In scene three, the king hears about the two spies.

Pause the drama.

Ask the king, "How are you feeling about these Israelites?" You may hear:

- "I am very frightened. We have a good army, but the Israelite army that is waiting on the east side of the Jordan is very big. There is no way we can stand against them. I have heard what they did to Sihon and Og. I am very afraid they will do the same to me."

In scene four, the king sends men to Rahab's house to demand that Rahab send the men out. Rahab tells the soldiers that the men were there but have already left her house. Rahab says that the men left at sundown just before the city gates were locked. Rahab is lying. Rahab has hidden the men on her roof. The soldiers go out of the city towards the Jordan River to search for the two men. The people shut the city gates and lock them.

Pause the drama.

Ask people in the city, "Why are you locking the city gates? Are you afraid?" You may hear:

- "I am very afraid. I think the Israelites are going to come and destroy our city. Or they may trap us inside the city for a long time, and I do not think we have enough food to survive it. I have heard about how they left Egypt. I have heard of what they did to those Amorite cities and to their kings. I think we are all going to be killed. I am terrified."

Ask Rahab, "How are you feeling?" You may hear:

- "I am lying for the men, because I believe that the God they serve is stronger than our gods. I am afraid."

In scene five, Rahab waits until after the soldiers have gone and people have shut the gates to the city. Then Rahab goes up to her roof and talks with the two men. Rahab tells the men all that she has heard about how Yahweh has helped the Israelites when they left Egypt and during their trip. Then Rahab says that she believes that Yahweh is the supreme God of the heavens and the earth. Rahab asks the two men to make a solemn promise to be kind to Rahab and her whole family when they come back to conquer the city of Jericho. Rahab asks for a guarantee, or a sign, that the men will keep their promise. The two men offer their own lives as a guarantee that they will be kind to Rahab and her family. However, they tell Rahab that this kindness depends on Rahab not telling anyone about them.

Pause the drama.

Ask Rahab, "What are you feeling right now as you ask these men to be kind to you and your family?" You may hear:

- "I am terrified that we will all die. But I think that this is the only way for us to live," or
- "If I help these men, they have promised to help me and my family. I believe they are honorable men and will keep their word," or
- "Their God, Yahweh, is more powerful than any of our gods. I know that their God will help them win the battle. Maybe I should follow their God too?" or
- "Either we all die like the Amorites did, or I find a way to help my family. I am scared, but I am going to take this chance."

Ask the two men, "How do you feel knowing that you are trusting this woman for your safety?" You may hear:

- "We do not know her. We have to hope she will keep her promise," or
- "I am surprised that she has heard so much about Yahweh. I wonder if she is going to become one of us and truly believe in Yahweh."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 2:1–14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

The Israelites are camped at a place called **Shittim**. Shittim means "acacia trees." You may either use the name "Shittim," or whatever words in your language mean "acacia trees." The Israelites had used acacia wood to make their ark of the covenant, so you may use the term for acacia wood that you used there.

Stop here and discuss as a group what you will call the place called **Shittim**. Pause this audio here.

Joshua chooses two men and sends them to check out the land around Jericho. Some translations say that these men are **spies**. The men go in secret. Some translations simply say that these are men who secretly go to Jericho.

Stop here and discuss as a group what you will call the men whom Joshua sent to Jericho to see how strong they were. Pause this audio here.

The two men come to the house of a **prostitute** named Rahab. Use the word for prostitute that you have already decided to use.

The **king** of Jericho found out that the **Israelite** men were in Jericho. A king is someone who rules over a city or territory, like a region or a country.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word you will use for king. For more information on king and Israelites, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word for **king** and for **Israelites** that you have used in previous translations. Pause this audio here.

Rahab had hidden the men on the roof of her house under some bunches of **flax** that Rahab had drying on the roof. People use the fibers from the flax plant to make linen cloth.

Stop here and look again at the photo of **flax** stalks, if needed. Discuss what word you will use for flax. Pause this audio here.

Rahab went up to the roof and told the men, "I know that **Yahweh**, your **God**, is giving you this land." Yahweh is the personal name for God. Use the same words for Yahweh and God you have been using. Yahweh and God are discussed in the Master Glossary.

Rahab says that Yahweh is the supreme God of the heavens above and earth below. Rahab probably does not yet understand heaven as being a place where Yahweh lives and rules. Heavens would refer to the sky, or

anything above the earth. Rahab is saying that Yahweh is the most powerful of all Gods, because Yahweh is stronger than any god in the sky, or any god on earth.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word you will use for **heavens**. Heaven is discussed in the Master Glossary. Use the same word for heavens that you have used in other translations. Pause this audio here.

Rahab asks the two men to **swear** that they will save her and her family. When someone swears, they swear a solemn **oath**, or promise. A solemn oath is binding and cannot be broken.

Stop here and discuss as a group what words you will use for **swearing**, or swearing an **oath**. If you use the word oath, use the same word for oath that you have used in previous translations. Oath is discussed in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

Rahab asks for a sign, or a guarantee, that the men will keep their promise. Rahab is asking that the men give her something that she can use to make sure that they keep their promise. Rahab is not asking for a miracle, or something extraordinary. The men reply by offering their lives as a guarantee. A guarantee is like a deposit, or when you buy something and give some money or leave something of value behind to show that you will return and pay the rest later.

Stop and discuss the word **sign**. How will you talk about this so that people understand that Rahab wants something from the men that guarantees that they will remember to help Rahab's family? The word sign has many meanings. Here it does not mean miracle.

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.

Joshua 2:1–14

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (13989433 KB)

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Joshua 2:15-24

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 2:15-24 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 2:15-24 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

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

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 2:15-24 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This passage continues with the story of the two spies Joshua sent to the city of Jericho to learn about the defenses of Jericho. The men made a solemn promise to help Rahab's family. Rahab makes plans to let the men escape Jericho by letting them down with a rope through her window in her house in the wall of the city.

At this point the two spies explain to Rahab what Rahab must do so that they will keep their solemn promise, or oath, to save Rahab and all her family when they come back to conquer Jericho. Rahab must do three things. The first thing Rahab must do is leave the scarlet rope tied in the window when the Israelite army comes to invade. This is when we learn that the rope that Rahab used to let the men out of the city was a bright red color. The men do not say that Rahab must keep the rope tied in the window all the time. Rahab makes the decision herself to leave the rope tied in the window from the time the men leave.

The second thing Rahab must do is have all her family in her house when the Israelites come to attack Jericho. The men tell Rahab that they will only save the family members who are in her house at the time. If the Israelites kill any family members outside Rahab's house, it is the family member's fault. But if the Israelites kill any family members inside Rahab's house, then the blood is on the head of the two spies. This means that the death would be the fault of the two spies.

The third thing Rahab must do is that Rahab must not tell anyone in Jericho about the two men. Rahab must keep it a secret that the two men came and stayed at her house.

Rahab agrees to the three conditions. Rahab ties the red rope in her window. After the men make their promise, Rahab uses the rope to help the men leave her house through the window. Rahab's house is in the wall that surrounds Jericho. Jericho has two walls. The inner wall is separated from the outer wall by about 3.5 to 4.5 meters. People built their houses in that space between the two walls. This helped the walls be stronger and also gave the people strong walls for their homes. Rahab built her house between the walls, and she had a window in the outer wall.

Stop and look at a picture of a house that people built into a city wall. Pause the audio here.

Before Rahab lets the spies out of the window, she tells the two spies to go into the hill country near Jericho and stay there for three days. Jericho is located in the Jordan Valley near the Jordan River. However, very near Jericho, the land changes and rises into low mountains, or hills. These hills become mountains and get higher as you move farther west from the Jordan River. The mountains are steep and rugged. The mountains have caves. This is a dry wilderness area and does not have many trees. It would be easy to hide among the caves in this hilly area. Rahab tells the two Israelite spies to stay in the hills until the men from Jericho have stopped searching for them. During this time the king's men would be searching the area around Jericho trying to find the two spies. Rahab thinks that the king's men will give up their search after three days. Then the spies can return to their camp on the east side of the Jordan River.

Stop here and look at a picture of the land around Jericho. Pause the audio here.

The two spies do as Rahab suggests and go into the hills to hide for three days. During that time, the king's men from Jericho search for the two men. Finally, the men stop searching and return to Jericho.

The two Israelite spies come out of the hill country and go back across the Jordan River. They report everything that has happened to Joshua. They say to Joshua, "Yahweh has given us the whole land." They tell Joshua that the people in Jericho were terrified, or very afraid, of the God of the Israelites. In fact, the spies use the same wording that Rahab had used before—they tell Joshua that the people are melting in fear because they are afraid of the Israelites. The people of Jericho no longer want to resist or fight the Israelites.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 2:15–24 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

This passage has four scenes.

In the first scene: Rahab lets the two Israelite men out the window of her house, which is built in the wall that surrounds Jericho. Rahab tells the men to go into the hill country near Jericho and hide there until the soldiers stop looking for them.

In the second scene: The Israelites tell Rahab three things that she must do so that they will keep their solemn promise to protect her and her family. This scene has actually happened before the first scene.

In the third scene: The two men hide in the hill country for three days.

In the fourth scene: The two spies go back across the Jordan River to the place where the Israelites camped and give Joshua a report of all that happened. The men describe the fear of the people in Jericho.

The characters in this passage are:

- Joshua
- Rahab
- Rahab's family
- The two Israelite spies
- The people of Jericho
- The men of Jericho who chase after the two spies
- The Israelites
- And Yahweh

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

Stop here and discuss the following: Rahab's house was built into the wall of Jericho. This means that the house was between two walls that surrounded the city. These walls formed the two sides of Rahab's house. Rahab had a window in the outer wall of her house. It might be helpful to take some small stones or sticks and make two walls, and then put the house in between. Now decide how you will explain that Rahab's house was built in the wall so that your people will understand this. Pause the audio here.

In scene one, Rahab lets the two spies out the window of her home. She uses a red rope to let them go down the wall to the ground. At some point, probably before she lets them down the rope, Rahab tells the men to go to the hill country and hide there for three days. Because of the way the Israelites counted days, this passage probably really means the day after tomorrow. The first day is the current day. The second day is tomorrow. The third day, or in three days, means the day after tomorrow. Rahab tells the men to remain hidden until the soldiers have stopped searching for them.

Stop here and discuss the following: Rahab told the men to hide for three days. The Israelites counted the current day as the first day. This means that the men were to hide that day, the next day, and the day after the next. Now discuss how you talk about time in your language. How can you help your people understand that the men were to hide until the day after tomorrow? Pause the audio here.

The second scene actually happens before the first scene. Before Rahab lets the men down the rope through her window, the men talk with Rahab and tell Rahab the three things that Rahab must do so that the men will keep their solemn promise.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How will you describe this scene in such a way that it is clear that this happened before the men went down the rope out of Rahab's window? Pause this audio here.

When the Israelites come to conquer the city, Rahab must have the red rope tied in her window. Rahab must have all her family inside her house. The Israelite soldiers will kill anyone who is not in Rahab's house. The men use special language to describe their responsibility for the deaths. They say that for anyone who goes out of the door of Rahab's house, that person's blood will be on their own head, which means they will be responsible for their own death if they are not in the house. But the men also say that a person's blood will be on the heads of these two Israelite men, meaning the two spies will be responsible if the Israelite soldiers kill anyone in Rahab's house. Rahab must keep all these things secret. If Rahab betrays the men, or tells the people of Jericho about this, then the men will not keep their solemn promise.

Stop here and discuss: Tell a story about someone who dies in a battle. The storyteller should describe, or tell, who is responsible for the death. Listen carefully for any special language that would describe who is responsible for the death. Pause the audio here.

Rahab says, "Let it be as you say," as her way to say that she agrees to the spies' conditions.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How do you formally agree to an agreement between two groups of people? What special words or phrases do you say? What is a natural way to show that Rahab agreed to the spies' conditions? Pause this audio here.

In scene three, Rahab sends the men away and leaves the red rope tied in her window. The two spies go into the hill country and hide there until the soldiers quit searching for them.

In scene four, the two spies cross the Jordan River at a shallow point in the river, and they go back to the Israelite camp at Shittim. The two men report to Joshua everything they saw and did. They say, "Yahweh has given us this land." Then the two men tell Joshua that the people of Jericho are very frightened about what was going to happen to them. The men use the same words that Rahab used to describe the people of Jericho. They say that the people are melting in fear because Yahweh has given the whole land into the hands of the Israelites. To put something into someone else's hands means that the person now has power. In other words, Yahweh will cause the Israelites to have power, or victory, over the entire 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 Joshua 2:15-24 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has four scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Joshua
- Rahab
- Rahab's family
- The two Israelite men
- The people of Jericho
- The soldiers of Jericho
- The 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.

In scene one, Rahab lets the men out the window of her house. Rahab's house is built into the wall of the city. The window would be in the outer wall. Rahab uses a rope to let the men down to the ground. Rahab tells the men to go into the hill country and hide until the soldiers stop looking for them. Rahab tells the men to wait three days before going back across the Jordan.

Pause the drama.

Ask the men, "How are you feeling?" You may hear:

- "I think Rahab will keep the secret," or
- "We are relieved to be able to escape."

Scene two describes the conversation the spies had with Rahab before they left her house. The two men tell Rahab the conditions under which they will keep their solemn promise to save Rahab and her family. Rahab must tie the red rope in the window. All of Rahab's family must be in the house when the Israelites come. Anyone outside the house will be responsible for his own death. The two men are promising to be responsible for all those in Rahab's house. Rahab must keep it a secret that the two men came to Jericho. Rahab agrees to these conditions. Rahab also tied the red rope in her window.

Pause the drama.

Ask Rahab, "How are you feeling?" You may hear:

- "I have to trust them. This is the only way I can save my family," or
- "Afraid! Their God is too strong. I know that Jericho will be destroyed."

In scene three, the two men go into the hill country and hide while the soldiers from Jericho search for them. Finally, the soldiers stop searching and return to Jericho.

Pause the drama.

Ask the soldiers, "How do you feel?" You may hear:

- "It was just two men. I think it is more important to go back and make sure that our defenses are strong. I want to be with my family and protect them as best I can."

Ask the people of Jericho, "How are you feeling?" You may hear:

- "I am so afraid. I cannot sleep at night. I cannot eat. I know that the Israelites are going to come and kill us all," or
- "I know that their God has helped them defeat and destroy other cities. I think this is going to happen to us."

In scene four, the two men go back across the Jordan River and return to the Israelite camp. They report to Joshua all that has happened. The two men report to Joshua how afraid the people in Jericho are. The two men say, "Yahweh has given us this whole land."

Pause the drama.

Ask Joshua, "How are you feeling?" You may hear:

- "I am very happy with this report. I know that Yahweh has given us this land."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 2:15-24 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Rahab let the men down out of her window that was in the **city** wall. In those days, larger cities usually had walls around them to keep them safe.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word you will use for a **city** large enough to have a wall around it. Keep in mind that there are also many smaller cities, called villages, throughout Canaan. Pause this audio here.

The two men mentioned the solemn **oath** they had taken to save Rahab's family. Oath is discussed in the Master Glossary. If you used the word for oath in the previous passage, use the same words for this oath.

The two men told Rahab to tie the **scarlet** rope or red rope in the window. Scarlet is a very bright shade of red.

Stop here and look at a photo of a **scarlet**, or bright red, rope. Discuss what word you will use to describe the color of the rope. Pause this audio here.

The two men used special language to describe the responsibility of each person to keep the oath. "Blood on someone's head" means that person is responsible for what happens. If necessary, you can just say that if one of Rahab's family members is not in Rahab's house, he will be responsible for his own death. The two spies will be responsible if any family member dies in Rahab's house.

Stop here and discuss how you will talk about **blood on the heads** of someone responsible for a death. Pause the audio here.

The two men went back to Joshua and reported all that had happened. They said, "**Yahweh** has given us this land." Yahweh is God's personal name. Use the same name for Yahweh you have been using and remember that Yahweh is in the Master Glossary.

The people of Jericho are **melting in fear**. Use the same special language to describe how the people are afraid as you have used in the previous passage.

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.

Joshua 2:15-24

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (10782647 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Joshua 3:1-17

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 3:1-17 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 3:1-17 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 Joshua 3:1-17 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last passage, the two men who had gone to spy on Jericho gave their report to Joshua. Early the next morning, after he hears this report, Joshua and all the Israelites pack up their tents and all their possessions. All the Israelites travel from their camp at Shittim west to the Jordan River. The Israelites will not be coming back to this camp at Shittim.

Joshua and the Israelites come to the Jordan River and camp there for several days.

Joshua must have given the tribal leaders instructions about what to do when the people cross the Jordan River. Now the tribal leaders go all through the camp and they tell the Israelites to get ready to cross the Jordan River. The instructions are very clear. When the people see the priests carrying the ark of the covenant out of the camp towards the Jordan River, the people are to move out of their positions and follow the priests. The ark of the covenant is the special box that Yahweh had commanded Moses to build. The ark represented the presence of Yahweh among the Israelites. The leaders remind the people that this is the ark of the covenant of Yahweh, the Israelites' God. Each time the people packed up their tents and moved, they had a specific order for marching. The leaders remind them to move according to their positions, or to use this specific order, when they follow the priests and the ark of the covenant.

The leaders tell the Israelites that they must remain about one kilometer, or 1,000 steps, back from the ark of the covenant. The Israelites must not come too near the ark of the covenant because, in the past, non-priests who touched it would die.

Stop here and discuss this question: How do people in your community treat holy, or special, things that represent their gods' presence? In this case, the priests carried the ark of the covenant before the people as they traveled. How do you use holy, or special, items like this? Pause the audio here.

The leaders remind the Israelites that they are now going a new way. None of them has ever traveled over this route before. They must follow the priests so they will know where to go.

Then Joshua tells the Israelites to consecrate themselves. This means that the Israelites were to make themselves ritually clean so that they could be holy, or set apart, to worship Yahweh. They had to go through special rituals to get rid of any sin, or any impure thing, that was around them. In this case, we do not know which rituals the people do to become consecrated, or set apart, to worship Yahweh. Because Yahweh was going to do great miracles among them, the Israelites needed to be pure and clean in the presence of Yahweh.

Stop here and review any previous passages in Exodus or Leviticus that you have translated that describe the purification rituals that the Israelites would have followed. What do you remember about these rituals? Why do you think Yahweh wanted his people to be ritually pure? How do people in your community prepare themselves for a new and important event in their history? Pause the audio here.

Yahweh tells Joshua, "Today, the people will know that I am with you just like I was with Moses." Then Yahweh tells Joshua to tell the priests carrying the ark of the covenant to take a few steps into the Jordan River and then stand still.

Joshua tells the Israelites that they are going to know that the living God is among them. The gods of the people living in Canaan were all dead or made of stone or wood or clay. The Israelites worshipped Yahweh who is alive and speaks to the people. Joshua tells the Israelites that Yahweh will drive out the different people groups, or tribes, who live in Canaan.

Stop here and look at a map of Canaan. Look for the locations of these Canaanite tribes: the Canaanites, Hittites, Hivites, Perizzites, Girgashites, Amorites, and Jebusites. Look for the Jordan River and the city of Jericho on the map. Pause the audio here.

Joshua tells the Israelites to choose twelve men, one from each tribe. The tribes are the descendants of the sons of Jacob. Jacob had adopted two of Joseph's sons to be Jacob's legal sons. The descendants of these two sons formed two of the tribes. The Levites, or the descendants of Jacob's son Levi, were the priests. The Levites were separate from the other twelve tribes. The Levites would not have chosen a man from their tribe. Joshua does not tell the people what these twelve men will do. We will learn about that in the next passage.

Joshua repeats the instruction that the priests, who are Levites, should carry the ark of the covenant into the Jordan River. Joshua gives Yahweh a new title, "God of the whole earth." The Canaanite gods, which were idols, had specific locations. Joshua is saying that Yahweh is God everywhere. Joshua tells the Israelites that the water

in the Jordan River will stop flowing as soon as the Levites who carry the ark of the covenant step into the water.

After Joshua finishes giving all these instructions, the people leave their camp and go to the Jordan River. The Levites, who are the priests, carry the ark of the covenant and lead the way.

This event occurred in the springtime. It rains in the winter in Israel and the mountains have snow that covers the tops. In the spring, all this snow melts and flows down the Jordan River. The Jordan River probably was at flood stage, which means that there was so much water flowing that the river was much bigger and wider than it normally would be. Some translations say that it was the time of the harvest. Because of the rain in the winter, the people harvested their grain in the months of May and June.

As soon as the Levites step into the water, the flow of the water stops far away from the Israelites, up the river at a place called Adam. From where they are, the water in the river continues to flow into the Dead Sea. There is no water left in the river near where the Israelites are crossing. They are able to walk across on dry ground.

Stop here and look at a picture of a dry riverbed. Talk about what happens to your rivers and bodies of water at different times of the year. How does that affect the way you plant crops and travel? Pause the audio here.

All the Israelites cross on dry ground while the priests carrying the ark of the covenant stand in the riverbed. The Israelites walk past the priests who are holding the ark of the covenant. These priests stand in the middle of the river on dry ground until every Israelite has crossed the dry riverbed.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 3:1–17 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

This passage has four scenes.

In the first scene: The Israelites pack up their tents and their possessions and leave Shittim to move closer to the Jordan River.

In the second scene: Three days later, the Israelite leaders go through the camp telling the people to prepare to cross the river. The people are to watch for the priests carrying the ark of the covenant, and then move into their positions to follow the priests. Joshua tells the people to purify themselves, because Yahweh is going to do great things before them.

In the third scene: Joshua tells the priests to take the ark of the covenant and lead the people across the river. Yahweh speaks to Joshua and tells Joshua that the priests are to take a few steps into the river and stop. Joshua also reminds the people that Yahweh is going to give the land to the Israelites. Joshua now tells the people that when the priests step into the river, Yahweh will stop the flow of the river.

In the fourth scene: The people follow the priests to the river. When the priests step into the river, the flow of the water stops. The riverbed becomes dry, and the people cross on dry land. The priests with the ark of the covenant remain in the middle of the riverbed until all the Israelites have crossed to the other side.

The characters in this passage are:

- Joshua
- The Israelite officers or leaders from each tribe
- The Levite priests
- The Israelites
- Yahweh
- Moses is mentioned
- And 12 men that Joshua chooses, one from each of the 12 tribes

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

Stop and review the previous passages you have translated that talk about the ark of the covenant. Pause the audio here.

In scene one, the Israelites pack up their tents and their possessions and move from Shittim to a place next to the Jordan River. The Israelites set up their camp in this new area while they wait to cross the river.

In the second scene, about three days later, the Israelite leaders go through the camp and tell the Israelites to prepare to cross the river. In this part of the story, three days could mean several days. We do not know exactly how many days they remained in this camp before the leaders gave them instructions.

The Israelite leaders tell the people that the Levite priests will carry the ark of the covenant. All Israelite priests were from the tribe of Levi, but often storytellers would mention that the priests were Levites. All priests were from the tribe of Levi, but not all Levites were priests. In this story, the storyteller is using the terms for priests and Levites in the same way.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Think about a group of people that you could describe in two ways, much like the priests and Levites in this story. How will you make sure that your audience does not think that some priests were not Levites? Pause this audio here.

When the people see the priests pick up the ark of the covenant, then the people are to move into their positions and follow the priests as they carry the ark of the covenant. The leaders tell the Israelites to follow the ark of the covenant so that they will know the route to take. The Israelites have never been on this route before. The leaders also tell the Israelites to make sure that they remain a safe distance away from the ark of the covenant. The officials tell the people to keep a distance of about 1,000 steps, or about 1 kilometer, between them and the ark of the covenant.

Stop here and discuss this question: How do you measure distances? How will you talk about how far away the people are from the ark of the covenant? Pause the audio here.

Joshua tells the people to consecrate themselves, or purify themselves. All of this preparation needed to happen today, because tomorrow, Yahweh was going to do great wonders or miracles among them. We do not know which purification rituals the people did.

Scene three probably happens the next day. The order of what happens is not very clear. First, Joshua gives instructions to the Levite priests to lift the ark of the covenant and lead the people across the Jordan River. The Levites obey Joshua and start off with the ark of the covenant. Then Yahweh talks to Joshua. Yahweh tells Joshua that Joshua will be a great leader in the eyes of the people. In other words, the people will see and know that Joshua is a great leader. Yahweh encourages Joshua when he says, "The people will know I am with you, just as I was with Moses."

Now Yahweh gives Joshua more instructions for the priests. Yahweh tells Joshua that the priests carrying the ark of the covenant must step into the river a few steps and then stop. It is interesting that Joshua did not tell the priests what would happen when they walked into the water. Throughout this story, the instructions come from Yahweh step by step. Yahweh says some small thing that the people or priests must do, and then the people do it. After the people do that small action, Yahweh gives the next instruction. This way of telling the story makes us wonder what will happen next!

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story that will make everyone interested to know what will happen next. Pay attention to the way you tell this story—your tone of voice, your words, and the order in which you tell it. Pause this audio here.

Then Joshua calls all the people together and says, "Come here and listen to the words, or message, from Yahweh your God!" Joshua reminds the people that Yahweh is a living God. Yahweh is going to drive out all the pagan tribes who live in Canaan. These tribes worship idols. These people groups will leave the land, and the Israelites will settle there. The ark of the covenant is going to lead the people across the river. Then Joshua tells the people that the ark of the covenant belongs to Yahweh, who is God of the whole earth. Joshua gives Yahweh a new name here, and he repeats this name—God of the whole earth—twice in this passage. Joshua wants the Israelites to know that their God, Yahweh, is the one who has the authority to give them this land, because he owns the whole earth.

Stop here and discuss as a group: What kinds of titles do you give to your leaders to show that they have authority to do a certain thing? How will you give Yahweh this title—God of the whole earth? Pause this audio here.

Joshua also tells the Israelites to choose one man from each tribe, although he does not say what these men will do. Joshua tells the Israelites that Yahweh is going to cut off the flow of the river. The water will stand up as if it is behind a high wall.

Scene four describes what happens when the Israelites obey everything Yahweh has told them to do through Joshua. The Israelites leave their camp and follow the priests who carry the ark of the covenant. The storyteller gives us extra information so that we can understand why it is such a miracle that Yahweh stops the flow of water in the river. The storyteller tells us that it is harvest season, and the water in the river is high and overflows the banks of the river. The river is flowing much wider than it normally does. As soon as the priests step into the river, the flow of the water stops far away from the Israelites, up the river. The flow of the water actually stops at a town called Adam, near the town of Zarethan, which is about 20 kilometers north of where the Israelites are crossing the Jordan. The water completely stops and backs up to Zarethan, as if someone put a dam into the river. From Adam, all the way to the Dead Sea, the water left in the river flows until finally there is no water left in the river near where the Israelites are crossing. They are able to walk across the river on dry ground.

Stop here and look at the map with the towns of Adam and Zarethan. Notice how far up the river the water stopped from where the Israelites were. Notice how far the water flow stopped—all the way from Adam to the Dead Sea! Pause the audio here.

Stop here and look again at the photo of the dry river bottom. Discuss as a group: When your rivers dry up completely, what do you call them? How do you describe the bottom of a river after all the water in the river has dried up? Pause this audio here.

The river bottom becomes dry, and the people cross the river on dry land. The Levite priests carrying the ark of the covenant remain in the river standing on dry land until every one of the Israelites, or all of the nation of Israel, has crossed. This happens near the town of Jericho.

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 Joshua 3:1–17 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:

- Joshua
- The Israelite officers or leaders from each tribe
- The Levite priests
- The Israelites
- Yahweh
- Moses is mentioned
- And 12 men that Joshua chooses, one from each of the 12 tribes

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, Joshua and the Israelites leave Shittim and move to camp beside the Jordan River.

Pause the drama.

Ask the Israelites, "How are you feeling?" You may hear:

- "I am relieved. We can see the land Yahweh has given us! We have finally made it here," or
- "I am so excited. I cannot wait to move out of this tent and into a settled house on our land," or
- "I am nervous, wondering what the battles will be like."

In scene two, Joshua tells the people that they are to wait until the priests start to carry the ark of the covenant, and then follow it. Joshua tells them that the ark will show the way since none of them have been this way before. Joshua reminds them to remain a safe distance from the ark so that no one will accidentally touch the ark. Then Joshua tells the people that they must do their rituals of purification to become fit to worship Yahweh, because Yahweh is going to do great miracles for them.

Pause the drama.

Ask the Israelites, "How are you feeling?" You may hear:

- "I am in awe. Yahweh is a holy God. We must be holy when we are in Yahweh's presence," or
- "Nervous. Somehow Yahweh is going to get us across that river. I think that will be a miracle, because the water is fast and deep, and we cannot swim. We also have many old people, women, and children."

In scene three, Joshua tells the Levite priests to carry the ark of the covenant and lead the people across the river.

Pause the drama.

Ask the priests, "How are you feeling?" You may hear:

- "I am scared. I have never been this way before. How can I lead them?" or
- "So afraid! Looks to me like that water will knock us down and then we might drown," or
- "Confident. Somehow Yahweh is going to make it possible for us to get across that river."

Yahweh promises Joshua that Joshua will become a great leader in the eyes of the people. The Israelites will know that Yahweh is with Joshua, just like Yahweh was with Moses.

Pause the drama.

Ask Joshua, "How are you feeling?" You may hear:

- "I feel so humble. I worked under Moses. I know what kind of leader Moses was," or
- "I am so grateful that Yahweh is planning to be with me and tell me what to do. I know I cannot do this on my own."

In scene four, the priests carry the ark of the covenant into the river, and the water stops flowing. The water in the river continues towards the Dead Sea. Soon the water all flows past, and the ground where the priests are standing is dry. The Israelites walk across the dry river bottom and into the land across the river. The priests remain standing with the ark of the covenant in the middle of the dry river bottom until everyone has crossed.

Pause the drama.

Ask the priests, "How were you feeling when you took those first steps into the water?" You may hear:

- "I was so afraid. I was trembling with fear. It is amazing we did not drop the ark of the covenant!" or
- "I was so amazed. I saw the water stop. It must have been a feeling like this when my parents crossed the Red Sea. I heard about that, but now I understand more since it has happened to me," or
- "It is hard to take that first step."

Ask the Israelites, "How are you feeling?" You may hear:

- "At last! This has been a journey of 40 years. I am so grateful."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 3:1-17 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Joshua and all the **Israelites** left Shittim and went to the Jordan River. Use the same words for Israelites and Shittim as you have used in previous passages. Remember that Israelites is in the Master Glossary.

The **officials**, or tribal leaders of the people, gave the Israelites instructions. Use the same word for officials, or tribal leaders, that you have used in previous passages.

All of the **priests** were **Levites** from the Israelite tribe of Levi. No one from any other tribe could be a priest. A priest helped people have a good relationship with God. The tribe of the Levites were responsible for the tabernacle, the Israelite place of worship, and all of the items in the tabernacle. Only Levites could carry the ark of the covenant. In this story, priests, who were from the tribe of the Levites, carried the ark.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will talk about **priests** and **Levites**. Priest and Levites are discussed in the Master Glossary. Use the same words for priests and Levites that you have been using in other books of the Bible. Pause this audio here.

The **ark of the covenant** was the special box that Yahweh told Moses to build. The ark contained the tablets of the law that Yahweh gave to Moses when he made his covenant, or strong promise, with the Israelites. The Israelites believed that God literally inhabited the space directly above the ark, so it came to symbolize God's presence.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will translate the **ark of the covenant**. The ark of the covenant is discussed in the Master Glossary. Use the same title for this box that you have used in previous books of the Bible. Pause this audio here.

Joshua referred to Yahweh as "**Yahweh your God**," or the God of the Israelites. Yahweh is the personal name of God. Both Yahweh and God are discussed in the Master Glossary. Use the same words you have been using in previous passages.

The Israelite leaders told the people to stay about 2,000 **cubits**, 1,000 steps, or 1 kilometer, behind the ark of the covenant. You may use your modern-day measurement, or you may use the term for cubit that you have decided.

Stop here and discuss as a group: What will you say for 2,000 **cubits**? Will you use 1 kilometer, or 1,000 steps? For more information about cubit, see the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

Joshua told the people to **consecrate** themselves. When someone consecrates something, they make it holy, or set it apart for special service, to God. The Israelites had specific rituals to remove anything that might be unclean and make them unfit to worship Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss how you will describe the Israelites **consecrating** themselves to Yahweh. Use the same word for consecrate that you have used in previous books of the Bible. Consecrate is in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

Joshua said that Yahweh would do great wonders among the Israelites. Another word for wonder is **miracle**.

Stop here and discuss what words you will use for wonders, or **miracles**. Miracle is discussed in the Master Glossary. Use the same word you have used in previous books of the Bible. Pause this audio here.

Joshua refers to Yahweh as "the living God" and as "God of the whole earth." These are titles for God. Use your word for God and then the appropriate phrase that describes what Joshua is talking about.

Joshua says that Yahweh will "drive out" the people from Canaan. Yahweh will destroy the people in Canaan completely. Either the Israelites will kill them or chase them away so that they no longer live in the land.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will talk about Yahweh **driving out** the people who live in the land of Canaan. Pause this audio here.

Joshua lists the tribes of people who currently live in the Promised Land. This list has been used before. If you have translated Deuteronomy 7:1, then use the same words for these people groups here.

Stop here and discuss what you will name each people group. Use the same words you used in previous books of the Bible. Pause this audio here.

The passage tells how the waters of the **Jordan River** stopped flowing at a city named Adam and backed up to a town named Zarethan. The water that was in the river flowed on into the Dead Sea. The Dead Sea still exists today. You probably want to use the name for this lake that is used on your official maps. The Dead Sea is a large lake, about 85 kilometers long and 16 kilometers wide at its widest. The Dead Sea is full of salt, so nothing is able to live in this sea. It is often also called the Great Salt Sea.

With no water coming down the river, the river bed became dry and the people were able to walk across on dry ground. Use the same word for city and Jordan River that you have used previously, and remember that Jordan River is in the Master Glossary.

Stop here and look at the map which shows these places. Pause this audio here.

The priests would stand in the dry river bottom until every person in the nation of Israel had crossed. A nation is a group of people who belong together, who live in the same country, and who have the same ruler.

Stop here and discuss what word you will use for "all of Israel," or the **nation** of Israel. If you have already translated nation in another book of the Bible, use that word here. See the Master Glossary for more information about nation.

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.

Joshua 3:1–17

Audio Content

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Joshua 4:1–14

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 4:1–14 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 4:1–14 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 Joshua 4:1–14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This passage continues the story of the Israelites crossing the Jordan River. As the story begins, all the Israelites, or the entire nation of Israel, cross the river from the east side of the river to the west side of the river. You will remember that the families of the three tribes planning to settle on the east side of the Jordan River do not cross, but the adult males of fighting age from these tribes do cross with the other tribes.

Stop here and review the map that shows the Jordan River, the city of Adam and the Dead Sea, the city of Jericho, and the surrounding area. Review the events in the previous passage. Pause the audio here.

Everyone has crossed the river, but the priests are still standing in the dry river bottom holding the ark of the covenant. Now, Yahweh tells Joshua to select 12 men, one from each tribe. You will remember that in the previous passage, Joshua had already selected these men but did not tell the men what to do. Yahweh tells Joshua that the men are to go to where the priests are standing with the ark of the covenant. Each man is to pick up one large stone and carry it to the dry land on the west side of the Jordan River. Each tribal representative will put the stone on the ground where the Israelites will camp for the night.

Joshua does exactly as Yahweh said. Joshua calls the 12 men that he had already chosen and tells the men what to do. Joshua says, "You must go to where the priests are standing with the ark of Yahweh your God. Each one

of you will pick up a stone from the riverbed that you can carry on your shoulder. There will be 12 stones in total, one stone for each of the 12 tribes of Israel." Joshua tells the 12 men that these stones will make a memorial, or a sign, for the people. A memorial is an object that reminds the people of something special that happened. A sign is an object that gives a clear message. Joshua tells the people that these stones will be a memorial to remind them that Yahweh stopped the flow of the Jordan River. The stones will be a sign, or message, for the Israelite descendants that Yahweh is with them. Joshua tells the Israelites that their children, or descendants, will ask what this pile of stones means, and they must be ready to answer with the explanation of how Yahweh stopped the flow of the river.

Stop here and discuss the following question: How do you remember important events that happened in the past in your culture? What sorts of structures do you make to remember things, and why do you make those structures? What do you build the structures from? Pause the audio here.

The 12 men do exactly as Joshua tells them. The 12 men go to where the priests are still standing with the ark of the covenant in the Jordan River. Each man picks up a large stone. Each man carries his stone to the place where the Israelites are going to camp that night. When the men get to this place, they put the stones down in the same place as the other stones.

Then Joshua chooses 12 stones and puts them in the middle of the dry river bottom where the priests are standing with the ark of the covenant. This pile of stones remains in the river. The person who wrote this story down wrote that the stones remained in the river until the time he wrote the story. It is possible that when the water in the river ran low, such as in October or November, the people could see the pile of stones still standing in the middle of the river.

The priests remain in the middle of the riverbed until all this is finished. All the people cross the river. Joshua does everything that Yahweh commanded Joshua to do. In previous stories Moses had also told Joshua to do all of these things when they came into the Promised Land. With all this finished, the priests carry the ark of the covenant from the dry riverbed to the west side bank of the Jordan River where all of the people are waiting. The people watch the priests carry the ark of the covenant out of the riverbed.

Now the storyteller summarizes what happens and tells us how many fighting men go into the Promised Land. First he reminds us about the fighting men from the three tribes, Manasseh, Gad, and Reuben. Half of the tribe of Manasseh, and the tribes of Gad and Reuben, plan to live on the east side of the Jordan River. The fighting men of the three tribes are ready for battle and march ahead of the rest of the Israelites. You will remember that these three tribes had agreed with Moses that they would go in front of the Israelites into the Promised Land when it was time to enter. They would help fight and conquer the Promised Land. Including the fighting men from these three tribes, there are probably around 40,000 men altogether. We are not sure if this means that there are actually 40,000 men, or if there are 40 military divisions of these men. These men cross before Yahweh. This means that the men walk in front of the ark of the covenant. Yahweh is with these men as they cross over to the land around Jericho. The area between Jericho and the Jordan River, east of Jericho, is a broad flat area sometimes referred to as the plains. The land on the other side of Jericho, to the west, quickly changes to hills and then mountains.

Yahweh makes Joshua a great leader that day in the eyes of all the Israelites. This means that all the Israelites now look at Joshua as a great leader. The Israelites had respected Moses as their leader. Now the Israelites respect Joshua in the same way. The Israelites stand in awe of Joshua, which means that they very much respect Joshua for the rest of Joshua's life.

Stop here and tell a story about a famous leader in your culture. Why are people in awe of him or her? What did he or she do to cause people to respect and follow them?

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 4:1-14 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 five scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh tells Joshua to choose 12 men to take stones from the riverbed and to put them in a pile at the place where the Israelites will camp for the night.

In the second scene: Joshua calls together the 12 men and gives them their instructions. The men obey Joshua. Joshua also sets up a pile of stones in the riverbed.

In the third scene: After all the people have crossed the river, and the stone piles have been set up, the priests carrying the ark of the covenant continue across the river.

In the fourth scene: The fighting men from the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh also cross the river with the other Israelites.

In the fifth scene: Yahweh makes Joshua a great leader in the eyes of the Israelites. The Israelites respect Joshua just like they respected Moses.

The characters in this passage are:

- Joshua
- The Israelites
- Yahweh
- The priests carrying the ark of the covenant
- The 12 men, one from each tribe
- The armed warriors from the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh
- The families of the warriors from the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh are not mentioned, but they were present—they remain on the east side of the River Jordan
- Moses is mentioned

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

This story begins after all the Israelites have crossed the river. Then the story goes back in time and tells us what happened as the people crossed the river. And then the story returns to where it started—with all the Israelites across the river! This is a normal way that the people in Joshua's time told stories. As you listen to this story, you may feel confused about when each event happened.

Stop here and discuss the following question: Think about stories you tell, and try to give an example of telling a story which you do not tell completely in order. How does your audience follow along in your story? Pause the audio here.

Scene one begins by saying that all the Israelites have crossed the Jordan. Then Yahweh speaks to Joshua and tells Joshua to select one man from each of the 12 tribes. The 12 men will go back to the river bottom to where the priests are standing with the ark of the covenant. Each of the 12 men will pick up a stone that he can carry on his shoulder. Yahweh tells Joshua that these stones will be put in a pile at the place where the people will camp for the night. When Yahweh talks to Joshua, it sounds like Yahweh might be speaking to the 12 tribal representatives and to Joshua at the same time.

We know from the previous passage that Joshua has already chosen these men. Now, in scene two, Joshua calls these 12 men to come forward. Joshua repeats the instructions from Yahweh. Joshua changes the name of the ark of the covenant and calls it the "ark of Yahweh, your God." Although Joshua uses a different name, this is the same holy box. Joshua tells the men that these stones will be a message to their descendants. Joshua says that in the future, children will ask about these stones and why they are there. Joshua says that the Israelites are to tell the children how Yahweh stopped the flow of the river so that the people could cross. The ark of the covenant symbolizes Yahweh's presence, so when the priests carried it, Yahweh stopped the flow of water. The stones will be a memorial that will remind the people in future generations of what Yahweh did for them that day in crossing the Jordan River. The 12 men obey Joshua, and each man collects a stone to carry on his

shoulder. The 12 men carry their stones to the place where they are going to camp for the night, and put the stones in a pile, or build a memorial, at that place. These stones are big enough that they make a large pile when all 12 of them are together, but small enough that a man can carry one on his shoulder.

Stop here and think about the 12 men carrying the stones on their shoulders, and then piling them in one place. How will you describe this action? Pause this audio here.

Then Joshua goes into the riverbed to where the priests are still standing with the ark of the covenant. Joshua probably has men help him gather stones from the riverbed, and he makes a pile of them right where the priests are standing. When the water in the river was low, the people could see this pile of stones still standing.

In scene three, after all these things are done, and everyone has crossed the river, the priests cross the river with the ark of the covenant. This means that all the instructions that Yahweh had given are done, and all the instructions that Moses had given Joshua are done. The people have done everything they were supposed to do.

In scene four, the storyteller gives more details about who is in the group of Israelites who has gone across the river. The fighting men from the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh went ahead of the other Israelites, just as they had promised Moses in previous stories that they would do. Altogether with the rest of the Israelite fighting men, there are probably around 40,000 fighting men altogether. Yahweh is with these men.

In scene five, Yahweh makes Joshua a great leader that day. All the Israelites look at Joshua and see a great leader. The Israelites respect Joshua just as they respected Moses. This respect and awe continues for the rest of Joshua's life.

Stop here and choose a place to represent the east side of the Jordan River and the west side of the Jordan River. The Israelites are all on the west side of the river. The women and children from the tribes of Reuben, Dan, and the half-tribe of Manasseh should be on the east side of the river. They are not mentioned in this story, but they were there. Show the Jordan River, which goes between these two places. Show that the water flowing down the river has stopped, and the riverbed is dry. Now put some priests carrying the ark of the covenant in the middle of the river. Now as you act out the story, your characters can move back and forth from the riverbed to the west bank of the Jordan River.

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 Joshua 4:1–14 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:

- Joshua
- The Israelites
- Yahweh
- The priests carrying the ark of the covenant
- The 12 men, one from each tribe
- The armed warriors from the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh.
- The families of the warriors from the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh are not mentioned, but they were present—they remain on the east side of the River Jordan
- Moses is mentioned

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

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

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

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

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

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

In scene one, the Israelites have all crossed the Jordan River. Then, Yahweh tells Moses to select 1 man from each of the 12 tribes. These 12 men are to go back to the center of the riverbed where the priests are still standing with the ark of the covenant. Each man is to select a stone that he can carry on his shoulder. The men will carry these 12 stones to the place where the people will camp for the night. The men are to place these stones in a pile there.

In scene two, Joshua calls the 12 men that Joshua has already selected and gives the 12 men the instructions from Yahweh. Joshua adds additional explanations. Joshua says that these stones will be used to build a memorial, or something to remind the Israelites of what Yahweh did for them that day. Joshua tells the men that in the future, children will ask about the pile of stones. When the children ask, the adults should explain what Yahweh did for the Israelites. Yahweh stopped the flow of water in the river so that the people could cross on dry land. These stones are to be a memorial forever.

Pause the drama.

Ask the 12 men, "How do you feel about this task?" You may hear:

- "I feel so honored that I am the one from my tribe chosen for this. I think this is a wonderful idea," or
- "I think it is also good for us right now to stop and remember how important this day has been."

Ask Joshua, "How are you feeling?" You may hear:

- "I am so glad that Yahweh is talking to me like this and telling me what to do and why. I know Yahweh did this for Moses, but I was so afraid Yahweh would not do the same for me."

In scene three, the priests who are carrying the ark of the covenant continue across the river and come out of the riverbed to be with the other Israelites on the west side of the Jordan River.

Pause the drama.

Ask the priests, "What were you feeling when you were standing in the middle of the dry river bottom?" You may hear:

- "This was awesome! How incredible that Yahweh stopped the flow of water so far away, and we were able to cross on dry ground," or
- "Yahweh worked a miracle for us today. I am glad I got to see it," or
- "This is amazing. I was not afraid at all. I thought I would be."

In scene four, the storyteller describes the fighting men who cross ahead of the other Israelites. The fighting men from the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh lead the Israelites across the dry riverbed. Altogether with the other Israelites, there are 40,000 fighting men, and they are all ready for battle. Yahweh is with these men.

Pause the drama.

Ask these men "How are you feeling?" You may hear:

- "I am proud to do my part in the coming battles. We have been given good land with cities and towns already built. It is only right that we help the others conquer their towns and villages," or
- "I wish I did not have to leave my wife and children behind. I hope they will be safe."

In scene five, Yahweh makes Joshua a great leader in the eyes of all the Israelites. As long as Joshua lives, the people look at Joshua with the same awe and respect that they had for Moses.

Pause the drama.

Ask Joshua, "How are you feeling today?" You may hear:

- "I feel so humble. This is such an amazing thing that Yahweh is doing for me. I know I cannot do this task by myself. I need Yahweh to be with me and guide me and tell me what to do each day," or
- "I am relieved! The people accept me as their leader," or
- "I am grateful. I need to pray every day that Yahweh will be with me and that I will hear what Yahweh says."

Ask the Israelites, "How are you feeling?" You may hear:

- "I am so glad that Yahweh is with Joshua. This is all good news for us Israelites. As we go into battle, Joshua will be telling us exactly what Yahweh wants us to do."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 4:1-14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

After the whole **nation** of Israel crosses the **Jordan River**, **Yahweh** speaks to Joshua. Yahweh is the personal name of God. Use the same words for Yahweh, nation, and Jordan River that you have been using. Yahweh, nation, and Jordan River are discussed in the Master Glossary.

Joshua tells the 12 men Joshua had chosen to go to the middle of the river in front of "the ark of Yahweh, your God." This is the same special box as the **ark of the covenant**. Joshua gives this holy box a different name at this time. When translating, you want to be sure that the people understand that this is the same box. The ark

of the covenant is discussed in the Master Glossary. The phrase "Yahweh, your **God**" appears often in the scriptures. Use the same words for the translation that you have been using, and remember that God is also in the Master Glossary.

Joshua tells the 12 men that each man must pick up a stone from the riverbed where the **priests** are standing, and carry the stone to the place where the Israelites are to camp that night. Use the same word for priests that you have used in previous passages, and remember that priest is in the Master Glossary. The men used the stones to build a **memorial** as a **sign** for the people. In the future generations, children would ask what the stones meant. A memorial can be any object, but in this story, the memorial is a stone monument set up to remind people of an event. A sign in this story is an object that gives a message. These stones will remind the Israelites of what Yahweh had done for them when Yahweh stopped the water in the river so that the people could cross on dry ground.

Stop here and discuss what words you will use for **memorial** and **sign**. Pause this audio here.

The warriors, or fighting men, from the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh also cross the river. Use the same names for these tribes that you have used in previous translations.

Yahweh makes Joshua a great leader. The people respect Joshua in the same way they respected Moses. The people are **in awe of** Joshua in the same way they were in awe of Moses. To be "in awe of someone" means that you have feelings like fear, reverence, and wonder for someone.

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.

Joshua 4:1–14

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (13507302 KB)

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Joshua 4:15–5:1

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 4:15–5:1 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 4:15–5:1 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 Joshua 4:15–5:1 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This passage is the conclusion of the story of the Israelites crossing the Jordan River. The storyteller repeats and summarizes what happened, and he gives a few more details. In the previous passage, the Israelites crossed the Jordan River on dry ground, and the priests came up out of the dry river bottom carrying the ark of the

covenant. Now, this passage starts with the priests and the ark of the covenant still in the middle of the riverbed. The storyteller goes back to focus on one part of the story, and gives additional information.

Yahweh tells Joshua to command the priests to come out of the riverbed with the ark of testimony, which is the same thing as the ark of the covenant. Joshua does as Yahweh commands and tells the priests carrying the ark of the covenant to come up out of the riverbed. As soon as the priests are standing on the west bank of the Jordan River, the water begins to flow in the Jordan River again. There is so much water that the river comes out of the river banks and floods that area.

The Israelites cross the river on the tenth day of the first month. The Israelites followed a lunar calendar, which means a calendar in which the new month began with a new moon. The first month occurs between March and April. The Israelites wandered in the desert for 40 years after they left Egypt. Most people believe that the events in this passage took place in the first month of the 41st year after leaving Egypt.

The people cross the river and set up their first camp at a place called Gilgal, which is east of Jericho. This means that the camp is between Jericho and the Jordan River. We do not know the exact location of Gilgal. This name will occur again in other Old Testament books, but we do not know if the later Gilgal is the same as this Gilgal. The people go to this place to camp, and Joshua has them pile the 12 stones they took from the river at this camp site, as we learned in the last passage.

After the men pile up the 12 stones, Joshua talks to the Israelites. Joshua tells them that in the future, their children, or their descendants, will ask why the 12 stones are there. The descendants will ask what the 12 stones mean. Joshua tells the Israelites that the stones are to remind the descendants of the Israelites that Yahweh stopped the flow of the Jordan River so that the Israelites could walk across on dry ground. In the same way, Yahweh had dried up the Red Sea for the Israelites to walk across when they left Egypt. Joshua says that all people will know now that Yahweh's hand is powerful, which is another way to say that Yahweh has great power. Because of Yahweh's great power, people must fear Yahweh, the Israelites' God, forever. In other words, people will recognize the majesty of Yahweh and trust him to do what he promises to do.

The Amorites and the Canaanites live west of the Jordan River. Although we have heard many names for the people groups that live in Canaan, the names Amorites and Canaanites often refer to all of these people groups together. The kings of these people hear how Yahweh has dried up the Jordan River for the Israelites. In this land, each city has its own king. The king rules over the city and the small villages around that city. When these kings all hear this news, their hearts melt and they become paralyzed with fear.

Stop here and discuss the following question: Talk about a terrible event that is coming. This could be a very bad storm, or a war, or some other terrible event. Describe how people feel. What kinds of things do they do to prepare for the terrible event? Pause the audio here.

Pause here and look at the map that shows Gilgal and where the different people groups live in Canaan. Pause the audio here.

The news of what Yahweh did for the Israelites spreads quickly to all these cities on both sides of the Jordan River, and the local people are all very afraid.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 4:15–5:1 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 Joshua to command the priests carrying the ark of the covenant to come out of the dry river bottom. Joshua obeys Yahweh. As soon as the priests leave the riverbed, the water starts to flow again.

In the second scene: The Israelites set up their camp at Gilgal. Joshua sets up the pile of 12 stones. Then Joshua instructs the Israelites on how to explain to their children what happened that day.

In the third scene: The Amorite kings and the Canaanite kings hear about what happened when the river dried up. They are all very afraid of the Israelites and what Yahweh might do.

The characters in this passage are:

- Joshua
- The Levite priests carrying the ark of the testimony, or ark of the covenant
- Yahweh
- The Israelites
- And the Amorite kings and Canaanite kings

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

This passage is a summary of the events of the previous passage. Israelite storytellers often repeated information and added more details to show how important an event was for the Israelites. In the first scene, Yahweh tells Joshua to command the priests who are standing in the middle of the riverbed with the ark of the testimony, or covenant, to come up out of the riverbed. Joshua does just as Yahweh says. Remember that the priests are on the dry river bottom, so they are probably lower than the sides of the river. The priests will need to walk up from the bottom of the river to the side of the dry river. As soon as the priests step out of the river bottom, or as soon as they put their feet on the ground beside the river, the water starts flowing again. The river is at flood stage, which means that the water comes out of the banks of the river.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Imagine that someone is in a dry river bottom, or a shallow hole or ditch. Now describe how they need to walk out of the lower area onto the higher area around them. What words or phrases do you use to describe someone coming up out of a lower area and onto the level ground? How will you describe the priests coming up out of the dry river bottom and onto the level ground on the side of the river? Pause this audio here.

This part of the story has already happened in the previous passage. The storyteller repeats this part of the story to emphasize that this miracle is related to the presence of the ark of the covenant. The ark of the covenant shows that Yahweh is with the Israelites.

Stop here and discuss the following question: Ask someone to tell the group about a very important historical event in your culture. How does the storyteller draw attention to the important parts of the story? Pause the audio here.

Some translations of this passage call the special box that the priests carry the ark of testimony instead of the ark of the covenant. Testimony means witness, or reminder. We know that the two stones with the Ten Laws from Yahweh are in that box. The box is a reminder to the Israelites that Yahweh is with them. This is the same box that Yahweh told Moses to make, and the same box as in the previous passages. The storyteller calls it the ark of testimony to show that it is important to remember that Yahweh is with the people.

It is important to remember that in the previous passages, when the priests carrying the ark of the covenant stepped into the river, the flow of water stopped. Now we see that when the priests carrying the ark of the covenant stepped out of the dry river bottom, the flow of the water started again.

In scene two, the Israelites go to Gilgal to set up their camp. Gilgal is between the river and Jericho.

Stop here and look again, if needed, at the map that shows the location of Gilgal. Pause the audio here.

This happened on the 10th day of the first month of the year. This would be some time in March or April.

As we have heard in the previous passage, we hear again that Joshua instructed the men to put down in the camp at Gilgal the 12 stones which the men had taken from the dry river bottom of the Jordan River. Then Joshua told the Israelites that the children of the Israelites would ask questions about the stones. You will

remember from previous books of the Bible that when the Israelites talk about their children, they are often talking about all of their descendants—their children's children's children!

Stop here and discuss as a group: Talk about how your descendants will hear the histories of your people. Pay attention to how you describe your descendants, or your children's children's children. Pause this audio here.

Joshua says that the Israelites are to tell their descendants that Yahweh had dried up the river so that the Israelites could cross. Yahweh had done the same thing with the Red Sea when the Israelites left Egypt. Yahweh did this so that all nations, or everyone on earth, will know how strong Yahweh's hand is, and so that the people of Israel will fear Yahweh. The storyteller uses special language to describe Yahweh's power—he says that Yahweh has a strong "hand."

Stop here and talk about a person you know who is very powerful—maybe a leader who rules strongly. How do you describe how powerful he is? Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss as a group: The people of Israel will fear Yahweh. In other words, the people will know that Yahweh is majestic and strong. They will trust Yahweh to keep his promises, and they know that Yahweh punishes those people who do not obey him. Talk about a leader that you "fear" in this way. How will you talk about the fear the Israelites feel about Yahweh? Pause this audio here.

In scene three, the Amorite kings and the Canaanite kings on the west side of the river all hear about how Yahweh has stopped the flow of water in the Jordan River so that the Israelites can cross on dry land. These kings become discouraged and fearful. They are so afraid that their hearts melt and they lose their spirit, or become paralyzed with fear. They feel too afraid to even prepare for war or do anything else. The storyteller uses two kinds of special language to show just how afraid the kings are.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Review how you will talk about people being so afraid that their hearts melt with fear. Now think about being so afraid that you lose your spirit, or you lose the desire to do anything to protect yourself. Think about a time when you, or someone you know, has been so afraid that you feel like you cannot do anything. How do you talk about this kind of fear? Remember how you talked about being afraid in step 2, Setting the Stage. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and try this activity: Gather 12 large stones, or something to represent these stones, and pile them up to make a memorial. Now talk about how seeing this memorial in the camp will remind the people of what happened when Yahweh stopped the flow of the river so they could cross on dry ground. Imagine that many years have passed, people have settled into their homes, and a new generation visits Gilgal and sees the pile of stones. How do you explain what the pile means to the new generation? 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 Joshua 4:15–5:1 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:

- Joshua
- The Levite priests carrying the ark of the covenant
- Yahweh
- The Israelites
- And the Amorite kings and Canaanite kings

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 Joshua to command the priests carrying the ark of the testimony to come up out of the dry river bottom. Joshua gives this command to the priests. The priests carry the ark of the covenant out of the riverbed. As soon as they put their feet on the ground above the river bottom, the water starts flowing in the river again. Because the river is at flood stage, the water comes out of the banks of the river just like it was doing before the flow of the water stopped.

Pause the drama.

Ask the priests, "How are you feeling?" You may hear:

- "I have so many emotions or feelings, I can hardly think of them all. We are carrying Yahweh's presence among us. Yahweh has done this miracle right in front of our eyes!" or
- "I wonder what all the Canaanites are thinking about all this."

Ask the Israelites, "How are you feeling now as you watch the water start flowing again?" You may hear:

- "We worship a mighty God. Yahweh is so strong. No other god can do what Yahweh has done for us today," or
- "I feel sorry for these Canaanites who are depending on their idols. They have no chance. I am glad Yahweh is on our side," or
- "I want to remember this and teach my children about the power that Yahweh has."

In scene two, Joshua and the Israelites set up their camp at Gilgal. Then Joshua instructs the men to put down the 12 stones that the men had taken from the dry riverbed of the Jordan River. Joshua explains to the Israelites that these 12 stones will remain where the men had placed them to remind the people in the future of what Yahweh did for them that day. Joshua tells the Israelites that the descendants of the Israelites will ask about the meaning of the 12 stones. Joshua tells the Israelites that they must teach their descendants about these things that Yahweh has done for them today, as well as when Yahweh made a dry path through the Red Sea when they left Egypt. Joshua explains that every nation must learn that Yahweh is powerful. The Israelites must always fear Yahweh.

Pause the drama.

Ask the Israelites, "How do you feel about Yahweh now?" You may hear:

- "Yahweh is all powerful. No other god is like Yahweh. Every nation must know that Yahweh has the power over the world," or
- "I have not done enough in teaching my children about what happened at the Red Sea. I must do a better job," or
- "I trust Yahweh. Yahweh is very strong! I am also a little afraid of Yahweh, because I know he will punish me if I disobey him."

In scene three, the kings of the surrounding area all hear about what Yahweh did for the Israelites. When these kings hear how the river stopped flowing, so that the Israelites could cross on dry land, the kings' hearts melt and they lose their will to fight.

Pause the drama.

Ask these kings, "How are you feeling right now?" You may hear:

- "I am terrified. Their God is so powerful. My god cannot do anything to protect us against that power," or
- "I know that my city is going to be destroyed. I have no hope. I am so afraid that I cannot even move," or
- "I feel powerless against them. My legs are trembling. My hands are trembling. I cannot sleep."

Ask Joshua, "How are you feeling?" You may hear:

- "I am feeling so encouraged by this. Yahweh took care of us," or
- "I am so thankful for what Yahweh has done. Yahweh has made it so much easier for me to lead these people forward to conquer this land."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 4:15-5:1 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Yahweh speaks to Joshua. Yahweh is the personal name of God. Use the same word for Yahweh that you have been using. Yahweh is in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Joshua to command the **priests** who carry the ark of the testimony to come up out of the dry bottom of the **Jordan River**. Use the same words for priests and Jordan River that you have been using, and remember that priest and Jordan River are in the Master Glossary.

The **ark of the testimony**, or **ark of the covenant**, is the name of the sacred box that holds the stone tablets of the 10 Laws that Yahweh gave Moses. The ark of the covenant represents the presence of God among the people. Some translations change the name and use the title, "ark of testimony." Other translations continue with the ark of the covenant, so that everyone realises it is the same box. If you use the ark of the covenant, use the same words you have been using. If you use ark of the testimony, you may want to look up testimony in the Master Glossary. The storyteller called the box the ark of testimony to show that it is important to remember that Yahweh is with the people.

Pause here and decide if you will continue with the **ark of the covenant** or if you will use the different title, the **ark of testimony**. Refer to the Master Glossary for ark of the covenant, or testimony, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Joshua instructs the men to pile up the 12 stones as a **memorial**. The word memorial is not used in this passage, but it was used in the previous passage. You may need to make it clear by repeating that these stones were to be a memorial.

Joshua said that the **Israelites** were to **fear** Yahweh, their **God**, forever. Use the same words for Israelites and God as you have used in previous passages, and remember that Israelites and God are in the Master Glossary. Fear has a much deeper meaning than to be afraid of something. Here fear refers to an attitude of reverence, honor, and respect for Yahweh. When we fear Yahweh, we can become wise and develop understanding. Those who fear Yahweh also know that they must obey Yahweh, or Yahweh will punish them for their disobedience.

Stop here and discuss how you will say that the Israelites should **fear God**. Fear of God is discussed in the Master Glossary. Use the same term for fear of God that you have used in other translations. Pause this audio here.

The Amorite and Canaanite **kings** heard about what happened. In those days, each city had their own king who ruled over the city and surrounding villages. Use the same word for king that you have used in previous passages, and remember that king 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.

Joshua 4:15-5:1

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (12338113 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Joshua 5:2-9

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 5:2-9 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 5:2-9 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 Joshua 5:2-9 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last passage, Yahweh stopped the water of the Jordan River from flowing for a short time so the people of Israel could walk across on dry ground. Joshua had men carry stones from the middle of the river bed and pile them up beside the river, which began flowing again after everyone crossed over. In the future, this pile of stones will remind the Israelites how Yahweh helped them cross the river.

In this passage and the next one, Yahweh reminds the Israelites of the two very important ceremonies that the Israelites should always do when they enter the Promised Land. In this passage, Yahweh wants the Israelites to circumcise every male Israelite. You may remember that when people circumcise men, they cut off the loose skin, or foreskin, at the end of the penis. In order to do that, Yahweh tells Joshua to make knives from a stone called flint. People can chip or strike flint with another object until it breaks to create a sharp edge. At this time, humans had just begun to use iron, so many people still used flint for knives.

Stop here as a group and look at a picture of a knife chipped from flint. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Joshua to use the flint knives to circumcise the sons of Israel, or the Israelite men and boys, a second time. You may remember that when Yahweh made a covenant, or special agreement, with Abraham in the book of Genesis, Yahweh told Abraham that from that time on, all of Abraham's male descendants, or all Israelite males, must be circumcised. Circumcision is a sign, or mark, of Yahweh's special covenant agreement with the Israelites. Yahweh said that all of Abraham's male descendants must be circumcised to keep their part of the covenant agreement.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about people in your culture who made a special agreement. What did each person have to do as part of the agreement? If one person did not do their part, what would happen? Pause this audio here.

We are not sure why Yahweh tells Joshua to circumcise the Israelites again, or a second time. Yahweh may mean the Israelites who were circumcised in Egypt were the first group of men circumcised, but the Israelites born in the wilderness will be the second group of men circumcised. Or Yahweh may also mean that the men who were circumcised as little children before the Israelites left Egypt must be circumcised again. Like the Israelites, the Egyptians also did circumcisions. But the Egyptians only cut off part of the loose skin at the end of the penis, which made their circumcision incomplete. So if the older Israelite men had been circumcised in the Egyptian way, Yahweh might mean that Joshua must remove the rest of the loose skin from these men.

The passage says that Joshua does what Yahweh told Joshua to do. Joshua makes knives from stones and circumcises the men and boys of Israel at the place called Gibeath Haaraloth, which means "Circumcision Hill."

Stop here as a group and look at a picture of knives made from stone. Pause this audio here.

Stop here as a group and find Gibeath Haaraloth on a map of Canaan. Pause this audio here.

All of the men who died in the wilderness had been circumcised in Egypt. But the boys born in the wilderness had not been circumcised. The passage does not say why the Israelites did not circumcise boys in the wilderness. However, it does remind us why everyone who was 20 years old and older when they left Egypt had now died. Yahweh punished these Israelites by causing them to die in the wilderness. Yahweh punished these Israelites because they had not listened to Yahweh's voice, or obeyed Yahweh. You may remember this story from the book of Numbers. Because the Israelites did not listen to the voice of Yahweh, or obey Yahweh, Yahweh swore, or made a special promise, that he would not let the Israelites who were 20 years old or older enter the land Yahweh had promised to Israel. Yahweh said that only those people's children, along with Joshua and Caleb, would enter the land. So the passage is reminding us that these men and boys Joshua must circumcise are the children Yahweh "raised up" to take the place of those who died in the wilderness.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a time when a parent promised something to their child, but then the child disobeyed the parent. What would happen if the parent punished the child by waiting longer to do what they promised? Why would a parent do that, and how would the child respond? Pause this audio here.

After Joshua circumcised all of the boys and men, the Israelites did not move from their camp until the circumcision wounds of all of the boys and men healed.

Finally, Yahweh tells Joshua that on this day, Yahweh has "rolled away" the shame of Egypt from Israel. The Egyptians had said the god of the Israelites brought the Israelites into the wilderness to die, but Yahweh is showing that the Egyptians were wrong. Yahweh will bring the Israelites into Canaan just as Yahweh promised. This is why the Israelites name this place Gilgal, which means "rolling away."

Stop here as a group and find Gilgal on a map of Canaan.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 5:2-9 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 five scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh tells Joshua to circumcise all of the sons of Israel, or the Israelite men and boys.

In the second scene: Joshua does what Yahweh tells him to do. Joshua makes knives from stones and circumcises the men and boys of Israel at a place that people now call Gibeath Haaraloth.

In the third scene: The passage explains why Joshua must circumcise the men and boys. All of the older Israelite men who died in the wilderness were circumcised in Egypt, but those born in the wilderness have not been circumcised. Yahweh had punished the older Israelites by making them die in the wilderness, but Yahweh promised that the children of those Israelites could enter the land instead. So now this new generation of Israelites must be circumcised before entering the land.

In the fourth scene: After Joshua circumcises the men and boys, the Israelites do not move from their camp until the wounds have healed.

In the fifth scene: Yahweh tells Joshua, "Today I have rolled away the shame of Egypt from you." This is why the Israelites named the place Gilgal, which means "rolling away."

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Joshua
- The Israelites who were 20 years old or older when they left Egypt and have died
- The Israelite men and boys who are alive now and need to be circumcised
- The entire camp of Israelites
- And the Egyptians

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

The passage begins by saying that "at that time" Yahweh told Joshua to make knives out of a type of stone called flint, and to use the knives to circumcise the sons of Israel a second time. This story happens at the same time and place as the last story. So this story happens while the Israelites are still living in their tents at Gilgal.

Stop here as a group and find Gilgal on a map of Canaan. Pause this audio here.

You will remember that Abraham was the first ancestor of the Israelites. Abraham's name means "the father of many nations." When Abraham was 75 years old, Yahweh made a covenant with Abraham that he would always be the Israelites' God, and the Israelites would always be Yahweh's people. As part of the covenant, Yahweh told Abraham to circumcise himself and every male person in Abraham's household. Yahweh also said that in the future, Abraham's ancestors, the Israelites, must circumcise every male child on the eighth day after it is born. Yahweh said this would show that the Israelites were Yahweh's special people.

Men had to be circumcised in order to be acceptable for Yahweh. To circumcise is to cut off the loose skin at the end of a boy or man's penis. The father, or someone who was specially trained, usually did this. Cutting the skin off left a wound, so people usually stayed in one place and rested while the wound healed.

Stop here as a group and discuss how you will talk about circumcision and the covenant between Yahweh and the Israelites in your translation. Pause this audio here.

The passage says that Joshua does what Yahweh told Joshua to do. Although the passage says Joshua makes the knives and circumcises the men and boys at Gibeath Haaraloth, it probably means that although parents or other people do the circumcisions, Joshua has to make sure everyone does what Yahweh said. In the original language, Gibeath Haaraloth means "Circumcision Hill," or "the Hill of the Foreskins." This does not mean that the place already had this name. The Israelites gave it this name because of all of the circumcisions they did on this day.

Stop here as a group and discuss how you will talk about the name of this place, and how people gave it this name because of this event. Pause this audio here.

The passage says all of the "men of war" died in the wilderness. The "men of war" are the males 20 years old and older who were able to fight as soldiers. Yahweh had allowed them to die without entering Canaan to punish them for their disobedience. But Yahweh kept his covenant to the people of Israel by allowing their children to enter the land. The storyteller says that Yahweh promised to give the land to "us." The storyteller sees himself as one of the Israelites to whom Yahweh gave the promise. The storyteller is reminding us that Yahweh has now kept his promise to the Israelites, and the storyteller is one of the Israelites now living in the land.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will talk about the Israelites' disobedience and punishment, as well as Yahweh's forgiveness, in your translation. Pause this audio here.

The Bible often describes Canaan as "the land flowing with milk and honey." This is special language meaning that this is a rich and fertile land where things grow well and there is a lot of food and animals. This same phrase is used in several places in the Bible. Honey is a sweet liquid that bees make. In Bible times, honey was one of peoples' favorite foods. The Israelites often drank the milk of cows, sheep, or goats, and also used the milk to make curds or cheese, which is a solid food.

Stop here and discuss as a group what words or phrases you will use to show that Canaan is rich and fertile. Think about how you describe a rich and fertile land in your culture. You may use the most natural way to describe this in your translation. Pause this audio here.

After the wounds of the men and boys heal, Yahweh tells Joshua that Yahweh has "rolled away," or removed, the shame of Egypt from Israel like a person removes a round object by rolling it away. It has been 40 years since Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt, and many Israelites have grown old and died in the wilderness. So the Egyptians said that the god of the Israelites had brought the Israelites into the wilderness to die. But now Yahweh will prove that the Egyptians are wrong. Yahweh will bring this new generation of circumcised Israelites into Canaan. Although Yahweh punished the first generation of Israelites by not allowing them to enter Canaan, Yahweh promised to "raise up" their children to go into Canaan instead. To "raise up" means to lift a person up from lying on the ground. People would lie on the ground to show great respect or because they were very afraid. People rose up to worship Yahweh or to do an important task. Yahweh was saying that the children of the first generation of Israelites would be the ones to do the important task of conquering the land Yahweh had promised them.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you prepare people for an important task. How will you describe how Yahweh "raises up" the children of the Israelites who came out of Egypt? Pause this audio here.

Because of what Yahweh told Joshua, the Israelites name this place Gilgal. In the original language, the name Gilgal sounds very similar to the word that means removed, or "rolled away." In the future, the Israelites will often gather at Gilgal to worship Yahweh.

Stop here as a group and look again at Gilgal on a map of Canaan, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Stop here as a group and discuss how you will talk about the name of this place-Gilgal-and how people gave it this name because of what Yahweh did here 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 Joshua 5:2-9 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
- Joshua
- The Israelites who were 20 years old or older when they left Egypt and have died
- The Israelite men and boys who are alive now and need to be circumcised
- The entire camp of Israelites
- And the Egyptians

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

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

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

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

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

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

In the first scene, Yahweh tells Joshua to make stone knives and circumcise all of the sons of Israel, or the Israelite men and boys.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I want to bless the Israelites by giving them the land I promised, but first they have to obey their part of the covenant."

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I wish parents would have circumcised their boys when they were born, like Yahweh said to do," or
- "This is a lot of people to circumcise all at once, but it feels good to obey Yahweh."

In the second scene, Joshua does what Yahweh tells him to do. Joshua makes knives from stones and circumcises the men and boys of Israel.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Israelite men and boys, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "I am trying to act brave, but I feel scared," or
- "I want people to know that I am special to Yahweh, but I wish there was an easier way," or
- "This is painful!"

In the third scene, we learn why Joshua needs to do these circumcisions. All of the older Israelite men have died, and Yahweh is ready for Joshua to lead the Israelites into Canaan. But first the Israelites have to complete their part of the covenant by making sure all of the men are circumcised.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Israelite men and boys, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "Why was removing part of my body important to Yahweh?" or
- "I do not understand, but if it means we can conquer Canaan, it was worth the pain!"

In the fourth scene, the Israelites do not move from their camp until the wounds of all of the boys and men have healed.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the entire camp of the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "Circumcising grown men is embarrassing!" or
- "We hope none of our enemies try to attack now. Our warriors would not be able to fight back!"

In the fifth scene, Yahweh tells Joshua that he has "rolled away" the shame of Egypt from Israel. This is why this place became known as Gilgal, which means "rolling away."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I am tired after all of these years of wandering, but I am looking forward to finally entering Canaan!" or
- "I am so glad that Yahweh will finally prove the Egyptians wrong. Yahweh will not let all of the Israelites die in the wilderness!"

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 5:2-9 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

At the beginning of the story, Yahweh tells Joshua to make knives out of **flint**, a type of stone. At this time, people were just beginning to use iron, so knives were often made from stone. Flint is a type of quartz. People chip or strike flint with another object until it breaks to make a sharp edge.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **flint**. 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 told Joshua to **circumcise** the sons of Israel. To circumcise means to cut off the loose skin at the end of a boy or man's penis. Yahweh told Abraham that the Israelites must circumcise all of their baby boys on the eighth day after they were born as a sign of Yahweh's covenant with the Israelites.

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

The "sons of **Israel**" means all of the male **Israelites**. Use the same words or phrases for Israel or Israelites that you used in previous passages. For more information on Israel and Israelites, refer to the Master Glossary.

In the original language, the place that was named **Gibeath Haaraloth** is a phrase that means "Circumcision Hill" or "the Hill of the Foreskins." The Israelites gave the place this name because of all the circumcisions they did during this story.

Stop here and discuss as a group what you will call the place named **Gibeath Haaraloth**. You may wish to use a word or phrase that has the same meaning in your language. If you have already translated the name of this place in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

The Israelites wandered in the wilderness for 40 years until all the men of war died. The men of war were the men who were old enough to be part of Israel's military. In Israel at this time, all men who were 20 years old or older were able to fight in battle.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use to describe men who were old enough to fight in battle. If you have already translated the same word or phrase in another book of the Bible, use the same word or phrase that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

Because the first generation of Israelites disobeyed Yahweh, Yahweh **swore** that he would not let them enter Canaan. To swear means to make an **oath**, or special promise. Use the same word or phrase for swear that you used in previous passages. For more information on oath, refer to the Master Glossary.

Before this, Yahweh had sworn "to their fathers" to give Canaan to the Israelites. The phrase "to their fathers" refers to their actual fathers and also to their ancestors.

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

The Israelites call the place Gilgal, because Yahweh has rolled away their disgrace. The Egyptians can no longer mock them and tell them that Yahweh is not powerful.

Stop here and discuss as a group: You have already used the place name Gilgal in previous passages. How does this new information affect what you call Gilgal?

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.

Joshua 5:2-9

Audio Content

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Joshua 5:10-15

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 5:10-15 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 5:10-15 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 Joshua 5:10–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last story, while the Israelites were camped at Gilgal, Yahweh told Joshua to circumcise all of the men and boys of Israel. The last generation of Israelite men had been circumcised in Egypt, but the ones born in the wilderness had not yet been circumcised. Joshua did what Yahweh said, and Yahweh told Joshua that on that day, Yahweh had removed the shame of slavery in Egypt from Israel.

In this story, the Israelites are still camped at Gilgal, which is on the plains of Jericho, a large, flat grassland west of the Jordan River.

Stop here as a group and find Gilgal and Jericho on a map of Canaan. Pause this audio here.

The story begins with the Israelites celebrating the Passover feast. You will remember that the Israelites first celebrated Passover while they were still in Egypt. Because the king of Egypt refused to let Moses and the Israelites leave, Yahweh sent plagues, or punishments, on the Egyptians. In the last plague, an angel from God killed the oldest son of each of the Egyptians, but the angel "passed over" the houses of the Israelites and did not kill their sons. That same night, God had the Israelites eat a special "Passover" meal, and God said the Israelites should celebrate Passover every year after that to always remember how God had saved them.

In this story, the Israelites celebrated the Passover at Gilgal on the evening of the 14th day of the 1st month of the year. To the Israelites, the 1st month of the year is the time of year we know as March and April. This was the same day and month of the year as the first Passover in Egypt, so this day would have an important meaning to the Israelites. This day was a reminder of the beginning of their journey out of Egypt 40 years ago when Yahweh saved them from being slaves. We hear in the book of Numbers that the Israelites celebrated the Passover in the wilderness at Mount Sinai the year after they left Egypt. Now, this story is probably the first time they have celebrated Passover since that time. Yahweh had said that all men and boys must be circumcised before they can join in the Passover feast. So after the men were circumcised, just as we heard in the previous story, all of Israel is now ready to celebrate Passover once again.

Stop here as a group and look at a map that shows Egypt, Mount Sinai, and Canaan, and the direction the Israelites traveled from Egypt to Canaan. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What are some important days or celebrations that your people keep each year? What do these days help you remember about what has happened in the past? How do they help you remember what is true about your people group today? Pause this audio here.

The very next day, after the Israelites celebrated the Passover, the Israelites ate food that was growing in the land of Canaan. They ate bread, or cakes, made without yeast, and they ate roasted grain. The grain was probably barley, which would have been fully grown and ready to pick from the fields at this time of year. This was the first time the Israelites ate food growing in Canaan. Yahweh was beginning to fulfill his promise to give them this land and the food that grew there.

The story does not tell the details of the feast or how the Israelites prepared the food. However, you will remember that in the book of Leviticus, Yahweh instructed Moses that the priest had to wave some of the grain before Yahweh before the Israelites could eat the new harvest, or food growing in the field. This was important to remind the Israelites that all of the food came from Yahweh.

You will remember that Yahweh provided manna from the sky every morning to feed the Israelites in the wilderness. This manna stopped the same day the Israelites ate this food in Canaan. Yahweh had used the manna to teach the Israelites to trust him for what they needed every day, but now he was giving them the food growing in Canaan just as he promised.

Stop here as a group and look at a picture of bread made with barley flour without yeast. Pause this audio here.

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

Some time now passes before this next part of the story happens. We do not know how much time passes, but it may be a few days. The story says that one day, while Joshua and the people of Israel are still camped near

Jericho, Joshua suddenly sees a man standing in front of him holding a sword. A sword is a weapon with a long, sharp-edged blade.

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

Stop here as a group and again look at Gilgal and Jericho on a map of Canaan, if needed. Pause this audio here.

It is important to notice how the man is holding his sword in his hand. The sword is not strapped to his belt. This would mean that the man is prepared to fight or to lead people into battle. Joshua knows the Israelites are now on enemy land and will have to fight to take the land of Canaan that Yahweh promised them. So Joshua asks the man if the man is for Israel or for Israel's enemies. Joshua is asking if the man is a friend of Israel and an enemy of the Canaanites, or if the man is a friend of the Canaanites and an enemy of Israel.

The man responds, "No." The man says he is the commander, or captain, of Yahweh's army. This man may really be an angel, because the phrase "army of Yahweh" probably refers to the angels who help fight Yahweh's battles. When the man says, "No," he is saying that he is neither of the things Joshua asks. The man is not an Israelite soldier, and he is not an enemy soldier. In other words, this man fights for Yahweh, not for Joshua. So if Israel does not keep the covenant with Yahweh, Yahweh could send this man to punish Israel. However, Yahweh could instead send this man to fight for Israel and against Israel's enemies.

Joshua falls down with his face to the ground to show respect. Then Joshua respectfully asks the man what the man commands Joshua to do. The words Joshua uses, and the way he acts, does not show that this is God himself visiting Joshua. However, even though the story calls this a man, the man talks and acts like an angel, and Joshua treats the man like an angel.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a time when someone in your community saw or talked with a messenger, or angel, from God. Talk about how the person reacted when they saw the messenger, and how they showed respect. Pause this audio here.

Since the man is holding a sword, and says he is the commander of Yahweh's army, Joshua probably expects the man to give Joshua instructions for battle. Instead, the man tells Joshua to remove Joshua's sandals from Joshua's feet. The man says Joshua must do this because the place where Joshua is standing is holy.

You will remember that in the book of Exodus, when Yahweh first spoke with Moses, Yahweh also told Moses to remove his sandals because he was standing on holy ground, or in a holy place. In that culture, people wore sandals to protect their feet when they were outside walking. However, people took their sandals off when they went into a temple, or place of worship, so that they would not bring dirt, or dust, into that place. So the holiness of this place shows that Yahweh is meeting with Joshua through the angel, Yahweh's representative. Although Joshua has already bowed with his face to the ground in respect, he still has his unclean sandals on his feet. So Joshua does as the man says and takes his sandals off. Now Joshua is ready for whatever Yahweh is about to do.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 5:10–15 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: The Israelites celebrate the Passover feast. They eat food from the land of Canaan, including unleavened cakes and roasted grain. Yahweh also stops providing manna, because now the people can eat food that grows in Canaan.

In the second scene: On another day, while the Israelites are still camped near Jericho, Joshua suddenly sees a man holding a sword. Joshua falls facedown on the ground and asks if the man is a friend or an enemy of Israel. The man says he is neither friend nor enemy, but he is the commander of Yahweh's army. Joshua asks the man what the man wants Joshua to do. The captain of Yahweh's army tells Joshua to take Joshua's sandals off of Joshua's feet because Joshua is standing on holy ground. Joshua does what the man says.

The characters in this passage are:

- Joshua
- Yahweh
- The Israelites
- And the commander, or captain, of Yahweh's army

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

As the story begins, the Israelites are still camped at Gilgal. This means the Israelites have not moved from the place in the last story where Joshua circumcised the men and boys. We do not know the exact location of Gilgal, but we know that it was close to Jericho. We also know that Gilgal was east of Jericho but west of the Jordan River. The story says that the Israelites celebrated the Passover on the plains of Jericho. These plains were the large, flat grassland surrounding Jericho where people would grow crops like barley to eat. Gilgal was located in these plains.

In the instructions Yahweh gave to Moses in the book of Exodus, Yahweh said that men and boys had to be circumcised before they could participate in the Passover. So after all the men and boys were circumcised in the last story, they are now able to participate in Passover for the first time. In Exodus, Yahweh had commanded the Israelites to celebrate the Passover when they entered the Promised Land of Canaan. So the Passover celebration in this story would have been very important to Joshua to make sure they were obeying everything Yahweh said to do.

Stop here and discuss how you will make it clear that the Israelites are still camped in the same place as the last story. Use the same word or phrase for Gilgal as you did in the last story. Pause this audio here.

In the original language, the word Passover refers to the meal that lasts for just one night, and then the next day the Israelites would start to celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread. But in this story, the word Passover seems to be referring to more than one night. Although the story does not say the Feast of Unleavened Bread, it does say the Israelites ate bread without yeast, which is an important part of celebrating the Feast of Unleavened Bread. So the story seems to use the word Passover to speak of both events together.

The story says that the Israelites celebrated the Passover on the evening of the 14th day of the 1st month of the year. You will remember that in a previous story, the Israelites crossed the Jordan on the 10th day of the 1st month of the year, just 4 days before this. You will also remember that Joshua circumcised all of the men and boys right after they crossed the Jordan. So when the Israelites celebrate the Passover, the wounds of the men and boys have barely healed and are probably still very tender. For the Israelites, the 1st month of the year was the time of year we know as March and April. It is also important to understand that for the Israelites, a new day begins at sunset, so the phrase "on the evening" means the start of a new day. In your translation, use whatever words make it clear that this evening was the beginning of the 14th day.

Stop here as a group and discuss how you will translate this part of the story so people will understand that this evening was the beginning of the 14th day of the month. Pause this audio here.

The Passover feast reminded the Israelites of the time when God delivered them from being slaves in Egypt. The Israelites had to leave Egypt very quickly, so they had little time to make the bread for that first Passover meal. To make bread with yeast so that the bread will rise, you have to let the bread sit for a long time before you cook it. The Israelites did not have time to wait, so the Passover bread was made without yeast. Some languages may show a difference between unprepared food and prepared food. Here it seems that the produce of the land, or the food that grew in Canaan, means the grain that the Israelites gathered. Then the Israelites made the grain into the unleavened flatbread, or cakes without yeast.

The Israelites also ate parched, or roasted, grain in this story. The grain was probably barley. Barley was a grain crop that people commonly grew in both Egypt and Canaan. People used barley as food for both animals and people. People usually harvested it in March or April, so it would have been ready to gather from the fields at this time. Both the unleavened cakes and the roasted grain were easy and fast to make.

Stop here as a group and again look at pictures of cakes made without yeast and roasted barley, if needed. Discuss how you will translate unleavened, or without yeast. Pause this audio here.

The story says that the day after the Passover, or the same day that they ate the food from Canaan, Yahweh stopped sending manna down from the sky each morning as he had done to feed the Israelites in the wilderness. You may remember that the meaning of the word manna may have been, "What is it?" which is what the Israelites said when Yahweh first sent this food from the sky in the book of Exodus. Manna was the Israelites' main source of food during their time in the wilderness. The book of Exodus describes manna as a white substance that tasted like wafers, or thin flakes, made with honey. When people ground and boiled manna, they could then cook it into cakes of bread. Yahweh instructed the Israelites to only gather enough manna to feed their families each day without any left over. On the sixth day of the week, they were to collect a double portion so they could rest on the Sabbath and not have to work by collecting manna that day. Because Yahweh did not allow the Israelites to gather more manna than they needed, it showed the Israelites that everything came from Yahweh and the Israelites could not live without Yahweh. This story tells us that the Israelites never saw the manna again, and now they ate something new—the produce from the land of Canaan.

Stop here as a group and discuss this question: Tell a story about a time when people suddenly stopped seeing or experiencing a certain thing, but something new replaced it. Pay attention to how you talk about how these changes happened. Pause this audio here.

The story now uses a special word in the original language to show that some time passes before this next part of the story happens. We do not know how much time passes, but it may have been a few days. The story says, "While Joshua was by Jericho." The word "by" probably means "nearby." We already know that the people of Israel are camped at Gilgal, which is nearby Jericho. So it may be that Joshua was in the Israelite camp, or perhaps he had gone closer to Jericho to secretly see how well the city was prepared to defend itself in battle. We do not know for sure. So you may wish to say something like, "One day while Joshua and the people of Israel were camped near Jericho."

Stop here as a group and discuss how you make it clear that Joshua is nearby Jericho. Pause this audio here.

Now the storyteller gets our attention by using a word that shows that something surprising is going to happen. Joshua looks up and sees a man standing in front of him holding a sword. Joshua asks the man if the man is a friend or an enemy of Israel. The man says, "No," meaning he is neither friend nor enemy. The man says he is the commander, or captain, of Yahweh's army. Many people believe that this man was an angel, but the story does not tell us. Most likely, the army of Yahweh is the army of angels who help fight Yahweh's battles. This army of Yahweh will help fight Israel's battles too, because when Israel is following Yahweh, they are fighting Yahweh's battles. You may wish to say, "I am the one who commands" or "I command." Joshua falls facedown on the ground to show great respect.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your language, how would one person ask another person a question where they expect the person to answer between two choices? How might a person respond that the answer is neither one of the choices? Pay attention to how the person responds. In this story, the commander of Yahweh's army does not answer with one of the choices that Joshua gives him. He says that he is neither for nor against the Israelites. How will you translate his answer? Pause this audio here.

When Joshua hears what the man says, Joshua throws himself facedown on the ground in order to show his respect for the man. Joshua calls the man "my Lord," or "my master," and he calls himself the man's "servant." Joshua then asks the man what the man commands Joshua to do. This shows that Joshua understands this man is more important than Joshua.

Stop here and try showing each other what it might look like for Joshua to be facedown on the ground. Discuss as a group how you will describe what Joshua does and says when he hears what the man says. Pause this audio here.

Stop here as a group and discuss how you will make it clear that this man is from Yahweh. If needed, refer back to the story you told in script two for words and phrases to describe a conversation with a messenger from God. Pause this audio here.

The man tells Joshua to remove Joshua's sandals from Joshua's feet. Sandals were what people wore to protect the bottom of their feet when going on a journey or walking on rocky ground. A sandal has a sole on the bottom

and is tied to the foot with thongs, or straps, to keep it in place. The man says Joshua must remove his sandals because the place where Joshua is standing is holy. You may remember that Yahweh is holy, which means Yahweh is completely good, pure, powerful, and majestic. Any place, person, or object that is dedicated to Yahweh is called holy. That means that the object or person is set apart for Yahweh's special purposes. The Israelites had to follow certain rituals to make them acceptable before God. This was called "purifying themselves," or "becoming clean." Sandals were considered unclean because of the dirty, dusty roads, so this was why Joshua had to remove his sandals.

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

The story ends as Joshua obeys what the commander of Yahweh's army said 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 Joshua 5:10–15 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:

- Joshua
- Yahweh
- The Israelites
- And the commander, or captain, of Yahweh's army

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 Israelites are still camped at Gilgal, the place near Jericho where they were camped in the last story. Here the Israelites celebrate the Passover feast. They eat food from the land of Canaan, including unleavened cakes and parched grain. Yahweh also stops providing manna, because now the people can eat food growing in Canaan.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "It feels so good to finally eat food that grows in Canaan after all of these years of waiting," or
- "I feel like Yahweh must be ready to lead us to conquer the Promised Land of Canaan," or
- "I am ready to fight for this land just like Yahweh told us the first time!" or
- "I hope this new generation of Israelites will trust Yahweh better than their parents did."

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I hope that eating manna every day has taught the Israelites to trust me," or
- "I want to give the Israelites this land, but I do not want them to forget that I am the one who provides for them."

Ask the people playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "We are so glad to be eating normal food again. Manna from the sky is better than no food at all, but we are tired of eating it!" or
- "After all of these years, most of us have never eaten food from the fields. This food is delicious!"

The second scene happens on another day while the Israelites are still camped near Jericho. Joshua suddenly sees a man holding a sword. Joshua asks if the man is a friend or an enemy of Israel.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Who is this man, and where did he come from? The man startled me when he appeared so suddenly!" or
- "I feel like there is something unusual about this man. He does not seem like a normal man," or
- "I do not know why this man has his sword in his hand like that, but he must be ready to fight. I hope this man is our friend and not an enemy."

The man says he is neither friend nor enemy, but he is the commander of Yahweh's army.

Ask the person playing the man holding the sword, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Joshua does not realize who I am. If he did, he would act more afraid!" or
- "I am not here to do what Joshua wants. I am here to do what Yahweh wants."

Joshua falls facedown on the ground. Joshua respectfully asks the man what the man wants Joshua to do.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I was right! Yahweh is finally ready to send us into the Promised Land!" or
- "If this man leads Yahweh's army, he must be here to give me instructions for the battle," or
- "I better let this man know I understand who he is and that I am ready to follow what he tells me to do."

The captain of Yahweh's army tells Joshua to take Joshua's sandals off of Joshua's feet because Joshua is standing on holy ground.

Ask the person playing the man holding the sword, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Joshua is trying to be respectful, but he does not fully understand who I am. If he did, Joshua would have taken off his dirty sandals," or
- "Yahweh will win this battle, not the strength of men and their weapons. Joshua needs to prepare himself for Yahweh before he can prepare his men for battle."

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I did not mean to disrespect this man of Yahweh! I hope Yahweh will forgive me," or
- "If Yahweh is going to fight this battle for us, I had better do whatever this man says," or
- "I have seen Yahweh do impossible things before, so I will do whatever I am told to do, even if it does not make sense to me!"

Joshua takes off his sandals, just as the man told Joshua to do.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 5:10-15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

In the last story, Yahweh told Joshua to **circumcise** all of the men and boys of Israel. This was very important to prepare the Israelites for what they would do next in this story. You will remember that to circumcise means to cut off the foreskin, or loose skin, at the end of a boy or man's penis. Use the same word or phrase for circumcision that you used in the last passage. For more information, look up circumcise in the Master Glossary.

The beginning of the story says that while the "sons of Israel" were still camped at Gilgal, the **Israelites** celebrated the **Passover** feast. "Sons of Israel" means all of the male Israelites. Passover was an important celebration that Yahweh told the Israelites to celebrate every year to remind them of when Yahweh saved the Israelites from death in Egypt.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **Passover**. 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 words or phrases for **Israel** and **Israelites** that you used in previous passages. For more information on Israel, Israelites, and Passover, refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

The story says that the Israelites ate some of the **harvest**, or "**produce** of the land." Produce is food that people grow by farming. Harvest is a word that describes food that has fully grown on the plant and is ready to take off the plant to eat. Use the same word or phrase for harvest that you used in previous passages.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **produce**. 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 story says that the Israelites ate "unleavened cakes," or bread made without yeast. **Leaven**, or yeast, is a fermented substance that causes bread dough to rise before it is cooked. Bread that is made with leaven, or yeast, feels more soft and squishy. **Cakes** are another word for small pieces of bread.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **unleavened**. 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 story says that the Israelites also ate parched, or roasted, grain. This means the Israelites did not eat the grain directly from the plant. The Israelites roasted the grain over a fire first and then ate the grain.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **parched grain**, or **roasted grain**. If needed, look at the photo of roasted barley again. 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 same day that the Israelites ate the food from the land of **Canaan**, the story says that Yahweh no longer sent the **manna** each day for the Israelites to eat. Manna was a white substance that tasted like wafers made with honey. When manna was ground and boiled, it could be cooked into cakes of bread. When Yahweh first sent the manna in the wilderness to feed the Israelites, the Israelites said, "What is it?"

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **manna** and for the land of **Canaan**. See the Master Glossary for more information about Canaan. 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.

One day, while the Israelites are still camped near Jericho, Joshua sees a man standing in front of Joshua holding a **sword**. A sword is a weapon with a long, sharp-edged blade that a soldier uses to fight an enemy by slashing or thrusting. Swords were often used in battle in Bible times.

Stop here as a group and look at a picture of a **sword**, if needed. Discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for sword. If you have already translated this word or phrase in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

Joshua asks the man if the man is a friend or an enemy of Israel. The man says, "No," or neither one. The man says he is the **commander**, or captain, of Yahweh's army. A commander is the person in charge of leading the army.

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

Joshua asks the man what the man wants Joshua to do. Joshua calls the man "my **Lord**," and Joshua calls himself "your **servant**." "My Lord" means my master, or the person in authority. "Your servant" means that Joshua is ready to do whatever the man says, just like a servant or slave would do. Use the same words or phrases for Lord, servant, and master that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Lord and servant, refer to the Master Glossary.

The captain of Yahweh's army tells Joshua to take off Joshua's **sandals** because this is a **holy** place. Sandals were what people wore to protect the bottom of their feet when going on a journey or walking on rocky ground. A sandal has a sole on the bottom and is tied to the foot with thongs or straps to keep it in place. Holy means good, or completely pure. Any place, person, or object that is dedicated to Yahweh is called holy. Yahweh had chosen the Israelites to be his holy people and to serve Yahweh's purposes. In order to be holy they had to worship Yahweh in the right way.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **sandals** and **holy**. If you have already translated these words or phrases in another book of the Bible, use the same words that you have used there. For more information on holy, 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.

Joshua 5:10–15

Audio Content

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Joshua 6:1–14

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 6:1–14 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 6:1–14 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 Joshua 6:1–14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Joshua met an angel, the captain of Yahweh's army. This angel, or messenger from Yahweh, clearly reminded Joshua that Yahweh was present with the Israelites as they began to conquer the land of Canaan. Now, Yahweh is about to give Joshua instructions for how to defeat Jericho, the first Canaanite city that the Israelites come to.

Stop here and look as a group at a map showing the Jordan River, the land of Canaan, the Gilgal camp, and Jericho. Pause this audio here.

Joshua starts by explaining what the Israelites found when they arrived at the city of Jericho. The city was shut up, which means the men of Jericho had closed the gates in the city walls, and no one could open the doors from the outside. As you remember, Jericho was the city where Joshua's spies met Rahab. Rahab told the spies that her people knew about the Israelites and their God, and that they were very afraid of them. So Joshua finds the city secure and closed, because the people were afraid of the Israelite army. In fact, they were so afraid that they did not allow anyone to go in or out of the city.

Stop here and look as a group at an illustration of the city of Jericho with its walls and doors closed. How do cities or towns protect themselves from enemies where you live? How do soldiers see enemies coming from far away in your culture? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Joshua that he is giving Jericho into Joshua's hands. This is special language that means Yahweh will give Joshua victory over the city, its king, and its mighty men of valor, or its strong, courageous men of war. Yahweh commands Joshua and his soldiers to march around the city once a day for six days in a row. Here, "march" does not refer to a military activity as much as a religious procession that would have been formal and solemn. It would not have taken a long time for the Israelites to go around Jericho since cities at this time and in this part of the world were not very large. The city of Jericho only measured 225 meters by 80 meters. It is likely that the people at the front of the Israelite procession would have returned to the camp long before the rest of the group had finished marching around the city. We know from previous passages that the number of Israelite soldiers was around 40,000 men.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group. How do soldiers march in your culture? If they do not march, how do chiefs organize their men of war to make enemies afraid? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh says that the ark of the covenant will go in front of the Israelites. As you remember, the ark was a rectangular box that symbolized the very presence of Yahweh among his people. Inside the ark were the stone tablets of the covenant law, or strong promise, that Yahweh made with the Israelites. We know that four priests carried the ark since it had carrying poles on each side.

Stop here and look as a group at a picture of the ark of the covenant with its carrying poles. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh says that seven priests, carrying trumpets of ram's horns, are to walk in front of the ark. People made these trumpets from the horns of male sheep. The priests blew into them to make a loud sound. The priests will blow these trumpets as they carry them each day.

Stop here and look as a group at a picture of trumpets of ram's horns. Pause this audio here.

However, Yahweh gives special instructions for the seventh day. On the seventh day, the Israelites will march around the city seven times. The priests will blow their trumpets continuously as they march. At the end of the

seventh march, the priests' trumpets will be silent. Joshua will then give a signal for the priests to sound one long note from their trumpets. At the same time, the soldiers will shout loudly, and the walls of Jericho will collapse. The Israelites used this type of battle cry to make enemy soldiers afraid, and to encourage friendly soldiers. Yahweh says that wherever the soldiers are when the wall collapses, they will climb over the wall and go straight ahead into the city.

So Joshua, the son of Nun, gives all of Yahweh's instructions to the priests. Joshua tells them to carry the ark in front of the soldiers. He also tells seven priests to carry trumpets and walk in front of the ark. Joshua then commands the Israelite army to "go forward," or to "advance," and march around the city. Joshua sends a small group of soldiers, the advance guard, ahead of the ark while the rest of the soldiers walk behind the ark. This means the order of the group is the advance guard, the priests with trumpets, the ark, and finally, the rear guard, or the rest of the soldiers.

Stop here and look as a group at a diagram of the Israelite procession that marched around Jericho. Pause this audio here.

The Israelites obey all of Joshua's commands. The whole time the Israelites are marching, the priests blow their trumpets. In contrast, Joshua tells the soldiers to remain quiet. The soldiers do not shout or say a word until the seventh day when Joshua tells them to shout together. Joshua emphasizes that it is the ark that will circle the city and then return to the Israelite camp in Gilgal. Even though he does not mention the soldiers, we know from the rest of the story that the whole group of soldiers and priests will go with the ark. Joshua emphasizes that it is Yahweh's presence who goes before the Israelites and who will ultimately give them victory. Once the group goes around Jericho once, the whole Israelite army will return to their camp and stay the night there.

Joshua and the rest of his soldiers and priests wake up early the next morning on the second day to march around the city. Just as before, the Israelites march in the same order in front of and behind the ark, and the priests blow their ram horns continuously. They return to their camp to sleep at night. Including the first day, the Israelites march around the city in the same way for six days in a row.

In the next passage, we will see how Yahweh defeats the city of Jericho for the Israelites on the seventh day because they obeyed Yahweh's commands.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 6:1–14 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 three scenes.

In the first scene: Joshua looks at the city of Jericho and sees that its doors are shut. No one can go in or out. Yahweh tells Joshua he has given victory over Jericho, its king, and its soldiers to Joshua. Yahweh commands Joshua to order his soldiers and priests to march around the city with the ark for six days. On the seventh day after marching, Yahweh will give the Israelites victory. Yahweh says that when the soldiers yell at the same time as the priests blow the trumpets, the city walls will collapse.

In the second scene: Joshua calls together the priests and gives them Yahweh's commands. When Joshua says, "Advance," the Israelite procession begins to march around the city: first the armed guard, then the seven priests blowing their horns, then the ark, and finally the rest of the soldiers. The soldiers are completely quiet. When they have finished circling the city, the Israelites return to their camp to sleep for the night.

In the third scene: Joshua gets up early the next morning, along with the priests and soldiers. Just as before, they march around the city in the same way, with the priests blowing their horns and the soldiers staying quiet. They return to camp and stay there for the night. Including the first day, the Israelites march in the same way around the city for six days, just as Yahweh commanded.

The characters in this passage are:

- Joshua
- Yahweh
- Seven priests with horns
- Four priests carrying the ark
- Soldiers in front of the ark
- Soldiers behind the ark
- And the people of Jericho

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

Joshua sees that the city of Jericho is completely closed. All of the doors are closed in the walls of the city, and no one can go in or out. The people of Jericho are afraid of the Israelites.

When Yahweh tells Joshua he has given the city, its king, and its brave soldiers into Joshua's hands, this is special language that means Yahweh is giving Joshua complete power and victory over the city. Yahweh tells Joshua that Joshua and his soldiers will march around the city in the same way for six days. It is important to notice that this is for six days in a row. The order of the march will be the same each day.

Yahweh says that seven priests will also march with ram horns in front of the ark. The ark is the most important part of the procession, since it represents the very presence of Yahweh going with the Israelites as they march. It is important to remember that there are also four more priests who will carry the ark, since the ark has four carrying poles.

Yahweh says the seventh day of marching will be different. Instead of marching around the city one time, the Israelites will march around the city seven times. Once they have completed their march, the soldiers will wait until the priests sound a loud note on their horns. Then all the soldiers will yell. When this happens, the city walls will fall, or collapse, straight down. They will not be knocked over. Then the Israelite soldiers will enter the city to fight from wherever they are when the walls fall down.

Joshua calls together the priests and gives them Yahweh's instructions. It is important to notice that the storyteller gives more details as the story goes along. We only hear about some of Yahweh's instructions to Joshua at first, but now we hear the rest of Yahweh's plan when Joshua tells the priests what to do.

It is important to remember that when Joshua "tells them to take up the ark of the covenant," Joshua is telling the priests to physically lift the ark with its carrying poles.

Though the story does not say this earlier, Joshua now gives more specific instructions for the order of the Israelites' march. When he tells them to "advance," or "go forward," he orders a small group of soldiers to go ahead of the seven priests with horns. After the seven priests, the four priests carrying the ark will march, and finally, the rest of the soldiers will march behind the ark.

Stop here and talk about a time you have heard someone command someone else to move forward. What do your army commanders say to make their soldiers start marching? How will you translate when Joshua tells the soldiers to "advance," or "move forward?" Pause this audio here.

It is important to remember that the rear guard put space between themselves and the ark, since they were not supposed to get too close to the presence of Yahweh.

When Joshua says the seven priests went before Yahweh, this means they went ahead of the ark, since the ark represented the invisible presence of Yahweh.

Stop here and make your own model, using rocks or other objects, of how the Israelites marched around the city. Pause this audio here.

It is important to remember that as they march, none of the soldiers make a sound. This is because Joshua ordered them to not make a sound until the seventh day, when he would tell them to shout. Joshua repeats phrases like "you shall not shout" and "do not let your voice be heard" to emphasize that the soldiers should be

completely quiet. This means the priests blowing their horns consistently is the only sound the Israelites make as they march.

Joshua ordered the priests to carry the ark of Yahweh around the city. Yahweh's presence is the thing that causes the Israelites to win the battle, and the storyteller makes that very clear. Even though Joshua does not mention them, the soldiers and the priests also go with the ark as the priests carry it around the city.

In this passage, Joshua uses different titles to refer to the same ark. The ark, the ark of Yahweh, and the ark of the covenant of Yahweh all refer to the same box where the presence of Yahweh lived.

Stop here and discuss: Although the passage says the ark went ahead of them, the priests actually carried the ark. By emphasizing the ark, this passage makes it clear that the ark is important to the victory of the Israelites. How will you make this clear in your translation? Pause this audio here.

It is important to note that at the end of each march, the Israelites return to their camp in Gilgal to spend the night. They wake up early the next morning and march in the exact same way around the city. Including the first day, they do this for six days in a row.

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 Joshua 6:1–14 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:

- Joshua
- Yahweh
- Seven priests with horns
- Four priests carrying the ark
- Soldiers in front of the ark
- Soldiers behind the ark
- And the people of Jericho

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 Joshua looking at the city of Jericho and seeing that its doors are shut. No one can go in or out. Yahweh tells Joshua he has given victory over Jericho, its king, and its soldiers to Joshua.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I am thankful for Yahweh's promise, but I have no idea how we are going to win against such a well-protected city," or
- "Nervous. We have never battled against such a well-guarded city before," or
- "Comforted. Yahweh is with me. I will listen to what Yahweh says, and I will believe his promises."

Act out that Yahweh commands Joshua to order his soldiers and priests to march around the city with the ark for six days. On the seventh day after marching, Yahweh says he will give the Israelites victory. Yahweh says that when the soldiers yell at the same time that the priests blow the trumpets, the city walls will collapse.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Nervous. I hope this will be a new start and that the people will obey Yahweh's commands even if they do not understand them," or
- "Thankful. Yahweh is promising to go with us, no matter how ridiculous we may look to our enemies," or
- "Determined. As a soldier, this plan makes no sense, but I trust Yahweh."

Act out that Joshua calls together the priests and gives them Yahweh's commands. When Joshua says, "Advance," the Israelite procession begins to march around the city: first the armed guard, then the seven priests blowing their horns, then the four priests who carry the ark, and finally the rest of the soldiers. The soldiers are completely quiet.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the priests, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Comforted. Yahweh is marching with us," or
- "I am proud to blow my horn and announce the victory that Yahweh will bring," or
- "I am thankful there are soldiers marching ahead and behind us."

Act out the Israelites finishing their march around the city. They return to their camp to sleep for the night. The next morning Joshua, the priests, and the soldiers wake up early. Just as before, they march around the city in the same way with the priests blowing their horns and the soldiers staying quiet. They return to camp and stay there for the night.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelite soldiers, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Confused. What are we waiting for?" or
- "Frustrated. It is hard to wait on Yahweh to act," or
- "Thoughtful. I think Yahweh is testing our obedience again."

Ask the person playing the people of Jericho, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Confused. Why did the Israelites not attack us?" or
- "Safe. They can make as much noise as they want, but there is no way they can get past our walls," or
- "Suspicious. What are they planning and what are they carrying around?"

Act out the Israelites marching the same way around the city for six days, just as Yahweh commanded.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 6:1–14 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Joshua finds the **city** of Jericho shut up, or completely closed, because they were afraid of the **Israelites**. Remember, the Israelites were God's special people. Use the same word or phrase for a city that was big enough to have a wall around it as you have used in previous passages. Use the same word for Israelites that you used in previous passages. For more information on the Israelites, refer to the Master Glossary.

Just as **Yahweh** spoke directly to Moses, Yahweh speaks directly to Joshua as the new leader of the Israelites. Yahweh tells Joshua that he will conquer Jericho and its **king**. Use the same words or phrases for Yahweh and king that you used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh and king, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh says seven **priests** will carry rams' horns in front of the ark and they will blow them continuously.

Stop here and discuss what word or phrase you will use to describe **ram's horns**. If needed, look at the picture of the rams' horns again. Be sure to use the same word or phrase that you used in previous books. Pause this audio here.

Priests served in the tabernacle, offered sacrifices on behalf of the people, and taught the people how to live. Use the same word for priest as you used in previous passages. For more information on priest, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh says the ark will go before the Israelites as they march around the city of Jericho. The **ark**, or the **ark of the covenant**, refers to a wooden box covered in pure gold that Yahweh asked Moses to make. In this passage, different names are used for the ark including the ark, the ark of Yahweh, and the ark of the covenant of Yahweh. The ark holds the stone tablets Yahweh gave to Moses with the 10 laws, or 10 commandments, on them. The Israelites called these tablets the covenant, or the binding promise Yahweh made with his people. The Israelites believed that Yahweh lived in the space directly above the ark, so it came to symbolize God's presence. Use the same word or phrase for the ark of the covenant as you used in previous passages. For more information on the ark of the covenant, refer to the Master Glossary.

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.

Joshua 6:1–14

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (15223791 KB)

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Joshua 6:15–27

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 6:15–27 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 6:15–27 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 Joshua 6:15–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last passage, Joshua arrived at the first Canaanite city, Jericho, and found the gates in the wall closed with no people going in or out of the city. Yahweh gave Joshua specific instructions for defeating Jericho. The Israelites followed Yahweh's instructions and marched around the city for six days in a row. Now, on the seventh day, Yahweh will give the Israelites victory over Jericho.

On the seventh day, Joshua, the priests, and the Israelite soldiers woke up at dawn, or when the sun was coming up in the morning, in their camp. They marched around the city of Jericho, not one time but seven times, just as Yahweh commanded. They marched in the same order as the previous six days. This means the advance guard went first, then the priests with trumpets, then the priests carrying the ark, and finally, the rest of the soldiers.

Though the order of events can be confusing, it is most likely that after the seventh march, Joshua gave instructions to the soldiers before the priests blew their trumpets a final time. Joshua tells the Israelite army to shout loudly when the priests blow their trumpets.

Stop here and look at a picture of trumpets made from rams' horns as a group. Pause this audio here.

Joshua says that Yahweh will give them victory over the city. Joshua makes it clear that though the Israelites will fight, it is because of Yahweh's power that the Israelite army will defeat Jericho, and not because of their own cleverness or strength.

Joshua tells his army that they will devote everything in the city to Yahweh for destruction. This means that the Israelites must destroy everything in the city as an offering to Yahweh. This includes both young and old people, animals, and nonliving things.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story of a time when your army, or an army you have heard about, completely defeated or destroyed a city or area. Pause this audio here.

Joshua says the only exception is that the soldiers will not destroy Rahab the prostitute and all those who are in her house. This does not literally mean that they will not destroy anyone who comes into Rahab's house, but rather it refers to all of Rahab's extended family. As you remember, Rahab hid the Israelite spies and helped them escape. The spies, or messengers, had promised Rahab that the Israelites would not harm Rahab or her family when they defeated Jericho, as long as Rahab and her family stayed inside Rahab's house. If any of Rahab's family members left Rahab's house, then that person would not be saved.

In contrast, Joshua orders his soldiers to destroy everything else in the city. Joshua emphasizes that the soldiers should obey his command when he tells them to "keep yourselves from the things devoted to destruction." Though the soldiers might be tempted to take the devoted things because of greed, Joshua wants to be sure they do not take anything that belongs to Yahweh. Joshua warns that if the soldiers do take things devoted to Yahweh, then they will bring disaster on all the Israelites.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In the stories of war in your culture, who gets most of the things that belonged to the defeated enemy? Why? Pause this audio here.

However, if the Israelites find silver and gold, or vessels of bronze and iron, then they should not destroy them because they are sacred, or set apart, to Yahweh. Vessels can refer to any type of container, tool, or decorative thing. Instead of destroying the objects, Joshua tells the soldiers to keep them for use in a storehouse, or the treasury. The priests could use the things in the treasury for worship to Yahweh. The storehouse was probably

in or near the tabernacle. As you remember, the tabernacle is the portable tent where Yahweh lived among his people and the Israelites worshiped Yahweh.

When Joshua finished giving instructions, the priests blew their ram's horns and the Israelite army shouted loudly at the same time. Immediately, the walls of Jericho fell down and the Israelite army went up into the city, ran over the crumbled walls, and conquered it. The army had to go up since Jericho was built on a hill.

Stop here and look at a picture of Jericho and its walls as a group. Pause this audio here.

The Israelite army then completely destroyed the city "with the edge of the sword." This means they took their swords and killed everyone in the city, including all people and animals.

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

But Joshua keeps the spies' promise to Rahab. Joshua instructs the two men to go to Rahab's house and bring her and all of her family members out of the house. The Israelites do not destroy Rahab and her family, because the spies promised to spare her. The two men obey Joshua and take Rahab, her parents, her brothers, and all of the other members of her family outside of the city. The spies place Rahab's family outside of the Israelite camp, since they are Canaanites and do not follow Yahweh's laws. They are ceremonially unclean because of this. For the Israelites, a clean person was a person who was fit for service to Yahweh and who was acceptable to participate in worship to Yahweh. Unclean people, like the Canaanites, were unfit for service to Yahweh. If an unclean person touched a clean person, then that person also became unclean and could not be in the camp with the rest of the Israelites. However, Rahab "lives among the Israelites even until this day." This is another way to say that Rahab and her descendants became a part of the nation of Israel. We do not know exactly how this happened, but at some point Rahab or one of her descendants must have married into an Israelite family.

The Israelites completely destroy Jericho. They not only kill every person and animal, except for Rahab's family, but they also burn everything left inside the city. Joshua emphasizes that the soldiers obeyed Yahweh's command and removed all of the items made of precious metals from the city before burning it. The Israelites kept these items for Yahweh's treasury in the tabernacle, or the house of Yahweh.

After the Israelites destroy the city, Joshua makes an oath, or gives a solemn warning, to the Israelites. Joshua says that Yahweh will curse, or punish, any person who rebuilds Jericho. When a person cursed someone, it meant Yahweh was angry with that person and would punish them. Joshua says that if anyone builds the foundation of Jericho, then their firstborn son will die, and if anyone sets up the gates of Jericho, then their youngest son will die. A foundation is the bottom part of the city walls that holds all of the weight of the walls. A foundation makes a structure stable. The gates were a part of the city walls where people could go in and out of the city. Joshua is not cursing anyone who lives in the same place where Jericho once was. Instead, he is saying that Yahweh will punish any person who rebuilds the city with its walls and gate as a city of war.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture use curses? Who gives curses and why? What is the difference between how Joshua cursed the city and how people use curses in your culture? Pause this audio here.

Just as Yahweh promised, Yahweh was with Joshua and he helped him in everything he did. Everyone in the land of Canaan heard about what a great man Joshua was. Yahweh defeats the first Canaanite city the Israelites come to with only trumpets and shouts. Jericho's defeat was the first glimpse of the ultimate victory Yahweh would give his people over the land of Canaan.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 6:15–27 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 five scenes.

In the first scene: Joshua, the priests, and the Israelite soldiers wake up early in camp. They then march around the city of Jericho seven times with the ark.

In the second scene: After the seventh march around Jericho, Joshua tells the soldiers to shout loudly when the priests blow their ram's horns, and Yahweh will give them victory. Joshua tells them to destroy all the people and animals in the city. The Israelites will only spare Rahab and her family. Joshua tells them not to take anything from the city for themselves, because this will bring punishment on the Israelites. Joshua tells the soldiers to keep silver, gold, and vessels of iron and bronze for Yahweh's treasury.

In the third scene: Joshua gives the signal and the priests blow their ram's horns loudly while all the Israelite soldiers shout. Immediately, the city walls fall down and all the Israelite soldiers go up into the city and conquer it. The Israelite army completely destroys the city and kills every person and animal inside.

In the fourth scene: Joshua tells the two spies to go to Rahab's house and to bring Rahab and her family out of the city. The spies obey Joshua. They bring Rahab and her family out of Jericho and place them outside the Israelite camp.

In the fifth scene: After the Israelites bring out all of the precious metals for Yahweh's treasury, the Israelite army burns everything left in Jericho. Joshua says that Yahweh will punish any person who tries to rebuild Jericho, and their children will die. Joshua's fame spreads through the land.

The characters in this passage are:

- Joshua
- The Israelite army
- The priests with their ram's horns
- The two Israelite spies
- Rahab
- Rahab's family
- And the people of Jericho

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

It is important to remember that the Israelites have already marched around Jericho with the ark for six days in a row. They have been following all of Yahweh's instructions. Yahweh has already promised Joshua victory.

On the seventh day, the Israelite army marches around the city seven times, just as Yahweh said. As you remember, the ark, which represents the presence of Yahweh, is going before the Israelite army.

Probably after the seventh march around the city, Joshua gives instructions to the soldiers. Joshua gives instructions to the soldiers first, then they shout for a final time when the priests blow their rams' horns.

Joshua tells the soldiers that Yahweh has given them the city. This expression means Yahweh will help the Israelites capture Jericho. Even though it has not happened yet, the phrase shows that Joshua is certain that the victory will happen through Yahweh's power.

Joshua tells the soldiers that they must devote everything in Jericho to Yahweh. In other words, they must completely destroy all the buildings, all the people, and all the animals. The Israelite army must destroy Jericho as an offering, or as a way to dedicate it to Yahweh, since Yahweh was the one who gave them victory.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Retell the story from Setting the Stage about how your army, or an army you have heard about, completely destroyed a city or area. Pay attention to the words and phrases you use to talk about the complete destruction of the city. How will you translate "devote to destruction"? Pause this audio here.

It is important to note that two stories are being told at the same time—Jericho's destruction and the story of Rahab. Telling these stories at the same time emphasizes how the stories contrast. While the Israelites

completely destroy Jericho, the Israelites spare Rahab and the others in her house. "The others in her house" refer to other members of Rahab's family. Joshua spares them because Rahab chose to hide the Israelite spies when they first came to Jericho.

Joshua warns the soldiers that even though they may want the things in the city for themselves, they are not to take anything, because they should devote it all to Yahweh by destroying it. If the soldiers do take something from Jericho, Joshua says they will bring destruction, or punishment, on the whole Israelite camp.

Joshua commands the soldiers to save all the gold, silver, and vessels of iron and bronze that they find in the city. These items are sacred, or set apart for Yahweh, and the priests will place them in Yahweh's treasury, or the tabernacle storehouse. This was where the priests kept items that they used in worship ceremonies.

The Israelite army does just as Joshua commanded. The priests blow their rams' horns a final time, and the whole Israelite army shouts at the same time. The walls of Jericho fall straight down, or collapse, and the soldiers climb over the ruins and enter the city from wherever they are standing. The phrase "they took the city" means they defeated the soldiers of Jericho and captured the city.

When Joshua says they devoted the city with the "edge of the sword," it means the Israelites used their swords to kill all the people and animals in the city.

Joshua tells the two spies to keep their promise and go to Rahab's house and remove her and her family from the city. Rahab's family is the only exception to the complete destruction of Jericho. It is unclear whether Joshua gave these instructions to the spies before or after the battle started. You may want to reorder the story so that Joshua gives instructions to the spies before the battle starts. Be sure to order the story in a way that makes the most sense in your translation.

It is important to note that the spies place Rahab's family outside of the Israelite camp, since Rahab and her family members are Canaanites and therefore ceremonially unclean.

The Israelite soldiers set aside all the precious metals they find in Jericho for Yahweh's treasury. Then the soldiers burn the entire city.

Joshua uses repetition to emphasize the complete destruction of Jericho. In contrast, Joshua also uses repetition to emphasize the rescue of Rahab and her family. Joshua says that he "spared Rahab and her family," and that "she lives among the Israelites until this day." While Joshua cursed Jericho, Rahab's descendants became a part of the people of God.

Joshua makes an oath, or gives a strong warning, to the Israelites. Joshua says, "At the cost of his firstborn son, he will lay its foundation. At the cost of his youngest son, he will set up its gates." This means that Yahweh will curse, or punish, anyone who rebuilds Jericho. Their children, from their oldest to their youngest, will die.

Yahweh is with Joshua and helps Joshua in everything he does. Everyone in the land of Canaan hears about Joshua and the things Joshua did.

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 Joshua 6:15–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has five scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Joshua
- The Israelite army
- The priests with their ram's horns
- The two Israelite spies
- Rahab
- Rahab's family
- And the people of Jericho

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 Joshua, the priests, and the Israelite soldiers waking up early in camp. They march around the city of Jericho seven times with the ark. After the seventh march around Jericho, Joshua tells the soldiers to shout loudly when the priests blow their ram's horns, and Yahweh will give them victory.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelite soldiers, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Unsure. I still do not understand how we can win when we cannot get inside the city," or
- "Confident. Yahweh has done the impossible before. Yahweh will do the impossible again," or
- "Finally we will have victory. I am so tired of marching."

Act out Joshua telling the soldiers to destroy all the people and animals in the city. The soldiers will only spare Rahab and her family. Joshua tells them not to take anything from the city, because they will bring punishment on the Israelites. Joshua tells the soldiers to keep silver, gold, and vessels of iron and bronze for Yahweh's treasury.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelite soldiers, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Surprised. We cannot keep anything at all?" or
- "This is going to be hard, but I will not disobey Yahweh," or
- "After seven days of marching in silence, I understand that this victory will come completely from Yahweh's power and not my own."

Act out Joshua giving the signal, and the priests blowing their ram's horns loudly, while all of the Israelite soldiers shout. Immediately, the city walls fall down.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Yahweh has done it again. Yahweh always does what Yahweh says," or
- "Joy. Yahweh is with us. What enemy can stand against us?" or
- "I wish Moses was here to see this."

All of the Israelites go up into the city and conquer it. The Israelite army completely destroys the city, killing every person and animal inside.

At the same time, act out Joshua telling the two spies to go to Rahab's house and to bring Rahab and her family out of the city. The spies obey Joshua. They bring Rahab and her family out of Jericho and place them outside the Israelite camp.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Rahab, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I am relieved they kept their promise despite who I am," or
- "I am thankful they rescued my family, too. I hope we can find our place among these new people," or
- "I am sad for my city, but I know no one can stand against the God of the Israelites."

Ask the person playing the two spies, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I am thankful that Joshua allowed us to honor our promise to Rahab," or
- "I am glad Yahweh is rewarding Rahab for helping us," or
- "We must keep them out of the camp until they understand Yahweh's commands."

Act out the Israelite soldiers bringing out all the precious metals for Yahweh's treasury. Then they burn everything left in Jericho. Joshua says that Yahweh will curse, or punish, any person who tries to rebuild Jericho, and their children will die. Joshua's fame spreads through the land.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 6:15–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

After the Israelite army marches around the **city** of Jericho seven times, Joshua tells the soldiers to shout at the same time as the **priests** blow their trumpets, or **ram's horns**. Use the same word for city, priest, and ram's horns as you used in previous passages. For more information on priest, refer to the Master Glossary.

Joshua tells the soldiers to shout loudly, because **Yahweh** has given them the city. Use the same word or phrase for Yahweh that you used in previous passages. For more information on the Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

Joshua tells the soldiers to spare Rahab the **prostitute**, because she hid the **spies** that they sent. Be sure to use the same word for prostitute and spies as you used in the previous story about Rahab.

The Israelites destroy every living thing in the city with the **sword**, which means that they use their swords to kill every animal and person. Use the same word for sword that you have used in previous passages.

Joshua tells the soldiers that if they take any of the things devoted to Yahweh, then they will bring destruction on the camp of **Israel**. The camp of Israel refers to the Israelites, or the people of Israel. Use the same word for Israel as you used in previous passages. For more information on Israel, refer to the Master Glossary.

All the items of gold, silver, bronze, or iron are **holy**, or set apart for Yahweh. Use the same word for holy as you used in previous passages. For more information on holy, refer to the Master Glossary.

These items of gold, silver, bronze, and iron will belong to the **treasury** of Yahweh. The treasury was a storeroom that the priests used in or near the tabernacle. The priests stored items in the storeroom that they used during worship ceremonies.

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

After the Israelite army completely destroys Jericho, Joshua makes an **oath**. An oath can be a serious promise which is also a solemn warning. In this case, Yahweh is promising that he will curse anyone who rebuilds the city of Jericho. In this way, Yahweh is warning the people. Use the same word for oath, meaning warning, as you used in previous passages. For more information on oath, refer to the Master Glossary.

Joshua says that Yahweh will **curse** anyone who tries to rebuild Jericho. To curse someone is the opposite of to bless someone. When you curse them, you wish that something bad will happen to them. When Yahweh curses someone, the bad thing that Yahweh says will happen will certainly happen. Yahweh curses people to punish them. Yahweh told the Israelites that if they obeyed him, Yahweh would bless them. If they disobeyed Yahweh, Yahweh would curse them.

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

Joshua 6:15–27

Audio Content

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Joshua 7:1–9

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 7:1–9 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 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 Joshua 7:1–9 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last passage, Yahweh gave the Israelites victory over the first Canaanite city they came to—Jericho. Joshua told his soldiers to devote everything in the city to Yahweh by completely destroying it. Joshua warned the soldiers that if they took anything from Jericho, Yahweh would punish all the Israelites. Now, we find out

that someone did take something from Jericho in secret, and the Israelites will lose their next battle because of it.

At the beginning of the passage, we learn the Israelites broke faith, or were unfaithful, to Yahweh, because someone took something from Jericho before the Israelites destroyed the city. As we know, the Israelites were supposed to burn all the things inside of Jericho. All of these things were an offering to Yahweh. The Israelites were unfaithful to Yahweh when they did not burn all the devoted things, because it was a serious offense against Yahweh. The storyteller not only tells us who disobeyed Yahweh, but he also lists that person's genealogy, or ancestors. It was Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zimri, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah. Though it was only one man who disobeyed Yahweh, Achan made Yahweh very angry with all the Israelites.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story of when one person who acted wrongly seriously affected your entire community. Pause this audio here.

Since Achan took things from Jericho in secret, Joshua did not know about his act of disobedience. Just as he did before with Jericho, Joshua sends out spies from the Israelite camp in Gilgal to get information about a nearby city called Ai. Ai was near Beth Aven to the east of Bethel. It was a city on a mountain ridge some 24 kilometers northwest of Jericho. Ai was both smaller and at a higher elevation than Jericho.

Stop here and look as a group at a map of where Jericho is in relation to Ai and Bethel. Pause this audio here.

Joshua tells his spies to go up and gather information about Ai and the land around it. Joshua wants to know any information that will help him plan an attack on Ai. The spies obey Joshua. Then the spies return to tell him what they found out. The spies tell Joshua that it is not necessary to send the whole Israelite army to attack Ai. The spies say that instead, Joshua can defeat Ai with only 2,000 to 3,000 men. This was a very small portion of the Israelite army, since they had around 40,000 soldiers in total. The spies say there is no reason for Joshua to make the whole army tired when Joshua could just send a few soldiers and easily defeat this smaller city.

Joshua follows the spies' advice. Joshua only sends 3,000 soldiers to attack Ai. But instead of easily winning against the smaller city, the soldiers of Ai defeat the Israelite soldiers and cause them to run away. The soldiers of Ai kill 36 Israelite men in front of the town gate and down the hill leading to Shebarim, the rock quarries. Like Jericho, a wall surrounded Ai. A gate in the wall was the only way for people to go in and out. The Ai soldiers chased the Israelites as far as Shebarim, which was a place where people dug for rocks to use in building things. The Israelites' hearts melted with fear, because the people of Ai had defeated them. This is special language. "Hearts melted with fear" means the defeat caused the Israelites to be very afraid and to not have courage.

When the soldiers return and tell Joshua what happened, Joshua and the elders, or the other Israelite leaders, tear their clothes and put dust on their heads. They lay down on the ground with their faces downward in front of the ark of Yahweh until the evening. As you remember, the ark represented the presence of Yahweh. In Hebrew culture, when people tore their clothes, lay on the ground, and put dust on their head, they showed their humiliation and sorrow.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What do people in your culture do to show humiliation and sorrow? Where you live, how would an army behave after someone defeated them? Pause this audio here.

Joshua starts his prayer to Yahweh by using a word like "alas," or "this is terrible," to show grief and shock. Joshua asks Yahweh a question he does not expect Yahweh to answer as a way to complain. Joshua thinks that Yahweh may be responsible for Israel's defeat. Joshua asks why Yahweh allowed the Israelites to cross the Jordan River into the Promised Land if Yahweh was going to allow the Amorites to defeat them. When Joshua mentions the Amorite people, Joshua may be talking about all the Canaanites, or more specifically, the group of people who lived in the hills near Ai. Joshua believes the Amorites are going to destroy, or kill, the Israelites. Joshua shows regret by saying he wishes that the Israelites had been content to stay on the east side of the Jordan River and had not crossed into the land Yahweh promised them.

Stop here and look as a group at a map showing the Jordan River and the land of Canaan. Pause this audio here.

Joshua asks, "What can I say about the fact that Israel ran away from their enemies?" This is another question Joshua does not expect Yahweh to answer. Joshua uses the question to continue his complaint against Yahweh, since Joshua cannot understand why Yahweh would allow the people of Ai to conquer the Israelites. When Joshua says, "Israel turned their backs on their enemies," Joshua means that they ran away from the battle, so

their enemies defeated them. Joshua tells Yahweh that all the people who live in Canaan will hear about the Israelites' defeat, and the people will come and attack the Israelites. When Joshua says they will "cut off our name from the earth," Joshua means their enemies will kill them, and no one will remember the Israelites' names anymore. Joshua then asks another question that he does not expect Yahweh to answer: Joshua asks what Yahweh will do for Yahweh's great name. Joshua is strongly suggesting that Israel's defeat will damage Yahweh's reputation, because the people of Canaan will see Yahweh as a weak god who allows enemies to defeat his people.

In the next passage, we will hear Yahweh's response to Joshua's prayer as Yahweh reveals Achan's secret disobedience.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 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: Achan secretly takes things from Jericho before the Israelite army destroys everything in the city.

In the second scene: Joshua sends spies to Ai. The spies go out to the small city. Then the spies return to report back to Joshua. The spies tell Joshua that Joshua only needs to send 2,000 to 3,000 soldiers to defeat Ai. Joshua listens to their advice. Joshua sends 3,000 soldiers to attack Ai.

In the third scene: The 3,000 Israelite soldiers attack Ai, but the people of Ai defeat the Israelites. The soldiers who protect Ai kill 36 Israelites. The soldiers chase the Israelites away from the city, down the hill, and as far as the rock quarry.

In the fourth scene: The surviving Israelite soldiers return to the camp. The soldiers tell Joshua what happened at Ai. Joshua and the Israelite elders tear their clothes, lay on the ground in front of the ark, and put dust on their heads. In the evening, Joshua prays to Yahweh. Joshua asks why Yahweh allowed their enemies to defeat them.

The characters in this passage are:

- Achan
- Joshua
- The Israelite army
- The soldiers of Ai
- The Israelite spies
- The Israelite elders
- And Yahweh

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

It is important to remember that Yahweh told the Israelites to destroy everything in Jericho as a way to devote the city to Yahweh. This means that Achan took things from Jericho in secret before the Israelite army completely destroyed the city. Achan broke faith, or did not keep his promise, to Yahweh.

Even though only one man disobeyed Yahweh, Yahweh's anger burned against all of Israel. This is special language that means Yahweh was very angry with all of the Israelites.

Stop here and discuss with your group: Talk about a time when someone you know was very angry with someone else because that person was unfaithful or broke a promise. Pay attention to how you describe this strong anger. What words or phrases will you use to describe that Yahweh is very angry with the Israelites? Pause this audio here.

Now the story focuses on what Joshua is doing. Joshua does not know what Achan has done, so Joshua sends men to "go up" and spy out the land near the city of Ai. Joshua expects that the Israelites will continue to conquer cities in Canaan.

It is important to remember that Joshua is at the Israelite camp in Gilgal near the destroyed city of Jericho. Since Ai was on a mountain ridge, the spies needed to walk uphill to the city.

The spies go to Ai. Then the spies come back to report to Joshua. The spies tell Joshua that Joshua only needs to send 2,000 to 3,000 soldiers to defeat the city, because the city is small.

Joshua sends 3,000 soldiers up the hill to attack Ai while the rest of the army stays in the Israelite camp. Like Jericho, Ai was surrounded by a wall.

The storyteller tells us that Ai defeated the Israelites and killed 36 soldiers. Then the storyteller tells us more details about what happened. The two armies fight in front of the town gates, and then the Israelites turn and run away. The Ai soldiers chase the Israelite soldiers down the hill as far as Shebarim, the rock quarry. Along the way, the Ai soldiers kill 36 Israelite soldiers.

The hearts of the Israelites melted and became water. You will remember that the hearts of the people in Jericho melted in fear. This is also special language that means the Israelites were very afraid.

When they hear the news, Joshua and the Israelite leaders tear their clothes, lay on the ground in front of the ark, and put dust on their heads to show grief. They most likely tore their upper and under garments in front of their chests as a symbol of pain in their hearts. Joshua was not expecting this to happen!

It is important to remember that the ark of Yahweh represented Yahweh's presence. One way to show this is by having the actor for Yahweh stand in front of Joshua and the elders as they lie on the ground.

Joshua prays to Yahweh. Joshua uses a word like "Alas," or "this is terrible," to show grief and sorrow. Joshua calls Yahweh "Lord," or master, to show respect. Joshua asks several questions that Joshua does not expect Yahweh to answer. Instead, Joshua uses the questions to make a complaint against Yahweh. Joshua does not understand why Yahweh would allow Ai to defeat the Israelites.

Stop here and discuss as a group: When you are very sad or upset, how do you show your grief? What kinds of words do you use to say that the situation is terrible? Pause this audio here.

When Joshua says, "give into the hands of the Amorites," Joshua is using special language that means Yahweh has allowed the Amorites to have control over and defeat the Israelites.

Joshua asks Yahweh why Yahweh allowed the people to cross the Jordan River at all. Joshua uses the question to show regret that the Israelites entered the land of Canaan.

Joshua asks, "What can I say...?" to emphasize Joshua's complaint. Joshua says the Israelites turned their backs on their enemies. This is special language that means the Israelites ran away from their enemies. Joshua is afraid that their enemies will "cut off our names from the earth." This is special language that means the Canaanites will kill the Israelites and no one will remember the Israelites anymore.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Think about people who no one remembers anymore, maybe because another group destroyed them all. How do you talk about no one remembering them? Pause this audio here.

Joshua uses the question, "What will this do for your great name?" as a way to tell Yahweh that the Israelites' defeat will damage Yahweh's reputation. Joshua believes the people who live in the land of Canaan will think Yahweh is weak because Yahweh allowed them to defeat his people.

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 Joshua 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:

- Achan
- Joshua
- The Israelite army
- The soldiers of Ai
- The Israelite spies
- The Israelite elders
- 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.

Act out Achan secretly taking things from Jericho before the Israelite army destroys everything in the city.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Achan, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Surely no one will notice if only a few things are missing," or
- "Rebellious. I know Yahweh said not to keep anything, but I think that is a waste of materials. Nobody will notice if I keep some things hidden," or
- "Guilty. I hope nobody finds out what I have done."

Act out Joshua sending the spies to Ai. The spies go out to the small city. Then the spies return to report back to Joshua. The spies tell Joshua that Joshua only needs to send 2,000 to 3,000 soldiers to defeat Ai.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the spies, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Relaxed. After a big city like Jericho, this will be an easy victory," or
- "There is no need for all of the army to fight and become tired," or
- "Excited. Maybe taking the Promised Land will not be as hard as we expected."

Act out Joshua listening to the spies' advice. Joshua sends 3,000 soldiers to attack Ai. The 3,000 Israelite soldiers attack Ai, but the enemy defeats them. The soldiers who protect Ai kill 36 Israelites. The soldiers chase the Israelites away from the city, down the hill as far as the rock quarry.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the soldiers of Ai, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Surprised. I thought that would be so much harder," or
- "Victorious. Now they know not to attack us again," or
- "Where is their God now? We had no reason to be afraid."

Act out the surviving Israelite soldiers returning to camp and telling Joshua what happened at Ai.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the defeated soldiers, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Confused. I thought Yahweh said he was with us," or
- "Devastated. If we cannot beat such a small city, how are we supposed to take over the whole land?" or
- "Maybe we should have taken more soldiers with us."

Act out Joshua and the Israelite elders tearing their clothes, lying on the ground in front of the ark, and putting dust on their heads. In the evening, Joshua prays to Yahweh. Joshua asks why Yahweh allowed them to be defeated.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Dismayed. It is one of my first acts as the new leader, and I have failed," or
- "Upset and surprised. Why would Yahweh allow us to be defeated? I should have asked Yahweh what to do before sending the soldiers," or
- "Confused. What have we done to lose Yahweh's favor?"

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 7:1-9 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Achan was unfaithful, or broke faith, when he took some of the devoted things from Jericho. The **devoted things** refer to everything in Jericho that Yahweh told the Israelites to destroy as a way to offer them to Yahweh. These things belonged to Yahweh. Be sure to translate devoted things in the same way you have in previous passages.

Faith is belief that what Yahweh says about himself is true. A person who is **faithful** is committed to do what Yahweh tells them to do. Because Achan did not believe what Yahweh said, and Achan did not do what Yahweh told him to do, Achan was unfaithful.

Stop here and discuss how you will talk about Achan being **unfaithful**. For more information on faith, refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

Joshua sends men to **spy**, or gather information, about the city of Ai. Use the same word for spy as you have used in previous passages.

A small group of **Israelites** attack the city of Ai, but the Ai soldiers defeat them. The Israelites refer to all of the descendants of Abraham, or the people of Yahweh. Use the same word or phrase for the Israelites as you used in previous passages. For more information on the Israelites, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Israelites' hearts **melted in fear**. Use the same words or phrases for "melted in fear" as you have used in previous passages.

When Joshua hears about the defeat, he tears his clothes and lies on the ground in front of the ark of **Yahweh**, or the **ark of the covenant**. Yahweh is the personal name of God and it will be used throughout this passage. The ark of the covenant is the box where the Israelites kept the stone tablets where Yahweh wrote Yahweh's laws. The ark symbolized the presence of Yahweh. Use the same word or phrase for Yahweh and the ark of Yahweh as you used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh or the ark of the covenant, refer to the Master Glossary.

The **elders** of Israel also mourn with Joshua over the defeat of their army. An elder is a person with authority in the community. Elders often were older men and were usually the heads of families or groups 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 of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

Joshua prays to Yahweh and calls him "**Lord** Yahweh." The title Lord, or master, shows respect. Joshua uses the title to show that Yahweh has authority over him. Use the same word or phrase for Lord, meaning master, as you used in previous passages. For more information on Lord, refer to the Master Glossary.

Joshua asks Yahweh why Yahweh allowed the Israelites to cross the **Jordan River**. The Jordan River is a long river that runs through Israel from north to south. The Jordan River is important because the Israelites had to cross it to enter into the land Yahweh promised the Israelites. Use the same word or phrase for the Jordan River as you used in previous passages. For more information on the Jordan River, refer to the Master Glossary.

Joshua says the **Canaanites** will hear about the Israelites' defeat and destroy the Israelites. The Canaanites refer to the people who lived in the land of **Canaan**, or the land Yahweh promised to give to the descendants of Abraham. Use the same word or phrase for Canaanites as you used in previous passages. For more information on 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.

Joshua 7:1–9

Audio Content

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Joshua 7:10–26

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 7:10–26 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 7:10–26 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 Joshua 7:10–26 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last passage, an Israelite man, Achan, secretly stole some of the things devoted to Yahweh from Jericho. Joshua did not know this, so Joshua sent part of his army to attack a nearby Canaanite city, but the enemy soldiers defeated the Israelites. Joshua prayed to Yahweh and asked why Yahweh allowed the enemy to defeat his people. Now, Yahweh answers Joshua. Yahweh reveals who is responsible for the Israelites losing the battle.

As you remember, in the last passage Joshua and the Israelite elders were grieving by lying on the ground in front of the ark. After Joshua complained to Yahweh, Yahweh now responds. Yahweh tells Joshua to stand up. Yahweh rebukes Joshua by asking Joshua why he is lying on the ground. Yahweh says Israel sinned, or disobeyed Yahweh, and that Israel broke Yahweh's covenant. Part of Yahweh's covenant, or agreement, with the Israelites was that the Israelites had to destroy everything inside the Canaanite cities they defeated. Destroying the items was a way to devote them to Yahweh. Yahweh says Israel stole some of the devoted things from Jericho, then lied about it, and hid the things among their own possessions. Although Achan was the only person who disobeyed, Yahweh says all of Israel is responsible for Achan's actions. Joshua does not yet know about what Achan did, but the Israelites will not be able to defeat their enemies because of Achan. Instead, the Israelites will turn their back on their enemies, or run away from their enemies in defeat. Yahweh says that if the Israelites do not destroy the devoted things, then Yahweh will no longer be with the Israelites, and Yahweh will destroy the Israelites.

Yahweh tells Joshua to tell the Israelites to consecrate themselves, or make themselves holy, so that they can appear before Yahweh the next day. This means the people will perform a ritual to prepare themselves. In this ritual, the people will confess their sins, and Yahweh will remove their guilt so they can become holy, or able to come before Yahweh the next day.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What type of shameful actions by a single person affect the whole community where you live? What are the consequences for the individual and the community when someone does these actions? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Joshua that the people should present themselves before Yahweh. Though the storyteller does not mention it, this means the people will stand in front of the tabernacle, or the tent where the Israelites kept the ark of the covenant.

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

First, the people will stand in front of Yahweh in groups of their 12 tribes of Israel. When Yahweh chooses a tribe, each clan of that tribe will stand before Yahweh. When Yahweh chooses a clan, then each household, or family, of that clan will stand before Yahweh. When Yahweh chooses a household, then each man of that family will stand before Yahweh. Finally, Yahweh will choose the man responsible for stealing the devoted things. This leaves the guilty man standing alone in front of all of Israel and before the presence of Yahweh.

Yahweh tells Joshua to kill and burn the guilty man, along with the man's family and everything the man owns. Because the man did not destroy the devoted things like Yahweh required, the Israelites must now destroy the man. The Israelites must do this because the man willfully broke the covenant and brought terrible shame to Israel by not keeping his promise to Yahweh.

Joshua obeys everything as Yahweh just said. Early the next morning, the 12 tribes come before Yahweh at the tabernacle. Although we do not know exactly how Yahweh chose, many scholars believe the Israelites threw lots, or threw small stones. The way the stones fell on the ground showed Yahweh's choice. Yahweh first

chooses the tribe of Judah. Then Yahweh chooses the clan of the Zerahites. Next, Yahweh chooses the family of Zimri. When all the men of the family of Zimri step forward, Yahweh chooses Achan. Achan was the son of Carmi, the son of Zimri, the son of Zerah, and from the tribe of Judah.

Joshua calls Achan "my son." This is a polite way for a person of a higher status to speak to someone who has a lower status. Joshua tells Achan to give glory, or honor, to Yahweh by telling the truth. Joshua tells Achan to confess what Achan has done. Joshua warns Achan not to keep it a secret.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, how do people confess, or make a public statement to admit they are guilty of a crime? What happens when someone accuses someone else of a crime where you live? Pause this audio here.

Achan confesses that he has sinned against Yahweh. Achan admits that when he saw some of the plunder, or beautiful things the Israelites found in Jericho, Achan kept some of them. Achan stole a mantle, or beautiful robe, from Babylon, two hundred shekels of silver, and a bar of gold. This means the silver weighed a little over two kilograms. The piece of gold weighed about one-half kilogram.

Stop here and look at a picture of a Babylonian robe, silver, and gold as a group. Pause this audio here.

Achan says he coveted the things, or Achan wanted the things very much for himself. Achan recognizes that it was like he stole the things, because the devoted things really belonged to Yahweh. Achan admits that he buried the stolen things beneath his tent, with the silver buried below the robe and gold. Joshua then sends messengers to search under the tent. The messengers run to Achan's tent and find the items buried there. The messengers bring the items and lay them out in front of Joshua and the tabernacle.

Then Joshua and the Israelites take Achan, the stolen items, his family, his domestic animals, and everything Achan owns to the valley of Achor, or the valley of trouble. When they arrive, Joshua asks Achan a question he does not expect Achan to answer. Joshua asks, "Why did you bring trouble on us?" Joshua says this to rebuke Achan for disobeying Yahweh, and for causing the Israelites to lose against their enemies. According to the covenant Yahweh made with his people, the punishment for sin, or disobedience, is death. All the Israelites then throw stones at Achan until Achan is dead. They do the same thing to Achan's family, then they burn their bodies along with everything Achan owned. The Israelites pile stones over their bodies until the Israelites cannot see the bodies anymore. The storyteller says the stones are still there at the time of writing the book of Joshua.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, what is the worst form of punishment for a crime? Who carries out the punishment? Pause this audio here.

Because the Israelites obeyed Yahweh and destroyed the devoted things, Yahweh turned away from Yahweh's burning anger. This is special language that means that Yahweh was no longer angry with the Israelites. This means that the Israelites could once again win against their enemies, because Yahweh was with them. The storyteller tells us that the Israelites continued to call the valley where Achan died the "Valley of Achor," or the Valley of Trouble.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 7:10–26 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 five scenes.

In the first scene: Joshua is lying on the ground in front of the ark. Yahweh tells Joshua to get up. Yahweh tells Joshua that Israel is responsible because someone broke the covenant and stole the devoted things from Jericho, then lied about it and hid the things in their possessions. Yahweh says Yahweh will not be with Israel and that the Israelites cannot win against their enemies until they destroy the devoted things.

In the second scene: Yahweh tells Joshua to go and consecrate the people. Yahweh gives Joshua instructions for how the Israelites must present themselves to Yahweh the next day. Yahweh also tells Joshua that the next day, the Israelites will have to kill and burn whoever took the devoted things, because that person broke the covenant.

In the third scene: After making themselves pure in order to stand before Yahweh, Joshua and the Israelites stand in front of the tabernacle the next day. Yahweh chooses Achan as the person who broke the covenant.

In the fourth scene: Joshua tells Achan to honor Yahweh by telling the truth. Achan admits that he stole a robe, silver, and gold from Jericho and hid them under Achan's tent. Joshua sends men to find the items under Achan's tent, and the men bring the items back to the tabernacle.

In the fifth scene: Joshua and the Israelites take Achan, the devoted things, Achan's family, and everything Achan owned to the Valley of Achor. Joshua says Yahweh will punish Achan now. The Israelites throw stones at Achan, and then at Achan's family, until they die. The Israelites burn their bodies and all of Achan's possessions. Yahweh is no longer angry with the Israelites.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Joshua
- The elders
- The Israelites
- The tribe of Judah
- The clan of the Zerahites
- The family of Zimri
- Achan
- Achan's family
- And the messengers, Joshua's men

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

It is important to remember that in the last passage, Yahweh ordered the Israelites to destroy everything inside of Jericho. This was a type of offering to Yahweh. Yahweh said that anyone who disobeyed Yahweh by taking things from the city would bring destruction upon all of Israel.

It is important to remember that Joshua was lying on the ground to show his grief while praying to Yahweh. When Yahweh tells Joshua to get up, and asks Joshua, "What are you doing down on your face?" this is a way to rebuke Joshua.

Yahweh says Israel sinned, broke Yahweh's covenant, stole devoted things, lied, and hid the things among their possessions. However, Yahweh is actually describing the actions of only one man, Achan. Yahweh holds all of Israel responsible for Achan's actions.

When Yahweh says the Israelites "cannot stand against their enemies," and that they have "turned their back to their enemies," Yahweh is using special language. This special language means the Israelites cannot win against their enemies without Yahweh. Yahweh says he will not be with the Israelites until they destroy the stolen things.

Yahweh tells Joshua to consecrate the people, or to make them ceremonially clean and ready to worship Yahweh. Yahweh tells Joshua exactly what to say to the Israelites.

Yahweh then gives Joshua specific instructions about how the Israelites must present themselves before Yahweh. First, the Israelites must divide into their 12 tribes. It is unclear how exactly Yahweh will show his

choices to the Israelites, but when Yahweh chooses a tribe, then each clan of that tribe will stand before Yahweh. When Yahweh chooses a clan, then each family of that clan will stand before Yahweh. When Yahweh chooses a family, then each man of that family will stand before Yahweh. Finally, Yahweh will choose the man responsible for stealing the devoted things. This will leave the guilty man standing alone in front of all Israel and before the presence of Yahweh. Yahweh emphasizes that the guilty man has done something very terrible. The man has broken the covenant, or special agreement, that Israel has with Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Describe a terrible action that someone in your community has done in the past. How do you describe this action? Pause this audio here.

Though the storyteller does not mention this, the Israelites obey Yahweh and purify themselves for the rest of the day. They probably do certain rituals to confess their sins and make themselves ceremonially clean as they prepare to meet with Yahweh.

Early the next morning, Joshua and the Israelites appear before Yahweh. It is important to remember that the Israelites are standing in front of the tabernacle, which represents the presence of Yahweh. The Israelites most likely throw lots, or toss small stones to see how they land, to know Yahweh's choices.

The Israelites present themselves by tribe, and Yahweh chooses Judah. Then Judah divides into clans, and Yahweh chooses the Zerahites. The Zerahites divide into families, and Yahweh chooses the family of Zimri. The family of Zimri divides into individual men, and Yahweh chooses Achan.

It is important to remember that when Joshua calls Achan "my son," this is a polite way for a person of higher status to speak to someone with a lower status.

Stop here and discuss as a group what you might say to someone of lower status when you begin to speak with them. Pause this audio here.

Joshua tells Achan to tell the truth to honor and give praise to Yahweh. Achan confesses what he did. Achan says he stole a robe, silver, and gold from Jericho and hid these things under Achan's tent. It is important to remember that Achan shared that tent with his family, so Achan's family probably knew what he did.

Joshua sends messengers to search under Achan's tent. The messengers find the items and bring them back to Joshua. The messengers spread the items out in front of the tabernacle.

Joshua and the Israelites grab Achan, his family, the things he stole, his tamed animals, and all of his possessions, and they take them to the Valley of Achor. It is important to note that the storyteller also tells us that Achan's sons and daughters died. The storyteller says this to emphasize that Achan's family line, or descendants, came to an end. It also shows that just as Achan's family promised to obey Yahweh together, they also broke that promise together. This is why Yahweh punished the whole family.

Joshua asks Achan, "Why have you brought trouble on Israel?" Joshua says this to rebuke Achan for stealing the devoted things and for causing Israel to lose against Ai. Yahweh brings trouble to Achan by punishing him. Achan's punishment is death.

The Israelites kill Achan and his family by throwing rocks at them until they are dead. The Israelites burn the bodies and all of Achan's possessions, then pile stones on top of them. They call the place the Valley of Achor, or the Valley of Trouble. After this, Yahweh turns from Yahweh's burning anger. This is special language that means Yahweh stopped being angry with the Israelites.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Think about a time when you or someone you know stopped being very angry. How did you talk about how you stopped being angry? 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 Joshua 7:10–26 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
- Joshua
- The elders
- The Israelites
- The tribe of Judah
- The clan of the Zerahites
- The family of Zimri
- Achan
- Achan's family
- And the messengers, Joshua's men

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

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

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

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

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

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

Act out Joshua lying on the ground in front of the ark. Yahweh tells Joshua to get up. Yahweh says that Israel is responsible because someone broke the covenant. Someone stole the devoted things from Jericho, lied about it, and hid the things in their possessions. Yahweh says he will not be with Israel and that Israel cannot win against their enemies until they destroy the devoted things.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Confused. Who would do such a thing?" or
- "Angry. Because of someone's selfish actions, we lost 36 good soldiers," or
- "Ashamed. I should not have blamed Yahweh for allowing us to lose when we broke Yahweh's covenant."

Act out Yahweh telling Joshua to go and consecrate the people. Yahweh commands Joshua to tell the people, "Clean yourselves to be ready for tomorrow. There are devoted things among you, and you cannot win against your enemies until you destroy them." Yahweh gives Joshua instructions for how the Israelites must present themselves to Yahweh the next day. Yahweh also tells Joshua that the next day, the Israelites will have to kill and burn whoever took the devoted things, because that person broke the covenant.

Act out Joshua telling the Israelites Yahweh's instructions, and the Israelites cleaning themselves. The next day Joshua and the Israelites stand in front of the tabernacle.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Nervous. What if it is someone in our tribe?" or
- "Upset. I want to know who would disobey Yahweh after Yahweh gave us such a great victory in Jericho," or
- "Dread. I cannot believe we failed so early on. This is a very serious offense against Yahweh."

Act out the Israelites dividing into their 12 tribes. Act out Yahweh choosing the tribe of Judah. The tribe of Judah steps forward and divides into clans. Then Yahweh chooses the clan of the Zerahites, and they step forward and divide into families. Then Yahweh chooses the family of Zimri, and they step forward. The men of Zimri step forward, and Yahweh chooses Achan. Act out Joshua telling Achan to honor Yahweh by telling the truth.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Achan, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Panicked. I cannot believe he found out it was me," or
- "Terror. Yahweh will hold me personally responsible. The treasures were not worth it," or
- "Guilty. I have no other choices. I have to tell him what I did."

Act out Achan admitting that he stole a robe, silver, and gold from Jericho and hid them under his tent. Joshua sends men to find the items under Achan's tent. The men find the buried items and bring them back to Joshua at the tabernacle.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Sad. I know what I must do, but obeying Yahweh is so hard," or
- "Frustrated. If only Achan had obeyed Yahweh, I would not have to do this," or
- "I hope the people will see how serious sin is to Yahweh."

Act out Joshua and the Israelites taking Achan, the devoted things, Achan's family, and everything Achan owned to the Valley of Achor. Joshua asks why Achan brought trouble to all of Israel. Joshua says Yahweh will punish Achan now. The Israelites first stone Achan, then his family. The Israelites burn their bodies and all of Achan's possessions. Yahweh is no longer angry with the Israelites.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Shaken. We have to start taking Yahweh's commandments more seriously," or
- "I mourn for Achan's family. Achan should have thought about them before disobeying Yahweh," or
- "I hope we will remember the consequences of sin when we see this pile of stones."

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Calm. I am no longer angry with my people," or
- "They cannot do this on their own. They must learn the consequences for breaking my covenant," or
- "In control. I have a plan to save them from their sin."

Act out the Israelites remembering what happened to Achan in the valley and calling it the Valley of Trouble.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 7:10–26 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Yahweh tells Joshua to stand up. Remember, Yahweh is the personal name of God and will be used throughout 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 tells Joshua to get up, because someone in **Israel** has sinned, or disobeyed Yahweh. Israel refers to the descendants of Abraham, or the people of Yahweh. Yahweh says that someone has broken Yahweh's **covenant**. As you remember, the covenant was the formal agreement Yahweh made with his people that could not be broken. Yahweh had agreed to give the Israelites the land of Canaan, and the Israelites had promised to trust and obey Yahweh. Since Achan disobeyed Yahweh and took some things from Jericho, Achan broke Yahweh's covenant. Use the same word or phrase for Israel and covenant as you used in previous passages. For more information on Israel and covenant, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and discuss what word or phrase you will use for **sin**. See the Master Glossary for more information about sin. If you have already translated this word in another part of the Bible, use the same word here. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh says someone took some of the **devoted things** from Jericho. Then that person lied about it and hid the things among their possessions. "The devoted things" refer to everything inside of Jericho that Yahweh commanded his people to destroy. Destroying the things inside the city was a way to offer them to Yahweh. Use the same word or phrase for "the devoted things" as you used in previous passages.

Joshua needs to **consecrate** the people. Consecrate means to make someone holy and set apart for Yahweh. In this case, the people cleaned themselves through a specific ritual that removed anything that might make them unclean and unfit to worship Yahweh. Use the same word or phrase for consecrate as you used in previous passages. For more information on consecrate, refer to the Master Glossary.

Joshua refers to God as Yahweh, the **God** of Israel. This title reminds the Israelites that Yahweh is Israel's special, covenant God. Yahweh promised to give the Israelites the land, and the Israelites promised to obey Yahweh. Use the same phrase for Yahweh, the God of Israel, as you have used in previous passages, and remember that God is in the Master Glossary.

Yahweh gives Joshua specific instructions for how the Israelites must present themselves. First they will appear by tribe, then by clan, and then by family or household. A tribe was the largest group of relatives. A tribe consisted of several clans. Clans were a smaller group of relatives that included different households or families. A household or family was usually the group of family members who lived together.

Stop here and discuss what words you will use for **tribes**, **clans**, and families or **households**. Be sure to use the same words or phrases for tribe, clan, and family as you used in previous books of the Bible. Household is in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

Joshua tells Achan to give **glory** to Yahweh and tell the truth. When people give glory to Yahweh, they praise Yahweh, admire Yahweh, and say good things about Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss what word or phrase you will use for **glory**. Use the same word or phrase for glory as you used in previous books of the Bible. For more information on glory, refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

Achan admits to taking **plunder**, or valuable items, from Jericho.

Stop here and discuss how you will talk about the **plunder**, or valuable items that Achan took from Jericho. Pause this audio here.

Achan has taken 200 shekels of silver and a wedge of gold weighing 50 shekels. A shekel is a unit of measurement that weighs around 11.4 grams. In this case, the silver weighed a little over two kilograms. The piece of gold weighed about one-half kilogram.

Stop here and discuss how you will talk about the weights of the pieces of silver and gold. If you use the term **shekel** instead of kilograms, use the same word or phrase for shekel as you used in previous books of the Bible. For more information on shekel, 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.

Joshua 7:10–26

Audio Content

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Joshua 8:1–13

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 8:1–13 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 8:1–13 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 Joshua 8:1–13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Previously, the soldiers of Ai defeated a group of Israelite soldiers because one of the Israelites secretly stole things from Jericho and broke Yahweh's covenant. Following Yahweh's command, the Israelites stoned the man and destroyed the stolen things so that they could restore their relationship with Yahweh. Now, Yahweh tells Joshua how to defeat the city of Ai.

Yahweh speaks to Joshua. Yahweh tells Joshua not to be afraid and not to be discouraged. As you remember, the last time Joshua sent soldiers to Ai, Ai defeated the Israelites. This time, Yahweh tells Joshua to take the whole Israelite army to attack Ai. Just as he did at Jericho, Yahweh tells Joshua he has delivered the king, the people, the city, and the land of Ai into Joshua's hand. This is special language that means Yahweh will help Joshua defeat the city. Just as before, Yahweh wants Joshua to destroy everyone living inside the city of Ai. However, in contrast to Jericho, Yahweh says that this time the Israelites can keep any livestock, or domesticated animals, and valuable goods inside the city for themselves. Yahweh tells Joshua that Joshua should set an ambush behind the city. This is a battle strategy in which Joshua will send some of the Israelite soldiers to hide so that they can attack Ai by surprise.

Stop here and discuss as a group: What battle or hunting strategies do people in your culture use to catch the enemy or prey by surprise? Tell a great war or hunting story from your people group. Pause this audio here.

Joshua obeys Yahweh and takes all the Israelite soldiers to attack Ai. Joshua chooses 30,000 of his best fighting men and gives them special instructions. Joshua gives his men a summary of what is going to happen. Joshua gives them a battle plan. Joshua tells the soldiers to go and hide behind the city, or on the west side of the city, so that they can later attack the town by surprise. The soldiers must not go too far from the city, and the soldiers must be ready to attack at any moment.

While the soldiers are hiding, Joshua and the rest of the army will march towards the front of the city as if they are going to attack it. We know from previous passages that the Israelite army had a total of around 40,000 soldiers, so Joshua would have taken around 10,000 men to march to the front of the city. Joshua says that when the Ai soldiers come out to attack the Israelites, the Israelites will turn and run away, just like they did the first time. But this time, the Israelites will not run away in fear. Instead, the Israelites will run away to trick the Ai soldiers into leaving their city. Joshua says that the Ai soldiers will think they are defeating the Israelites as they did before. When Joshua and his men lead the Ai soldiers away from the city, the 30,000 soldiers will come out from where they are hiding and seize the city, or defeat it. Joshua tells the soldiers that Yahweh will help them defeat the city. Once the soldiers have defeated the city, Joshua tells them to burn the city, because that was the command of Yahweh. It is very important that this time, the Israelites obey the commands of Yahweh.

So the 30,000 soldiers go out from the Gilgal camp and sneak behind the city of Ai to hide for the night. The soldiers hide between the towns of Bethel and Ai, or around 3 kilometers to the west of Ai. They wait there for the Israelite attack to begin the next day. Meanwhile, Joshua stays overnight with the rest of the Israelites in their camp.

Stop here and look at a map of the Israelite camp in Gilgal, Ai, and Bethel as a group. Pause this audio here.

Early the next morning, Joshua and the elders, or the other Israelite leaders, take the rest of the Israelites to march toward Ai. This was a distance of 25 kilometers, or around 15 miles. The Israelite army approaches Ai, right in front of the city, and then camps to the north with only a valley separating the army from Ai. This means the soldiers of Ai can easily see the Israelite army camped across from them. Joshua orders 5,000 men to set up an ambush on the west side of Ai between Bethel and Ai. It is unclear why the numbers 30,000 and 5,000 are so different, but we believe that this was the same ambush.

Stop here and look as a group at a map showing the city of Ai, the Jordan Valley, the position of the Israelite camp, and the Israelite ambush. Pause this audio here.

Joshua and the elders stationed, or arranged, the army in their places to the north and west of the city. They positioned the main group of soldiers to the north, while the soldiers on the west hid, ready to attack the city by surprise. Joshua goes down and spends the night in the valley.

With everyone in battle positions, the next passage will describe the battle between the Israelites and the city of Ai.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 8:1–13 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: Yahweh tells Joshua not to be afraid and to take the whole army to attack Ai. Yahweh says he will give Joshua victory. Yahweh says Joshua must completely destroy Ai, but Yahweh allows the soldiers to keep the domesticated animals and valuable goods. Yahweh says Joshua must set an ambush behind the city.

In the second scene: Joshua gives special instructions to 30,000 soldiers to set up an ambush to the west of the city. Joshua says the main part of the army will attack the city from the front, then turn around and run away. They will do this to draw the Ai soldiers away from their city. When this happens, the soldiers on the west will launch a surprise attack and conquer Ai. Joshua tells them that Yahweh will give them victory and that they need to burn down everything in the city once they conquer it. Joshua sends the soldiers out into the night to set up the ambush in secret.

In the third scene: Joshua stays in the camp for the night. Early the next morning, Joshua and the elders lead the rest of the Israelite army toward Ai. When they arrive in front of the city, they set up camp to the north. That night, Joshua sends 5,000 men to be a part of the ambush to the west. Joshua and the elders arrange the army in battle positions. Joshua stays in the valley for the night.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Joshua
- Elders
- The Israelite army
- The Israelite ambush
- And the Ai soldiers

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

It is important to remember that the soldiers of Ai recently killed 36 men and defeated a small part of the Israelite army after an Israelite disobeyed Yahweh in Jericho.

Yahweh uses repetition when he says, "Do not be afraid," and "Do not be dismayed." Yahweh uses repetition as a way to emphasize that Joshua has no reason to fear this time.

Unlike before, when Yahweh was not with the Israelites, this time Yahweh promises to give Ai, its king, its people, and its land into Joshua's hand. This is a special language that means Yahweh will give Joshua victory.

When Yahweh says Joshua must do to Ai as he did to Jericho, Yahweh means Joshua must completely destroy the city by killing everyone in it and burning the city. The only exception this time is that the Israelites can keep the valuable items and livestock, or domestic animals such as cattle, sheep, and goats.

Yahweh tells Joshua to set an ambush, or a surprise attack, behind the city, or on the west side. This means the soldiers in the ambush will hide and wait until it is time to attack the city.

Joshua prepares the Israelite soldiers to march toward Ai. Joshua gives special instructions to 30,000 soldiers to set up an ambush to the west side of Ai, or behind the city. Joshua uses a special word to get the soldiers to listen carefully to what he is about to say.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How do you normally talk about directions, like north, south, east, and west? The west side of Ai would be the side of Ai where the sun sets. The north side of Ai is where Joshua and the rest of the army are. When you are facing north, the setting sun is on your left. Think about how you will describe where the ambush is, which is the west side, and where the rest of the army and Joshua are, which is the north side. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Think about a time when a leader wanted to get the attention of their people. What words or phrases did that leader use to ask everyone to listen to the leader carefully? Pause this audio here.

It is important to remember that Joshua tells the soldiers the battle plan before they do it. Joshua says the rest of the army will attack from the front and then pretend to run away to get the Ai soldiers to leave their city. The Ai soldiers will think they are winning since they have defeated the Israelites once already. Once the enemy soldiers leave the city, the soldiers who are hiding on the west side of Ai will attack from behind the city and conquer it.

Joshua tells the soldiers who are part of the ambush that Yahweh will give the city into their hands. This is special language that means Yahweh will give them victory.

Joshua tells the soldiers that Yahweh wants them to burn everything once they have defeated the city. Joshua tells the soldiers that they should burn everything because Yahweh told them to do it. Then Joshua says, "see, I have commanded you," to emphasize how important it is for the soldiers to obey Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss as a group: When a leader, or perhaps a parent, really wants their followers to obey their instructions, what kinds of things do they say to them to tell them that they must obey everything they have told them? Pause this audio here.

It is important to notice that the soldiers go to their hiding place on the west side of the city at night, meaning it is less likely the enemy soldiers will see them. Joshua spends the night with the rest of the soldiers and people at the Israelite camp in Gilgal.

The next day Joshua and the elders lead the Israelite army toward Ai, which is a 25 kilometer journey uphill. They arrive in front of the city and then set up their camp to the north with a valley, or low area of land, in between them and Ai. This means the enemy could see them across the valley from their city walls.

That night, Joshua sends 5,000 soldiers to take part in the ambush on the west side. It is unclear if this happened the night that Joshua was camped with his soldiers in front of Ai, or if Joshua had already sent these soldiers. Since the order of events in this story is very unclear, it is best to translate this in a similar way to the Bible text that you are listening to.

Joshua and the elders, or Israelite leaders, set up the army in their positions, and the storyteller reminds us of where all the parts of the army are camped. The ambush, or the soldiers hiding, are on the west side, and the rest of the army is on the north side across the valley, where the people of Ai could see them.

That night, Joshua goes down into the valley and spends the night in the valley.

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 Joshua 8:1–13 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
- Joshua
- Elders
- The Israelite army
- The Israelite ambush
- And the Ai soldiers

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 Joshua to not be afraid and to take the whole army to attack Ai. Yahweh says he will give Joshua victory. Yahweh says Joshua must completely destroy Ai, but Yahweh allows the soldiers to keep the tame animals and valuable goods. Yahweh says Joshua must set an ambush behind the city.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Nervous. It is very soon to attack the same city that killed our men," or
- "I have to trust Yahweh. If Yahweh is telling me to go, I will go and follow Yahweh's plan," or
- "Relieved. I am glad Yahweh is allowing the people to keep all the valuables from the city. Yahweh is very gracious."

Act out Joshua giving special instructions to 30,000 soldiers to set up an ambush to the west of the city. Joshua says the main part of the army will attack the city from the front and then turn around and run away. They will do this to draw the Ai soldiers away from their city. When this happens, the soldiers on the west will launch a surprise attack and conquer Ai. Joshua tells the soldiers that Yahweh will give them victory and that they need to burn down everything in the city once they conquer it. Joshua sends the soldiers out into the night to set up the ambush in secret.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the soldiers who are part of the ambush, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Impressed. This is an excellent battle plan. The Ai soldiers will not know what happened!" or
- "Thankful. I am relieved to hear Yahweh will give us victory. We will be sure to follow all of Yahweh's orders this time," or
- "Nervous. I hope this ambush works."

Act out Joshua staying in the camp for the night. Early the next morning, Joshua and the elders lead the rest of the Israelite army toward Ai. When they arrive in front of the city, they set up camp to the north. At some point, Joshua sends 5,000 men to be a part of the ambush to the west. Joshua and the elders arrange the army in battle positions. Joshua stays in the valley for the night.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the soldiers of Ai, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Amused. Why have they come back? Do they not remember what happened last time?" or
- "Arrogant. They are in plain sight. They clearly do not know how to fight wars," or
- "Suspicious. They have more soldiers this time, but they are not attacking. I wonder what their plan is."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 8:1–13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Yahweh speaks to Joshua and tells Joshua to not be afraid but to go and attack the **city** of Ai with the entire Israelite army. Yahweh is the personal name of God and will be used throughout this passage. Use the same word or phrase for city and for Yahweh as you used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh tells Joshua that Yahweh has given Ai, its **king**, its people, and the land "**into Joshua's hand**." Use the same word for king as you have used in previous passages, and remember that king is in the Master Glossary. In Hebrew, "into his hand" is special language used in reference to battles that means Yahweh will give Joshua victory over his enemies. Be sure to use the same word or phrase for putting something into someone's hand as you used in previous passages.

Yahweh tells Joshua that the people can take the valuable items and the **livestock** from Ai. Livestock is any animal that people use for work or food, like cattle, sheep, and goats. Use the same word for these kinds of domesticated animals that you have used previously.

Joshua calls Yahweh, "Yahweh your **God**." Joshua is emphasizing Yahweh's role as the covenant God and creator of the Israelites. Use the same word or phrase for God as you used in previous passages. For more information on God, refer to the Master Glossary.

After arranging the ambush, Joshua and the **elders** of **Israel** lead the Israelite army toward Ai. The elders were other Israelite leaders who were in charge of different tribes and clans. Israel refers to all of the descendants of Abraham, or the people of Yahweh. Use the same word or phrase for elders and Israel as you used in previous passages. For more information on elders and Israel, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will talk about the **ambush**, or the group of soldiers who are hiding on the west side of Ai so that they can attack Ai by surprise. What word or phrase will you use to describe 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.

Joshua 8:1–13**Audio Content**

[webm zip](#) (13026863 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Joshua 8:14–29

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 8:14–29 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 8:14–29 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 Joshua 8:14–29 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last passage, Yahweh gave Joshua a battle plan to defeat the Canaanite city of Ai. Yahweh told Joshua to set up an ambush behind the city, and Yahweh promised that he would give Joshua victory. Now, Joshua and the Israelite army follow Yahweh's orders and defeat Ai.

As you remember, Joshua arranged the Israelite army in battle positions with the ambush in the west, while the main part of the army was in front of the city. Joshua spent the night in the valley between the armies of Israel and the city of Ai. Early the next morning, when the king of Ai sees the main part of the Israelite army, he quickly gathers his army and rushes out of the city. The Ai king and his army go and meet the Israelites in battle facing the Arabah, or the valley of the Jordan River. This valley was to the east of the city. The king of Ai did not know about the Israelite soldiers who were hiding behind the city.

Stop here and look as a group at a map showing the city of Ai and Bethel, the Jordan River Valley, and the positions of the Israelite camp and the Israelite ambush. Pause this audio here.

The two armies begin to fight. Joshua and the Israelites pretend to let the Ai soldiers win and push them back. The Israelites pretend to run away toward the wilderness, the rocky land east of Ai where few people lived, between Ai and the Jordan River valley. The Israelites continue to run away, causing the Ai soldiers to move farther and farther away from their city. The Ai king calls all the fighting men from Ai and Bethel, a nearby city, to chase after the Israelites. The enemy soldiers run out of the city gates, leaving the gates open and the city of Ai unprotected.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What type of defenses or protection does your town have against enemy attacks? Pause this audio here.

In the middle of the battle, Yahweh tells Joshua to extend his arm with his javelin pointing towards Ai. A javelin is probably a short sword that people used for thrusting and hunting. Some javelins were a curved, crescent-shaped sword. Yahweh says he will give Ai into Joshua's hand, or give Joshua victory over the city.

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

Joshua obeys Yahweh and points his javelin toward Ai. Joshua's action not only symbolizes Yahweh's power in defeating Ai, but it may also have been a sign for the Israelite ambush to attack Ai. The hidden soldiers on the

west side of Ai knew that Joshua's raised javelin was a signal to begin their surprise attack. The Israelite soldiers from the ambush run into the city and capture it. They quickly set fire to the houses and other things in the town.

When the Ai army looks back, they see their town burning and smoke filling the sky. But there is no direction for them to escape because the Israelite army is on both sides. Joshua and the soldiers who pretended to run away suddenly turn around and begin to attack the Ai soldiers. The Israelite soldiers who conquered and burned Ai come out of the city and attack the Ai soldiers from behind. The Israelite army cuts the Ai soldiers down, which means that they attack and kill them all. They do not allow anyone to escape, but they do take the Ai king alive and bring him to Joshua.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do soldiers in your culture treat captured enemy leaders? Pause this audio here.

After the Israelite army chases and kills all the Ai soldiers in the open fields, they return to the city and kill everyone inside. They also kill the women and children. All the people of Ai fall by the edge of the sword, which means that the Israelites kill every person with their swords. All the men and women of Ai die that day, which is 12,000 people. From the time the ambush began, Joshua kept his javelin stretched out toward the city of Ai until every person was dead. This action was a symbol that it was Yahweh who won the victory over Ai, not the Israelites themselves. Just like in Jericho, the Israelites completely devote the city to Yahweh by completely destroying all the people and the city. However, this time, Yahweh allows the Israelites to keep the livestock and valuable goods inside the city.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, who receives the praise for a victory in war, and why? Pause this audio here.

The Israelite soldiers burn everything inside the city, making it forever a pile of ruins. This is fitting since, in Hebrew, Ai means ruins. Ai is still a pile of ruins at the time the author writes the book of Joshua. Joshua has his soldiers kill the king of Ai and hang the king on a tree. Since the word for tree can also mean pole, it is most likely that they stick the king's dead body on a wooden stake, or sharpened pole. This was a common war practice during this time. The winning army usually hung the bodies of defeated enemies as an example to others of what might happen to them. The soldiers hang the king's dead body until the sun sets. Then they take the body from the tree and throw it down in front of the gates of the ruined city. The Israelite soldiers pile stones over the king's dead body to cover it. It is still this way at the time the author writes the book of Joshua.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 8:14–29 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 five scenes.

In the first scene: Early in the morning, the king of Ai sees the Israelite army to the north. The Ai king quickly gathers his soldiers and rushes out of the city to meet the Israelites in battle. The Ai soldiers leave their city unprotected.

In the second scene: The Israelites fight the soldiers of Ai in front of the city and pretend to let the enemy win. Joshua and the Israelites allow the Ai soldiers to push them back before they turn around and pretend to run away. The Ai soldiers chase after them and get further away from their city. The Ai king calls all the soldiers from Ai and Bethel to chase after them.

In the third scene: Yahweh orders Joshua to raise his javelin and point it toward Ai. Yahweh says he will give Joshua victory. Joshua obeys Yahweh, and when Joshua points his javelin, the Israelites begin their ambush. The Israelites leave their hiding place on the west side of the city and attack the city. The Israelites conquer and burn the city. Joshua keeps his javelin pointed towards the city.

In the fourth scene: The Ai soldiers look back and see their city burning and smoke in the sky. The Ai soldiers cannot escape because the Israelites are on both sides. Joshua's soldiers turn and attack the enemy soldiers. The Israelites come out of Ai and attack the Ai soldiers from behind. The Israelites chase down and kill all the Ai soldiers outside of the city. Then the Israelite soldiers go inside the city and kill everyone inside. The soldiers capture the Ai king. Joshua finally lowers his javelin once the Israelites defeat everyone.

In the fifth scene: The Israelites take all the animals and valuable goods from Ai for themselves. Joshua returns to Ai, and Joshua's soldiers bring the Ai king to Joshua. Joshua orders the soldiers to kill the king and hang him from a tree until sundown. When the sun sets, the soldiers take the body down and throw it in front of the ruined city. The soldiers pile rocks over the king's body as a reminder of what happened.

The characters in this passage are:

- Joshua
- The Israelite army
- The Israelite ambush
- The Ai King
- The Ai army
- The Ai citizens
- The men from Bethel
- And Yahweh

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

It is important to remember that the night before, Joshua positioned the Israelite army across a valley and in clear view of the city of Ai. The king of Ai wakes early in the morning, sees the Israelite army, and rushes to gather all of his fighting men to attack the enemy army.

The two armies meet in front of Arabah, or the nearby wilderness around the Jordan River Valley, and begin to fight. The storyteller is sure to remind everyone that the enemy king does not know about the Israelites' ambush set up behind the city.

It is important to remember that the last time Israel fought Ai, Ai defeated the Israelites and killed 36 men. This time, Joshua and his soldiers pretend to be defeated and turn around to run away. They will have run downhill and into the valley.

It is important to remember that the Israelites are only running away to get the Ai soldiers to move farther away from their unprotected city. The Ai king calls not only all of his soldiers, but also the soldiers of a nearby town, Bethel, to help the king chase after the Israelites. It is important to note that many translations do not include the men from the city of Bethel, because it is unclear why they were involved in the battle.

It is important to remember that in that time, cities usually had walls around them with a gate as an entrance. If the soldiers left the gate open, the city was completely defenseless with all of the women, children, and men who were unable to fight inside the city.

Yahweh speaks to Joshua and tells him to stretch out his javelin toward Ai, saying that Yahweh will give Ai into Joshua's hand. This is special language that means that Yahweh will give Joshua victory over Ai. It also means that the Israelites will win because of the power of Yahweh.

When Joshua raises his javelin, it is most likely a sign for the Israelites to begin their ambush. It is unclear if the ambush can see this signal, or if messengers have to run with this message to the soldiers in the ambush when they see Joshua's javelin. In any case, after Joshua raises his javelin, the Israelite soldiers behind the city leave their hiding places, enter the city, and conquer it. They then follow Yahweh's command and burn the city.

It is important to remember that Joshua holds his javelin out continually as the rest of the battle comes to an end. Joshua does not lower his javelin until the Israelites have killed every person from Ai.

After Joshua raises his javelin, the Ai soldiers look back and see their city burning. Then Joshua's soldiers turn around and begin to attack the Ai soldiers. The Israelite soldiers who ambushed the city come out of the city and help attack the Ai soldiers from behind. The Ai soldiers are in between two attacking forces of Israelites.

The Israelites chase down and kill every Ai soldier in the wilderness. The enemy soldiers die by the edge of the sword, which means the Israelites kill them with swords. They leave only the king of Ai alive and bring him to Joshua.

The Israelites then go back to the city of Ai and kill all the remaining people inside. It is important to remember that this is the same complete destruction that Yahweh required in Jericho. The Israelites kill all 12,000 inhabitants of Ai that day.

It is important to remember that Joshua continues holding out his javelin until the Israelites completely destroy Ai.

The Israelites keep the domestic animals and valuable goods from Ai just as Yahweh commanded.

Joshua commands his soldiers to kill the king of Ai and hang the king from a wooden pole. They leave the body there until the sun sets, then they take the king's body down and bury it under rocks in front of the ruined city.

Stop here and tell again a story about a great battle. Pay attention to the words, phrases, gestures, and tone of voice you use as you tell this story. How do you make your listener interested in what will happen next? As you think about the story of the Israelites attacking Ai, think about how you will tell about this battle in an interesting way. 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 Joshua 8:14–29 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:

- Joshua
- The Israelite army
- The Israelite ambush
- The Ai King
- The Ai army
- The Ai citizens
- The men from Bethel
- 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.

Act out the king of Ai waking early and seeing the Israelite army to the north. The Ai king quickly gathers his soldiers and rushes out of the city to meet the Israelites in battle. The Ai soldiers leave their city unprotected.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Ai king, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Determined. It is time to defeat the Israelites once and for all," or
- "Arrogant. There is no way they can escape this time," or
- "Excited. I will be a hero today, and all the land will hear how our small town defeated the mighty Israelites."

Act out the Israelites fighting the soldiers of Ai in front of the city and pretending to let the enemy win. Joshua and the Israelites allow the Ai soldiers to push them back before they turn around and pretend to run away. The Ai soldiers chase after them and get farther away from their city. The Ai king calls all the soldiers from Ai and Bethel to chase after them.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelite soldiers, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Running away is humiliating, but I need to be patient a little longer," or
- "Confident. I trust Yahweh's plan. Let's get them a little further from their city," or
- "Excited. It is working! They are all leaving the city."

Act out Yahweh ordering Joshua to raise his javelin and point it toward Ai. Yahweh says he will give Joshua victory. Joshua obeys Yahweh. When Joshua points his javelin, the Israelites begin their ambush. The Israelites leave their hiding place on the west side of the city and attack the city. They conquer the city and burn it. Joshua keeps his javelin pointed toward the city.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "In awe. I am humbled that Yahweh speaks directly to me. I trust Yahweh's plan," or
- "Excited. It is time to show them Yahweh's power! We will run away no longer," or
- "Confident. I will hold this javelin up as long as it takes for Israel to have victory."

Act out the Ai soldiers looking back and seeing their city burning and smoke in the sky. They cannot escape because the Israelites are on both sides. Joshua's soldiers turn and attack the enemy soldiers. The Israelites come out of Ai and begin to attack the Ai soldiers from behind.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Ai soldiers, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Surprised. I cannot believe we allowed ourselves to be tricked!" or
- "Panic. How could we have left our city unprotected?" or
- "All the stories were true. Their God fights for them!"

Act out the Israelites chasing down and killing all the Ai soldiers outside of the city. Then they go inside the city and kill everyone inside. The soldiers capture the Ai king. Joshua lowers his javelin once everyone is defeated.

Act out the Israelites taking all the animals and valuable goods from Ai for themselves. Joshua returns to Ai and his soldiers bring the Ai king to him. Joshua orders the soldiers to kill the king and hang him from a tree until the evening. Act out the soldiers taking the dead king's body down in the evening and throwing it in front of the ruined city. The soldiers pile rocks over the king's body as a reminder of what happened.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I am in awe of what a difference there is between fighting with Yahweh on our side and fighting by ourselves," or
- "I will be careful this time to obey all of Yahweh's commands," or
- "I am thankful that Yahweh allowed us to keep the valuables from the city this time."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 8:14–29 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

When the **king** of Ai sees the soldiers in front of his **city**, the king gathers his soldiers to meet **Israel** in battle. Here, the word Israel refers to all the descendants of Abraham together, or the Israelites. Use the same words or phrases for city, Israel, and king as you used in previous passages. For more information on Israel and king, refer to the Master Glossary.

The king of Ai does not know that the Israelites have an **ambush**, or group of soldiers, hiding on the west side of the city. Use the same words or phrases for ambush as you have used in previous passages.

After battling with the soldiers of Ai, Israel pretends to be defeated and runs into the **wilderness**. The wilderness refers to a dry and rocky place where people do not live. Use the same word or phrase for wilderness as you used in previous passages. For more information on wilderness, refer to the Master Glossary.

In the middle of the battle, **Yahweh** tells Joshua to raise his javelin toward Ai. Yahweh is the personal name of God and is used throughout this passage. Use the same word or phrase for Yahweh as you used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and look as a group at a picture of a **javelin** if you have not already. Discuss what word you will use to describe this type of weapon. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Joshua that Yahweh will give the city into Joshua's hand. Remember, this phrase is special language that means that Yahweh will give Joshua victory over Ai. Be sure to use the same phrase for "give into your hand" as you used in previous passages.

Yahweh allows the Israelites to keep all the **plunder** from Ai. Remember that plunder refers to the valuable goods that remain inside a defeated city, such as precious metals or tamed animals, that the winning army gets to keep. Be sure to use the same word or phrase for plunder as 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.

Joshua 8:14–29**Audio Content**

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Joshua 8:30–35

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 8:30–35 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 8:30–35 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 Joshua 8:30–35 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last passage, Joshua and the Israelites followed Yahweh's battle plan and defeated the city of Ai. The Israelites completely destroyed the people and the city, but Yahweh allowed them to keep the animals and valuable items from the city. Now, Joshua builds an altar and leads the people to remember the covenant Yahweh made with them.

Some time later, after the Israelites defeated Ai, Joshua and the Israelites traveled to Mount Ebal, which was around 32 kilometers north of Ai. Mount Ebal was on the north side of Shechem Valley, while Mount Gerizim was on the south side of the valley.

Stop here and look as a group at a map of Mount Ebal, the Shechem Valley, Mount Gerizim, and Ai. Pause this audio here.

Joshua builds an altar to Yahweh, the God of Israel, on Mount Ebal. The God of Israel is a title that emphasizes who Yahweh is to his people. Yahweh is their covenant God. As you remember, the Israelites used altars to make sacrifices to Yahweh. Joshua builds the altar according to the teaching in the law of Moses—specifically the teaching found in the book of Deuteronomy. The Israelites use the phrase "the law of Moses" to refer to all the instructions Yahweh gave to his people through Moses. Joshua calls Moses "Yahweh's servant." This is a humble title that shows Moses obeys Yahweh as his master. Yahweh's law requires the Israelites to build an altar by piling up stones that the Israelites have not cut with iron tools. This is probably because Yahweh wants the Israelites' worship to be different and separate from Canaanite worship, which involves cutting stones into idols. Also, in Israelite culture, uncut stone showed that the altar belonged to Yahweh.

Stop here and look at a picture of a stone altar as a group. How do people in your culture make sacrifices to gods? Describe the religious ceremonies or rituals that people perform where you live. Pause this audio here.

The Israelites offer burnt offerings and peace, or fellowship, offerings to Yahweh. When the priests made a burnt offering on behalf of the Israelites, they burned the whole animal in the fire on the altar. This was a way to clean the people of their disobedience to Yahweh. In contrast, peace offerings were sacrifices in which the priests only burned a part of the animal on the altar, and then the worshipers ate the rest of the animal. Whoever ate part of the animal had fellowship with Yahweh.

Joshua then writes a copy of the law while all the Israelites watch him. This is an important event for all of Israel since Joshua is following Moses' command in Deuteronomy. There Yahweh had instructed that all the kings, or leaders, of Israel write the law for themselves in order to remember it well and promise to follow it. Before Moses died, Moses commanded Joshua to go to Mount Ebal and write the law on large stones. This symbolizes that Yahweh made a covenant, or strong promise, to always be with his people and to give the land of Canaan to them. Yahweh's covenant is connected to the Israelites' obedience to Yahweh's law, because Yahweh's law gave them the terms of the covenant. As you remember, Moses wrote the original copy of the law on two stone tablets, and the Israelites keep these tablets in the ark of the covenant.

Joshua and the Israelites perform a ceremony to honor Yahweh. The Israelites set up the ark of the covenant, which represents the presence of Yahweh, in the center of all the people of Israel. All of Israel includes both native-born Israelites, and those who are sojourners, or foreigners who live in the Israelite community. All the elders, officers, and judges of Israel are also present. Elders were leaders of tribes and families, while officers had military and administrative responsibilities. Judges were people who judged disputes between the Israelites.

The Israelites stand in two groups and face the ark of the covenant. One group of Israelites stands with their backs to Mount Gerizim, while the other group stands with their backs to Mount Ebal. It is likely the two groups of Israelites stand on the slopes of the two mountains, facing in the direction of the opposite mountain. Scholars have shown that this would have been a good location for such a large group of people to be able to hear everything Joshua said. The location would have acted like an amphitheater, echoing everything that was said, and allowing all of the Israelites to hear Yahweh's blessings and curses. The Levite priests who carry the ark of the covenant stand in their places on each side of the ark. They carry the ark on poles over their shoulders. As you remember, the priests are the only ones that Yahweh allows to touch the poles of the ark. All the priests belong to the tribe of Levi, or to the Levites.

Stop here and look at an illustration of the priests carrying the ark of the covenant. Pause this audio here.

Joshua emphasizes that everything the Israelites did was according to the instructions that Moses gave in Deuteronomy. Moses commanded the Israelites to read the law and bless the people. When someone blesses another person, they are asking Yahweh to show his favor to that person. In this case, the priests bless the people before Joshua reads aloud all of the law to the Israelites. Joshua reads aloud all of the teachings of Moses to the people, including the blessings and curses. Before he died, Moses told the people that Yahweh would bless them if they obeyed Yahweh, but that they would experience curses if they disobeyed Yahweh. A curse is when Yahweh punishes someone. In many cases in ceremonies like this in ancient times, the people would have shouted out the blessings and curses. We do not know if the people of Israel shout out the blessings and curses or not.

Stop here and discuss with your group: How do people in your culture celebrate covenants and promises that their gods have kept? What kind of activities do they do? How do they arrange themselves when they are in large groups? How do large groups of people themselves get involved in the ceremony? Pause this audio here.

When it says there is not a word that Joshua does not read from Moses, this emphasizes how important it is for Joshua to read all of the law to the Israelites. The storyteller emphasizes that all the people of Israel are present to listen to the reading of the law. This includes women, children, and foreigners who are not always present at every Israelite ceremony. This entire Israelite ceremony celebrates Yahweh and how Yahweh has kept his promises to his chosen people. The Israelites repeat and emphasize that they will honor their covenant and obey Yahweh's laws in the land Yahweh has given them.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 8:30–35 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: Joshua and the Israelites travel to Mount Ebal. Joshua follows the instructions that Yahweh gave to Moses about building an altar. Then the priests present burnt offerings and peace offerings to Yahweh on behalf of the people. Joshua makes a copy of the law of Moses on large stones in the presence of all the Israelites.

In the second scene: Joshua divides the Israelites in two groups following Moses' instructions. One group stands in front of Mount Ebal and the other group stands in front of Mount Gerizim. The groups face each other with the ark that the priests carried in the middle.

In the third scene: Joshua reads the whole law, including the blessings and curses that Moses wrote. Joshua reads every word and every command that Moses gave. Every Israelite, including the women and the foreigners who live among them, listen to Joshua.

The characters in this passage are:

- Joshua
- The priests
- All of the Israelites
- And the foreigners living among the Israelites

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

It is important to remember that by the end of the last passage the Israelites had defeated Ai.

It is important to remember that this passage is a short, but important, interruption of the larger story of the Israelites conquering the land of Canaan. Now, Joshua is building an altar to Yahweh on Mount Ebal. This means that the Israelites have gone from Ai to Mount Ebal. They have walked about 32 kilometers.

It is important to remember that Yahweh gave instructions to Moses on how to build an altar while the Israelites were in the wilderness. So Joshua knew exactly how to follow those instructions. The Israelites build the altar with stones that no one has cut.

The Israelites present a burnt offering and a peace, or fellowship, offering, on the altar. It is important to remember that the priests made these sacrifices on behalf of the people.

Then Joshua writes the instructions onto stones. These are separate stones from the altar stones. It is important to remember that according to the instructions Moses gave Joshua, Joshua covers the stones with plaster. This means that Joshua writes the instruction on the plaster.

It is likely that Joshua copies these laws either from a copy Joshua already has or from the copy Moses made. Joshua writes these instructions on the stones in the presence of, or in front of, all the Israelites. In other words, many of the Israelites watch Joshua as he carves the instructions into the stones.

Stop here and discuss with your group: How would you talk about how Joshua wrote the instructions on the stones "in the presence of all the people" in your language? Pause this audio here.

It is important to remember that Moses gave instructions on how to divide the people according to their tribes on the two mountains, Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim.

It is important to note that in this passage, it does not mention what tribes are on Mount Ebal and what tribes are on Mount Gerizim. Previously, Moses said that the tribes of Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin would stand on Mount Gerizim and pronounce the blessings. The tribes of Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali would stand on Mount Ebal and pronounce the curses. Although the passage does not say it, it is likely that the six tribes on Mount Gerizim shout the blessings that happen when people obey Yahweh, and the six tribes on Mount Ebal shout the curses that happen when people disobey Yahweh. This allows everyone present to hear what is said.

Stop here and discuss with your group: How do people in your culture talk about and remember past instructions? Pause this audio here.

The two groups of Israelites face each other. The ark of Yahweh is in the middle and the priests carry it.

Everyone, the Israelites and the foreigners living among them, hear Joshua reading the blessings and the curses that Moses wrote. Joshua also reads every word and command that Moses gave, and all the Israelites hear him. The storyteller emphasizes that Joshua reads every word.

Stop here and discuss with your group: How will you make it clear in your language that Joshua read every word of the law and not just a part of the law? 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 Joshua 8:30–35 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has three scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Joshua
- The priests
- All of the Israelites
- And foreigners living among 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 Joshua remembering the instructions of Moses. Moses told them that when they cross the Jordan River they need to build an altar. Moses told them how to do this and where. Act out Joshua walking with the Israelites to Mount Ebal. Joshua orders the Israelites to build the altar with uncut stones just as Moses commanded.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I am honored to carry out Moses' instructions," or
- "I feel confident in Yahweh's promise. Yahweh has already given us the land and victory over our enemies," or
- "Thankful. Yahweh is worthy of our praise and gratitude."

Act out Joshua telling the priests to make a burnt offering and a peace offering to Yahweh on behalf of the people. Joshua makes a copy of the instructions onto stones.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the priests, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Fulfilled. We are honored to represent the people before Yahweh and to offer this burnt offering on their behalf," or
- "I am happy that we are honoring Moses and following his instructions even after he passed," or
- "Purposeful. I hope the people will remember and obey Yahweh's words for years to come."

Act out Joshua dividing the Israelites into two groups following Moses' instructions. One group stands on Mount Ebal and the other group stands on Mount Gerizim. The groups face each other with the ark in the middle carried by the priests. Act out Joshua reading the blessings and curses that Moses wrote. Joshua reads every word and every command that Moses gave. Every Israelite and everyone who lives among them listens to Joshua's words.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Joshua is a good leader. He is following in Moses' footsteps," or
- "Attentive. Yahweh has done so much for us. I want to be sure to obey all his commands and to teach them to my children," or
- "Unified. Yahweh's covenant and law is for all of Israel."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 8:30–35 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Joshua travels to Mount Ebal to build an **altar** to Yahweh. An altar refers to a place where people kill animals and burn them as an offering to Yahweh. In this case, the Israelites built the altar out of uncut stones, perhaps like a table or small platform. Use the same word or phrase for altar as you used in previous passages. For more information on altar, refer to the Master Glossary.

Joshua builds the altar to **Yahweh**, the **God of Israel**. Yahweh is the personal name of God. The God of Israel is a title that emphasizes who Yahweh is to his people Israel. Yahweh is the Israelites' covenant God. Use the same words or phrases for Yahweh, God, and Israel as you used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, God, and Israel, refer to the Master Glossary.

Joshua and the **Israelites** built the altar. The Israelites refer to the people of God who were the descendants of Abraham. In this case, all of Israel also includes the foreigners who live as a part of the Israelite community. All of the Israelites are present for this ceremony. Use the same word or phrase for the Israelites as you used in previous passages. For more information on the Israelites, refer to the Master Glossary.

Joshua refers to Moses as a **servant** of Yahweh. A servant works for another person and has a low status in the community. Many times the word servant is used to show that a person serves others. In this case, Moses serves Yahweh as his master. Use the same word or phrase for servant as you used in previous passages. For more information on servant, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Israelites build the altar just as Moses commanded in the book of the law of Moses. In this case, the book of the law of Moses refers to the full set of instructions Yahweh gave to his people through Moses. The main instructions, or the Ten Commandments or laws, were carved on tablets of stone. However, Moses would probably have written all of the rest of the instructions on a scroll, or long piece of parchment that people rolled up. In the Old Testament, we find the law of Moses, especially in the first five books of the Bible.

Stop here and review as a group what word or phrase you will use for the book of the **law** of Moses. Remember that you have translated the phrase "book of the law of Moses" in the first passage in the book of Joshua, so use the same phrase here. Look up law in the Master Glossary for more information. Pause this audio here.

According to the law of Moses, the Israelites could not use an iron tool to cut the stones of the altar. An iron tool refers to a **chisel**, which people used to cut and shape large stones.

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

The Israelites make a **burnt offering** and a **peace or fellowship offering** to Yahweh. A burnt offering is when a priest burned a whole animal in the fire on the altar. This was a way to clean the people of their disobedience to Yahweh. In contrast, peace or fellowship offerings were sacrifices in which the priests only burned a part of the animal on the altar, and then the worshipers ate the rest of the animal. Whoever ate part of the animal had fellowship with Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss what words or phrases you will use for **burnt offering** and **peace or fellowship offering**. If you have already translated burnt offering or peace or fellowship offering in another book of the Bible, use the same words here. For more information on burnt offering and peace or fellowship offering, refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

All of the elders, officers, and judges of Israel are also present at the ceremony. Elders were Israelite leaders of tribes and families. Officers had military and administrative responsibilities. Judges were people who judged disputes between Israelites.

Stop here and discuss what words you will use for **elders**, **officers**, and **judges**. Use the same word or phrase for the elders as you used in previous passages. For more information on the elders and judges, refer to the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

All of the Israelites are present for the ceremony, including the **aliens**, or **foreigners** living among the Israelites. An alien refers to a person who is a foreigner in a country when they are in a country that is not where they are born. In this case, aliens are people who are not descendants of Abraham but who are living among the Israelites and following the law of Moses.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **alien** or **foreigner**. Look up sojourner or foreigner 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 divide into two groups and face the **ark of the covenant** in the center. The ark of the covenant was a box that contained the stone tablets of the covenant inside. The ark represented the presence of Yahweh among his people. Use the same word or phrase for the ark of the covenant as you used in previous passages. For more information on the ark of the covenant, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Levitical **priests** are the ones holding the ark of the covenant. As you remember, the **Levites** were all descendants of Levi, one of the 12 sons of Jacob. Priests made sacrifices on behalf of the people to Yahweh and taught the people how to worship Yahweh. All priests were from the tribe of Levi. Use the same word or phrase for priests as you used in previous passages. For more information on Levites or priest, refer to the Master Glossary.

Joshua reads all of the words of the law including the **blessings** and **curses**. A blessing is when someone asks Yahweh to show favor to someone or something. A curse is the opposite of a blessing. When Yahweh curses someone, the bad thing that Yahweh says will happen will certainly happen. God curses people to punish them for not obeying him. Use the same word or phrase for bless and curse as you used in previous passages. For more information on bless and curse, refer to the Master Glossary.

Joshua reads all of the law in front of the **assembly**, or **congregation**, of Israel. Here, assembly, or congregation, describes a formal coming together of the people of Israel for a religious purpose. All of the Israelites, even the foreigners living among them, participate in hearing the reading of Yahweh's covenant with his special people.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will describe the **assembly**, or **congregation**, of Israel.

*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.

Joshua 8:30–35**Audio Content**

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Joshua 9:1–15

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 9:1–15 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 9:1–15 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 Joshua 9:1–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, after the Israelites defeated Jericho and Ai, Joshua led the people to remember the covenant Yahweh made with them. After Joshua built an altar to Yahweh, half of the people stood in front of Mount Ebal, and half of the people stood in front of Mount Gerizim. The priests stood between the people with the ark of the covenant. Joshua read to all the people every word Yahweh instructed Moses to write.

Joshua and the Israelites were camping at Gilgal. This is probably the same place near Jericho where the Israelites made their first camp after they crossed the Jordan River into Canaan, the land Yahweh promised them.

Stop here and look at the map. Identify Gilgal, Jericho, Ai, and Gibeon as a group. Pause this audio here.

In Canaan, many people lived beyond the Jordan, or west of the Jordan River. They were the tribes of the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites. They lived in the hills and foothills of central Canaan, along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, and as far north as the mountains of Lebanon.

Stop here and look at the map of Canaan that includes the areas where the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites would have lived as a group. Pause this audio here.

Many kings would have ruled cities in each of these tribes. All of these kings heard about how Joshua led the Israelites to conquer and destroy Jericho and Ai. These kings decided to combine their armies to fight Joshua and the Israelites together.

The people in Gibeon, or the Gibeonites, were from the Hivite tribe. They also heard about how Joshua and the Israelites defeated Jericho and Ai, and they made a different plan. Gibeon was only a few kilometers from Gilgal, where Joshua and the Israelites were camping. Even though Yahweh had commanded the Israelites to destroy every tribe in Canaan, the Gibeonites decided they did not want to fight against the Israelites. Instead, the people in Gibeon wanted to make a covenant, or agreement of peace, with Israel.

So, the Gibeonites decided to trick the Israelites into thinking the Gibeonites lived very far away. Some of the Gibeonites put on old and torn clothes and worn-out sandals so they would look like they had traveled from a distant land. They gathered dry and crumbly bread in worn-out sacks, and put wine in old and patched

wineskins, which are bottles made of animal skin. They loaded the sacks and wineskins on their donkeys, which are animals that can carry heavy burdens.

Stop here and look at a picture of dry and crumbly bread as a group. Look at a picture of a wineskin. Look at a picture of old worn-out sandals and patched clothes. Look at a picture of a donkey. Pause this audio here.

The small group from Gibeon traveled to Gilgal and met Joshua at the Israelite camp. They told Joshua and the Israelites that they had traveled a long way to come and make a covenant, or agreement of peace, with the Israelites. However, the men of Israel questioned the Gibeonites about their city. The Israelites knew they were not allowed to make a covenant with any of the tribes in Canaan, and they did not trust that the Gibeonites were telling the truth about where they lived.

The Gibeonites told Joshua that the Gibeonites were willing to be servants to the Israelites. Joshua continued to question the Gibeonites. Joshua asked who they were and where they lived. But the Gibeonites insisted they had come from a country very far away.

The Gibeonites said they had heard about the great things Yahweh had done, about Yahweh's power, and about all that Yahweh had done in Egypt. They had also heard the stories about how Yahweh and the Israelites defeated the two Amorite kings, Sihon of Heshbon and Og of Bashan, in Ashtaroth east of the Jordan River. You remember from the stories in the book of Numbers that the Israelites defeated these kings before the Israelites crossed the Jordan River into the land of Canaan. So the Gibeonites said that because the Gibeonite people had heard all of these things, the Gibeonite elders and people who lived in their country told some of them to pack up provisions and travel to make a covenant, or strong agreement, with Israel. The Gibeonites told the Israelites that, when they left home, their bread was still warm and fresh and their wineskins were new and whole. The Gibeonites said that because they had traveled so far and for so long, now the bread was dry and crumbly and the wineskins were cracked and mended. The Gibeonites said that their clothing and sandals were worn out from the long days of travel.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell about a time when someone told a lie or tricked someone to protect himself or herself. Pause this audio here.

The Israelites examined the Gibeonites' food. Perhaps they looked at it and touched it, or perhaps they tried some of it and found that it was old. We do not know exactly what the Israelites did, but in any case the Israelites trusted that the dry and crumbly bread meant the Gibeonites were telling the truth about where they came from. Joshua and the Israelites did not ask Yahweh for help to make a decision. Instead, Joshua and the Israelites made a covenant of peace with the Gibeonites. The Israelites promised to keep the Gibeonites safe and to let them live. The leaders of Israel swore an oath, or made a solemn promise, to guarantee the covenant. The people of Israel were making an absolute promise to keep the people of Gibeon safe, and if Israel did not keep the promise, Yahweh could punish Israel. It would be disgraceful if Israel "broke" the oath.

Stop here and discuss these questions as a group: Tell a story about a time when someone made an important decision based on information that was not true. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and tell another story about a time two groups in your community made a peace agreement.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 9:1–15 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: All the kings west of the Jordan River hear about how Joshua led the Israelites to defeat the cities of Jericho and Ai. The kings decide to come together and fight as one army against Joshua and the Israelites.

In the second scene: The people from the city of Gibeon, who belong to the Hivite tribe, decide they do not want to fight. Instead, they want to make a covenant of peace with Joshua. They know Yahweh has commanded the Israelites to conquer every tribe in Canaan, so they plan to deceive Joshua and Israel by claiming to be from a distant land.

In the third scene: A small group of people from Gibeon travel to Joshua at Gilgal and they ask to make a covenant. They carry dry, crumbly bread and torn wineskins, and their clothing is worn out. They look like they have traveled a long distance. Joshua and the Israelites do not ask Yahweh what to do. Instead, the Israelites make a covenant and promise to protect the people from Gibeon and to keep them safe.

The characters in this passage are:

- Kings from Canaan
- Hivites who are from Gibeon
- Small group of people from Gibeon who travel to Gilgal
- Yahweh
- Joshua
- And Israelites, including leaders

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

In scene one, Joshua and the Israelites are camping at Gilgal. This is probably the same place near Jericho where the Israelites made their first camp after they crossed the Jordan River into Canaan, the land Yahweh promised them. All the kings in Canaan beyond the Jordan River, or west of the Jordan River, hear about how Joshua and the Israelites conquered Jericho and Ai. These kings in Canaan include the kings of the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites. These tribes live in the hills and foothills of central Canaan, along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, and as far north as the mountains of Lebanon.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Look at the map again and see where each region is in Canaan. Here the description of the geography of Canaan moves from east to west. Think about how you describe the regions of your country or territory. How would you order geographic regions of the area in your culture when you are describing them? Pause this audio here.

Before the Israelites entered the land Yahweh promised them, Yahweh had told Joshua and the Israelites to completely destroy all the people living in Canaan, because Yahweh was ready to punish the Canaanites' sin. Yahweh meant that the people of Israel should conquer the Canaanite tribes who did not choose to turn and follow Yahweh. Yahweh did not mean for every single person in each tribe to be killed. Yahweh did not allow Israel to make covenants or peace treaties with anyone living in Canaan. The kings knew that Yahweh had commanded Joshua and the Israelites to conquer and destroy every king and city in Canaan. The kings decide to work together to fight against Joshua and Israel.

Stop here and discuss: Tell a story about how people in your culture respond when they feel threatened by an opposing army or country. What words or actions do people use to show how they feel? Pause the audio here.

In scene two, people who live in the city of Gibeon also hear about how Joshua and the Israelites have begun to conquer Canaan. These people are from Gibeon, but they are also part of the Hivite people, so they are called Gibeonites or Hivites. Gibeon is only a few kilometers from where the Israelites are camping. Instead of fighting against Israel, the people of Gibeon want to make a covenant of peace with Israel. A covenant is a promise between two groups or individuals. The Gibeonites know that Yahweh will not allow the Israelites to make a covenant with them because the Gibeonites live in Canaan, so they decide to deceive the Israelites by claiming to be from a distant land. They send a small group of people to represent all the Gibeonite people. These people carry a message to the Israelites.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How does your culture describe people who go to give a message to a person or people who represent a group? Pause this audio here.

These Gibeonite people put on torn, worn-out clothing and sandals. They place dry crumbly bread in old sacks and carry wineskins that have been torn and mended. Wineskins are bottles made of animal hide. The small group of Gibeonites load all their provisions onto their donkeys, which are animals big enough to carry heavy burdens. All of these things make the small group of Gibeonites look like they have been traveling for many days from a far-off country.

In scene three, the small group of Gibeonites arrive at Gilgal and tell Joshua they have come from a distant land and want to make a covenant with Israel. But the Israelites do not trust what the Gibeonites claim. The Israelites say, "How do we know you do not live nearby? We cannot make a treaty with you if you do." The Gibeonites answer, "We are your servants." The Gibeonites say this to show that they respect the Israelites and are willing to obey them. Once again, Joshua demands to know who the Gibeonites are and where they have come from. This time, the Gibeonites say that they have come from a distant country and they have heard of "the great name of Yahweh, your God." This means the Gibeonites had heard about Yahweh's fame and all the great things that Yahweh had done in Egypt. They also heard about what Yahweh did to the two Amorite kings Sihon and Og on the east side of the Jordan River.

Stop here and discuss as a group: The Gibeonites told the Israelites how they had heard about Yahweh. How do people in your culture report about information they have heard from other people? Pause this audio here.

When the elders and people of the Gibeonites' country heard about Yahweh, they sent the small group of Gibeonites to make a covenant with Israel. As proof of their long journey, the Gibeonites insist that the Israelites look at the bread they have left to eat. The Gibeonites say the bread was warm and fresh when they left home, but it is now dry and crumbly. Their wineskins are now torn. Their clothing and sandals are worn from the long journey. The Israelites examine the food and decide to make a covenant with the people of Gibeon. Perhaps the Israelites ate some of the bread, but in any case they looked at it carefully. Joshua and the Israelites do not ask Yahweh for help in making this decision. Yahweh usually guides the Israelites by giving his instructions to the high priest, but this time Joshua and the Israelites do not ask Yahweh to guide them to the best choice. Joshua and the Israelites make a covenant with the Gibeonites and promise to keep the Gibeonites safe and to let them live. The leaders of the community of Israel seal, or guarantee, the covenant with a binding oath.

Stop here and discuss: Tell a story about someone trying to convince someone else by telling a lie. How do they convince them? What words or tones of voice do 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 Joshua 9:1–15 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:

- Kings from Canaan
- Hivites from Gibeon
- Small group of people from Gibeon who travel to Gilgal
- Yahweh
- Joshua
- And Israelites, including leaders

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 kings of Canaan west of the Jordan River hear about how Joshua and the Israelites defeated Jericho and Ai. The kings decide that they want to fight against the Israelites all together as one big army.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the kings from Canaan, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The people might answer things like:

- "We are panicking. We are afraid of the Israelites and need to defend ourselves," or
- "We think we are strong enough together to fight against Joshua and the Israelites and Yahweh."

However, the people who live in the city of Gibeon, from the Hivite tribe, do not want to fight against Joshua and the Israelites. Instead, the Gibeonites, who are part of the Hivite tribe, want to make a peace treaty with Joshua and the Israelites. They know that Yahweh will not allow the Israelites to make a treaty with any tribe living in Canaan, so the Gibeonites decide to deceive Joshua and the Israelites.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Gibeonites, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The people might answer things like:

- "We know Yahweh is powerful, and we do not wish to fight against the Israelites," or
- "We are afraid of being destroyed and think that lying is the only way to keep our families safe."

So, some people from Gibeon gather supplies that make it look like they have traveled from a distant land. They put dry crumbly bread in worn out sacks and carry torn and mended wineskins. They put on clothes and sandals that look old and worn out. They load the supplies on their donkeys and travel to Gilgal where Joshua and the Israelites are camped.

When they reach Gilgal, the people tell Joshua that they have traveled from a distant land and want to make a covenant with the Israelites. But the men of Israel say to the Gibeonites, "We do not know where you come from. You might live in Canaan. We cannot make a treaty with you."

The representatives from Gibeon reply, "We are your servants."

So Joshua asks again, "Who are you and where do you come from?"

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the small group from Gibeon, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The people might answer things like:

- "We are afraid but are determined to stick to our plan," or
- "We are certain that our preparations will trick Joshua and the Israelites."

Ask the people playing the Israelites, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The people might answer things like:

- "We are suspicious of the story these people are telling us," or
- "We want to believe these people are telling the truth so we can be at peace with them. We are tired of fighting."

The small group of Gibeonites tell Joshua that they have come from a distant land because they heard about Yahweh's reputation and the great things Yahweh did in Egypt. They heard how Yahweh helped the Israelites defeat the Amorite kings Og and Sihon. They say that when the elders of their land heard of Yahweh, the elders sent the small group immediately to make a covenant with the Israelites. The group of Gibeonites show the Israelites their supplies and say, "When we left our land, our bread was warm and fresh, but now it is dry and crumbly. Our wineskins were new and full, and now they are cracked and empty. Our clothes and sandals are worn out from the long trip." The men of Israel examine the supplies, but Joshua and the Israelites do not ask Yahweh to help them make a decision. So Joshua makes a covenant with the Hivites from Gibeon, and the Israelites swear an oath to let them live.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you thinking and feeling?" The person might answer things like:

- "I think these people are trustworthy. Their supplies make me believe they are telling the truth about where they live," or
- "I am weary of fighting and am glad to make a covenant with these people," or
- "I can trust my own judgment and do not need to ask Yahweh for help."

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you thinking and feeling?" The person might answer things like:

- "I am sad that the Israelites do not feel it is necessary to ask me to help them make a decision," or
- "I am angry that the Gibeonites have deceived the Israelites so easily."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 9:1–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

All the kings west of the **Jordan River**—the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites—refers to the people groups who lived in the land during the time that Yahweh led Joshua and the Israelites to conquer it. These peoples lived in the hill country, western foothills, and along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea north to the mountains in Lebanon. The Jordan River is a long river that runs through the land from north to south. Use the same word or phrase for Jordan River that you used in previous passages. For more information on Jordan River, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here as a group and, if needed, look at a map of Canaan that includes where these peoples lived. Pause this audio here.

The **kings** west of the Jordan River wanted to fight together against Joshua and the Israelites. A king was someone who ruled over a city, tribe, or territory. Use the same word for king that you used in previous passages. For more information on king, refer to the Master Glossary.

The people living in the city of Gibeon did not wish to fight. These people are called **Gibeonites** or **Hivites** because they belonged to the Hivite tribe.

The Gibeonites decided to act craftily, or lie to the Israelites. The Gibeonites wanted to trick the Israelites into believing that Gibeon is far away from Canaan. In order to look like they had been on a long journey, they packed supplies that looked old. Their bread was dry and crumbly, and their wineskins were cracked and mended. A

wineskin is a bottle made from animal hide. The clothes the Gibeonites wore were also patched and worn out. They loaded all their supplies on **donkeys**. A donkey is an animal that is big enough to carry heavy loads. For more information on donkey, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and look at a picture of **dry crumbly bread** as a group. Look at a picture of a **wineskin**. Look at a picture of **worn-out clothing** and **sandals**. Look at a picture of a **donkey**. Discuss what you will call each of these things. Pause this audio here.

The Gibeonites traveled to Gilgal where the **Israelites** were camping. Israelites refers 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.

The Gibeonites wanted to make a treaty of peace, or a **covenant**, with the Israelites. When people make a covenant with each other, they make a strong promise to each other that they cannot break. When people make a covenant, they say they want to have a good relationship with each other. The Israelites were promising that they would live in harmony, without fighting, with the Gibeonites. Use the same word or phrase for covenant that you used in previous passages. For more information on covenant, refer to the Master Glossary.

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

At first, Joshua and the Israelites did not believe the Gibeonites were telling the truth. But when Joshua questioned the Gibeonites about where they lived, they responded, "We are your servants." A **servant** is a man or woman who works for another person. Use the same word for servant that you used in previous passages. For more information on servant, refer to the Master Glossary.

Joshua asked the Gibeonites again where they traveled from, and they told him they heard about **Yahweh**, the Israelites' **God**, in their land. Yahweh is God's proper name and God is the general way to talk about a god. Use the same word or phrase for Yahweh, and the same general word for God, that you used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh and on God, refer to the Master Glossary.

When the elders of the city of Gibeon heard about Yahweh, they sent a small group to make a covenant with the Israelites. An **elder** is a person with authority in a community. A group of elders would meet together to make decisions about the affairs of the community. Use the same word for elder that you used in previous passages. For more information on elder, refer to the Master Glossary.

The leaders of the community of Israelites sealed the covenant with an **oath**. When people make a covenant with each other, they can swear an oath to make the promise more serious. When someone swears an oath, he is saying, "I will absolutely keep my promise. If I do not, God may punish me." Use the same word for oath that you used in previous passages. For more information on oath, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and discuss what word you will use for **community of Israel**. The community, or congregation, of Israel refers to the entire group of Israelite people. If you have translated this word in a previous 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.

Joshua 9:1–15

Audio Content

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Joshua 9:16–27

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 9:16–27 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 9:16–27 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 Joshua 9:16–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, the Israelites were camped at Gilgal. Some people from Gibeon came to Joshua and the Israelites and claimed to be from a distant land. They showed the Israelites dry crumbly bread and they wore worn-out clothing. The Gibeonites offered to be servants of the Israelites. Joshua and the Israelites did not ask Yahweh for guidance. Instead, they made a covenant with the Gibeonites and promised to let them live.

Three days after the Israelites and Gibeonites made a covenant together, the Israelites discovered that the Gibeonites lived near the Israelites. We do not know how the Israelites discovered this. Perhaps the Israelites were traveling around the land and happened to come to the place the Gibeonites lived, or maybe someone told the Israelites where the Gibeonites lived and then the Israelites traveled to their cities. We do know that within three days, the whole community of Israel came to Gibeon. The Gibeonites lived in four cities: Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth, and Kiriath Jearim. These cities were close together.

Stop here and look at a map that shows Gilgal, Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth, and Kiriath Jearim. Pause this audio here.

The community of Israel grumbled against Israel's leaders. The people were upset because of the situation that the leaders had caused. The Israelite people believed that Yahweh would punish the Israelites if they did not kill the Gibeonites as Yahweh had commanded. But now, because of the covenant, or peace treaty, that Israel's leaders had made with the Gibeonites, Yahweh could also punish the Israelites if they did kill the Gibeonites. Israel's leaders knew they could not break the oath they had made in Yahweh's name, even though they had made the oath based on false information. So instead of killing the Gibeonites, the Israelite leaders decided to make the Gibeonites into servants who would cut wood and carry water for the Israelites.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a time when one person, or a small group of people, made a decision that affected a larger group of people. Pause this audio here.

Then Joshua had someone bring the Gibeonites to him. Joshua asked the Gibeonites why they deceived the Israelites by saying they came from a distant land when they actually lived so close. Joshua told the Gibeonites that, because they lied, Yahweh cursed them to only ever be slaves who would cut wood and carry water for the house of God and the community of Israel. The Gibeonites would help the Israelites with the wood and water that they need for worship in the tabernacle, or place of worship to Yahweh.

Stop here and look at a picture of a person cutting wood and a person carrying water. Pause this audio here.

The Gibeonites answered Joshua and said that they knew clearly that Yahweh had commanded Yahweh's servant Moses to conquer the land and to destroy the people who lived in the land. The Gibeonites were very afraid of the Israelites and lied to stay alive. The Gibeonites admitted that Joshua and the Israelites are more powerful than the Gibeonites, and they told Joshua to do to the Gibeonites whatever Joshua believed was right.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a time when someone told the truth, even when it caused harm. Or, tell a story about a time when someone did not tell the truth so that they would not cause harm. How is telling the truth important even when it may cause harm? Pause this audio here.

Joshua saved the Gibeonites from the Israelites who wanted to destroy them. From that day on, Joshua made the Gibeonites work in the tabernacle, the place of worship to Yahweh. The tabernacle moved from place to place, and Yahweh would show the Israelites where Yahweh wanted them to set up the tabernacle each time. The Gibeonites would cut wood and carry water so that the Israelites could do the sacrifices that Yahweh asked

them to do at the tabernacle. The Gibeonites continue to serve "to this day" wherever Yahweh decides the altar, or place of worship, will be.

Stop here and look at a picture of the altar of Yahweh as a group.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 9:16–27 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: Three days after making a covenant with the Gibeonites, the Israelites discover that the Gibeonites live close like neighbors. The entire Israelite community travels to the Gibeonite cities. The Israelite people want to kill the Gibeonites as Yahweh had originally commanded, but the Israelites are not allowed to kill the Gibeonites because the Israelite leaders had made a strong oath before Yahweh not to harm the Gibeonites.

In the second scene: The people of Israel grumble against their leaders. The people want to kill the Gibeonites in order to obey Yahweh's command to destroy any inhabitants in the land. But the leaders remind the people that the leaders made a strong oath before Yahweh, and if they break that oath, Yahweh will be very angry. The leaders believe that the Gibeonites should become slaves to the Israelites by cutting wood and carrying water for the community.

In the third scene: Joshua calls the Gibeonites to himself and asks why they lied about living far away when they live close to the Israelites. The Gibeonites answer that they knew that Yahweh had commanded the Israelites to destroy all the inhabitants of the land, so they lied to survive. They agree that Joshua should treat them as he believes best. So Joshua does not allow the Israelites to kill the Gibeonites. Instead, Joshua makes them woodcutters and water carriers for the altar of Yahweh, wherever Yahweh chooses for it to be.

The characters in this passage are:

- Community of Israel, or the Israelites
- Israelite leaders
- Gibeonites
- And Joshua

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

The Israelites traveled around Canaan. Three days after they made a covenant and solemn oath with the Gibeonites, the Israelites arrived at the Gibeonite territory and discovered that the Gibeonites did in fact live close to them like neighbors. This means that Israel made the covenant with Gibeon on one day, they traveled on the next day, and on the third day they found the cities of the Gibeonites, which included Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth, and Kiriath Jearim. These cities were only about 30 kilometers from Gilgal, where the Israelites had been camping. The people of Israel wanted to kill the Gibeonites, but they could not attack them because the Israelite leaders had made a solemn oath before Yahweh not to harm the Gibeonites.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story where some of the events in the story happen a few days after the first events in the story. How does your culture count days? Pause this audio here.

The people of Israel grumble, or complain, against their leaders because of the covenant the leaders made with the Gibeonites.

Stop here and talk about a time a group of people complained about their leaders. What words or phrases do you use to describe how they complain? Pause this audio here.

The people want to obey Yahweh's command to destroy the people who live in the land. But the leaders remind the people, "Since we swore an oath before Yahweh, we cannot break it. If we do, Yahweh will be angry. We must let the Gibeonites live." Yahweh's wrath, or anger, would fall on the Israelites and punish them if they broke the oath with the Gibeonites. So because the Israelites cannot kill the Gibeonites, the leaders instead decide that the Gibeonites must do the work of cutting wood and carrying water for the Israelite community. Usually, servants, slaves, or foreigners did these tasks. The leaders want to make sure the people of Gibeon will have no influence over the people of Israel. The leaders themselves do not tell the people of Gibeon about what roles the Gibeonites will play. Instead, Joshua tells the Gibeonites this information.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story that includes a decision that a group makes at one time, but a leader communicates it later. What words help the listener understand the order of events? Pause this audio here.

Joshua sent a messenger to the people of Gibeon and asked that a group of Gibeonites come to talk to Joshua. The messenger brought the people, or group of people, from Gibeon to Joshua, and Joshua asked them, "Why did you lie to us and tell us you lived far away when you are living close to us?" Because the Gibeonites lied to Joshua, Yahweh cursed the Gibeonites and gave them a punishment to work for the Israelites. So Joshua tells the Gibeonites, "Yahweh has cursed you to always be slaves who cut wood and carry water for the house of my God." Even though the Israelite leaders had already decided what work the Gibeonites would do, Joshua is the one who tells the Gibeonites about that decision. The Gibeonites reply to Joshua with great respect, "We are your servants, and we did it because we feared for our lives. Moses served Yahweh, and we know that Yahweh promised to give you the whole land, and he commanded you to kill the people in it." The Gibeonites understand that Joshua and the Israelites have power over them. This means the Israelites can decide how to treat the Gibeonites, and the Gibeonites do not have anything to say about how the Israelites decide to treat them.

So Joshua did not allow the Israelites to kill the Gibeonites. But Joshua and the Israelite leaders made the Gibeonites woodcutters and water carriers for the community of Israel and the altar of Yahweh wherever Yahweh would choose to build it. The Israelites had a tabernacle that they carried from place to place. Yahweh told them where to set it up each time they camped. The Israelites set up the altar with the tabernacle to make sacrifices in their worship of Yahweh. Sometimes, Yahweh also gave special instructions about building altars for special places and occasions. The Gibeonites served at the altar, and the storyteller tells us that they are still serving "to this day," or up to the time when the storyteller wrote this story.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Here "altar" refers to a place of worship to Yahweh, because worship involved sacrificing on an altar. How do you describe places of worship in your culture? Who decides where you can worship God or your culture's gods? 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 Joshua 9:16–27 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:

- Community of Israel, or Israelites
- Israelite leaders
- Gibeonites
- And Joshua

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

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

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

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

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

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

Three days after making a covenant and solemn oath with the Gibeonites, the Israelites learn that the Gibeonites lied to them. The Gibeonites are neighbors to the Israelites. Immediately, the people of Israel travel to the cities of the Gibeonites, arriving within three days. But the Israelites did not attack the Gibeonites because the Israelite leaders had made a solemn oath before Yahweh to protect Gibeon.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the people of Israel, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "We are angry that the Gibeonites lied to us," or
- "We are confused about why these people pretended to be from a distant land," or
- "We are afraid of Yahweh's anger because we did not kill these people who live in the land."

The people of Israel grumble against the Israelite leaders because the leaders had made a treaty with the Gibeonites. But the leaders replied, "Because we swore a solemn oath before Yahweh, we cannot attack them. We have to let them live because Yahweh would be very angry if we broke our oath." So the Israelites obeyed their leaders and let the Gibeonites live, but they made the Gibeonites cut wood and carry water for the community of Israel.

Pause the drama.

Ask the persons playing the Israelite leaders, "What are you thinking and feeling?" The persons might answer things like:

- "We feel foolish and guilty that we made a covenant and swore an oath with people who lied to us," or
- "We are angry too that the Gibeonites lied, but we are fearful of Yahweh's anger if we break our oath," or
- "We wish we had asked Yahweh for guidance before we made the covenant! Now we have caused more difficulty for ourselves."

Joshua called the Gibeonites to come to him. Joshua asked the Gibeonites, "Why did you lie to us by saying you came from a distant land? You are our neighbors! Now Yahweh will curse you. You will always cut wood and carry water for the house of Yahweh, wherever Yahweh chooses to place it."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you thinking and feeling?" The person might answer things like:

- "I am frustrated that the Gibeonites were able to deceive us so easily," or
- "I am afraid that allowing the Gibeonites to live might distract the Israelites from Yahweh," or
- "I will make sure that the people of Gibeon cannot turn us away from Yahweh."

The people of Gibeon reply to Joshua, "We are your servants, but we were told clearly that Yahweh commanded Moses to direct Yahweh's people to take the land and to kill all the inhabitants of the land. We were afraid that we would die, so we lied to you. We know we are at your mercy to do what you believe is right." So Joshua did not allow the Israelites to kill the Gibeonites. Joshua made the Gibeonites woodcutters and water carriers for the community of Israel and for the house of Yahweh, wherever Yahweh chose to build it. The Gibeonites continue to do these jobs at the time the storyteller writes this passage down.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Gibeonites, "What are you thinking and feeling?" The people might answer things like:

- "We are relieved that Joshua and the Israelites must let us live," or
- "We are content to serve the people of Israel as long as they will keep us safe."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 9:16–27 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Three days after the people of Israel had made a **covenant** with the Gibeonites to let them live, they found out the Gibeonites had not told the truth. When people make a covenant, they make a solemn promise to each other that they cannot break. Use the same word or phrase for covenant that you used in previous passages. For more information on covenant, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Israelites discovered that the Gibeonites were their **neighbors**. A neighbor is someone who lives near another person. The Gibeonites lived in the same land with the Israelites. The Gibeonites did not live in a distant country.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **neighbor**. Look up neighbor 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** left at once from Gilgal to travel to the cities of the Gibeonites. Israelites refers to the people who are descended from Abraham. Use the same words or phrases for city and Israelite as you used in previous passages. For more information on Israelite, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and look at a map that includes the Israelite camp of Gilgal as well as the cities of the Gibeonites. Pause this audio here.

The Israelites did not attack the Gibeonites because the Israelite leaders had made a strong **oath** before Yahweh to keep the Gibeonites safe. When people make a promise to each other, they can swear an oath to make the promise more serious. When someone swears an oath, they say, "I will absolutely keep my promise. If I do not, Yahweh may punish me." If someone does not keep his promise after swearing an oath, we say he has broken the oath. It was a very disgraceful and dangerous thing to break an oath. Use the same word for oath that you used in previous passages. For more information on oath, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Israelite leaders had sworn an oath before **Yahweh**, the **God of Israel**. Yahweh is God's proper name, and God is the general way to talk about the creator God. Use the same words or phrases for Israel, Yahweh, and

the same general word for God that you used in previous passages. For more information on Israel, Yahweh, and on God, refer to the Master Glossary.

The community, or congregation, of Israel grumbled against their leaders because the leaders had made an oath. Use the same word for **community of Israel** that you used in previous passages. The leaders told the Israelites that the leaders must keep their oath to allow the Gibeonites to live. If the Israelites killed the Gibeonites, Yahweh would send his **wrath** on the people of Israel. Wrath is the strong anger Yahweh has when Yahweh sees sin and evil. Wrath is stronger than anger and involves punishing people for their sin.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **wrath**. Look up wrath 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 tell the people of Israel that the Gibeonites should live, but from now on the Gibeonites will have the jobs of **woodcutters** and **water carriers**. The Gibeonites were in charge of cutting down trees for wood and drawing water from wells or streams for the community of Israel. These were jobs usually done by slaves or servants.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **woodcutter** and **water carrier**. Use the same word or phrase for woodcutter and water carrier throughout the book of Joshua. Stop here and look at a picture of a person cutting wood and carrying or drawing water.

Then Joshua calls the Gibeonites to himself and asks why they had deceived the Israelites. Joshua tells the Gibeonites that they are **cursed** to be slaves who cut wood and carry water from now on. To curse someone is the opposite of to bless someone. When you curse someone, you wish something bad would happen to them. People believed that a curse would come true. Look up curse in the Master Glossary for more information. Use the same word for curse as you have in previous passages.

The Gibeonites respond to Joshua by calling themselves his **servants**. A servant is a man or woman who works for another person. In the Bible you can use the same word for servant or slave. If you are a servant, you usually have a low position in the community. Use the same word or phrase for servant that you used in previous passages. For more information on servant, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Gibeonites tell Joshua they lied about where they lived in order to stay alive. The Gibeonites admit they are now in Joshua's hands, or under Joshua's power. Joshua saves the Gibeonites from being killed and tells them they will now serve the nation of Israel by cutting wood and carrying water for the community and for the **altar** of Yahweh, wherever Yahweh chooses for the altar to be. An altar may refer to a place where people kill animals and burn them as an offering to Yahweh, or it may refer to a place where people burn incense. People often built an altar out of stones. The Gibeonites would forever be servants who cut wood for the sacrifices on the altar and carried the water they needed. Use the same word for altar that you used in previous passages. For more information on altar, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and look at a picture of the altar of Yahweh as a group. 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.

Joshua 9:16–27

Audio Content

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Joshua 10:1–15

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 10:1–15 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 10:1–15 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 Joshua 10:1–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, the Israelites discovered that the Gibeonites did not live far away. The Gibeonites were neighbors to the Israelites. Because Israel had made a covenant of peace with Gibeon, the Israelites did not attack Gibeon. Instead, Joshua commanded that the Gibeonites would serve Israel as woodcutters and water carriers.

After confronting the Gibeonites, the people of Israel returned to their camp at Gilgal. Gilgal is close to Jericho and Ai, cities the Israelites had completely destroyed because they obeyed Yahweh.

Stop here as a group and look at a map that includes Jericho, Ai, and Gilgal. Pause this audio here.

At that time, Adoni-Zedek was king of Jerusalem, a city that belonged to the Amorites. The Amorites were part of the Canaanite tribes. Adoni-Zedek heard about how Joshua completely destroyed Jericho and Ai and killed the kings of those two cities. Adoni-Zedek also heard how the Gibeonites had made a covenant of peace with the Israelites and lived among the Israelites. King Adoni-Zedek and his people were afraid because Gibeon was a big and important city. Gibeon was larger than Ai and as big as any city that kings ruled. Gibeon's men were known to be great warriors. Israel's peace with the Gibeonites would have been a threat to King Adoni-Zedek's reign, because now Israel and Gibeon together would be difficult to conquer if they attacked Jerusalem.

At that time there were four other kings of Amorite cities. These kings were Hoham king of Hebron, Piram king of Jarmuth, Japhia king of Lachish, and Debir king of Eglon. So Adoni-Zedek sent messages to those four kings of the Amorites. The messages told the other kings to join Adoni-Zedek in attacking the Gibeonites, because the Gibeonites had made peace with Joshua and the Israelites. These five kings came together with their armies to surround and attack Gibeon. In those days, large cities usually had walls around them. When an army surrounded a city, they made it impossible for the people of that city to go outside the walls to get food or water. Enemy armies often surrounded cities to make the people weak from hunger. The army would then attack the city when it was weakest.

Stop here as a group and look at a map that includes Gibeon, Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon. Discuss this question as a group: Tell about a time in your culture when a group of people or cities got together to fight against another group. Pause this audio here.

Right away some men from Gibeon took messages to Joshua at Gilgal. They begged Joshua not to leave them alone but to come quickly to save them from the attack of the Amorite kings. They needed Joshua to save and to help them. Because Israel had made a covenant or treaty with Gibeon, Israel had to help them. Joshua immediately gathered his army, including the best warriors, and traveled from Gilgal to Gibeon. Before they set out, Yahweh assured Joshua that the Israelites should not be afraid of the Amorite armies. Yahweh would certainly give the Israelites victory over the Amorites. Yahweh even said that not one Amorite would stand to fight against Israel!

Joshua and the Israelite army marched through the night on steep mountain trails. They traveled so quickly that they surprised the Amorite armies when they arrived at Gibeon. Yahweh caused the Amorite armies to be afraid and very confused and to run away when they saw the Israelite army attacking them. Then Yahweh caused the Israelites to kill many of the Amorites at Gibeon and to chase the rest of the Amorites down the mountain pass at the city of Beth Horon. Yahweh gave the Israelite army the power to keep attacking the Amorites as far south as the cities of Azekah and Makkedah.

As the Amorites ran down the hill at Beth Horon away from the Israelite army, Yahweh threw large hailstones down on the Amorite army. The hailstones fell all the way to Azekah. The hailstones killed more people that day than the Israelite army killed with their swords.

Stop here and look at a map that includes the route the Amorite soldiers took to run away, including Gibeon, Beth Horon, Azekah, and Makkedah. Look at a picture of a large hailstone as a group. Pause this audio here.

On that day, Yahweh gave the men of Israel victory over the Amorites. On that same day, Joshua prayed to Yahweh in front of all the people of Israel. Joshua asked Yahweh to stop the sun from moving over Gibeon and to stop the moon in the Valley of Aijalon, which is south of the mountain pass at Beth Horon.

And so the sun stayed still and the moon did not move for an entire day while the Israelites completely defeated their enemies. Joshua quotes this story from the book of Jashar, which was probably a book of ancient war songs. Yahweh did what Joshua asked. Never before and never since has Yahweh answered a person's prayer to make the sun and moon stand still in this way. Yahweh listened to Joshua and fought for Israel. After their victory, Joshua and the Israelites returned to their camp at Gilgal.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell about a time when something happened that no one could explain. How did people react?

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 10:1–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

This passage has five scenes.

In the first scene: Adoni-Zedek, king of Jerusalem, learns that Joshua has completely destroyed the cities of Jericho and Ai and killed their kings. Adoni-Zedek also learned that the Gibeonites had made a covenant of peace with the Israelites. The king and his people are very afraid.

In the second scene: Adoni-Zedek sends messages to the other four kings of the Amorites. Adoni-Zedek urges the other kings to join him in destroying Gibeon because they have made peace with Joshua and the Israelites. So the five kings and their armies join together to surround and attack the city or area of Gibeon.

In the third scene: The men of Gibeon send urgent messages to Joshua in Gilgal and beg him to save the Gibeonites from the five Amorite kings. Immediately, Joshua and his warriors leave Gilgal for Gibeon. Yahweh assures Joshua that Yahweh has already given Israel victory over the Amorites, and the Israelites should not be afraid.

In the fourth scene: Joshua and the Israelite army immediately march to Gibeon, and they surprise the Amorite army when they arrive. Yahweh causes the Amorites to run away in fear, and the Israelite army kills many at Gibeon and pursues the rest. Yahweh kills more soldiers by throwing large hailstones at the retreating Amorites than the Israelite army kills with their swords.

In the fifth scene: The same day that Yahweh defeats the Amorites for Israel, Joshua prays and asks Yahweh to make the sun and moon stand still. Yahweh keeps the sun and moon from moving through the sky so Joshua can defeat the Amorites. Never before or since has Yahweh answered a prayer like this one and acted this way. When they finish the battle, Joshua and the Israelites return to Gilgal.

The characters in this passage are:

- Adoni-Zedek
- Four kings of Amorites: Hoham of Hebron, Piram of Jarmuth, Japhia of Lachish, Debir of Eglon
- Gibeonites
- Joshua
- Israelite army
- Yahweh
- And Amorite armies

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

In the first scene, Adoni-Zedek, king of Jerusalem, hears that Joshua captured and destroyed Jericho and Ai, and Joshua also killed their kings. Adoni-Zedek also learns of the covenant of peace that the Israelites and the Gibeonites made together. These events cause the king and his people to be afraid. Jerusalem was a city where some of the Amorite people lived. Jerusalem was located between Jericho and Ai and Gibeon. Gibeon was a large and important city, much larger than Ai. The Gibeonite warriors were mighty and strong. Gibeon's covenant of peace with Israel meant that Israel and Gibeon fought on the same side, even though the Gibeonites were servants. King Adoni-Zedek was probably afraid that the Israelites would march towards Jerusalem next in order to conquer it.

Stop here and look at the map that includes Jericho, Ai, Gibeon, and Jerusalem as a group. Pause this audio here.

In the second scene, Adoni-Zedek sends messages to the other four kings of the Amorites. The Amorites lived in the hill country of Canaan, and they were very strong warriors. The cities of the five kings were important cities on a trade route through Canaan. Adoni-Zedek invites Hoham of Hebron, Piram of Jarmuth, Japhia of Lachish, and Debir of Eglon to join him in attacking Gibeon because Gibeon has allied itself with Israel. The other kings join Adoni-Zedek, and their armies all together surround Gibeon to cut it off before they attack.

In the third scene, the Gibeonites send messengers to Joshua at Gilgal. They use respectful words to show that they are under Israel's authority and beg Joshua for help. They say, "We are your servants and are under your protection. Please do not abandon us! All the Amorite kings have joined together to attack us." Right away, Joshua calls together the army, including the best warriors. Before they begin marching, Yahweh assures Joshua that the Israelites should not fear the Amorite army. Even though this information comes after the story says that the Israelites start marching, we know that Yahweh encourages Joshua before they start marching. Yahweh has already given the Amorites into Israel's hand. This means that Yahweh has already given Israel victory over the Amorites, and not one Amorite will be able to stand before Israel.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story about a time when someone's circumstances appeared to be hopeless. How would you beg someone for help if you felt hopeless? What words would you use? Pause this audio here.

In the fourth scene, Joshua took his army and included the best fighting men from Israel. They marched all night up through steep mountain passes and arrived at Gibeon. A mountain is a raised part of the Earth's surface that has very steep sides. A mountain pass is a trail between two mountains. Because they traveled so quickly, the Israelite army surprised the Amorites when they arrived. Yahweh caused the Amorite soldiers to be terrified and to run away in all directions.

Stop here and look at a picture of a mountain pass. Discuss this question as a group: How would you describe people who are terrified and very confused? Pause this audio here.

The Israelites killed many Amorites at Gibeon, and Yahweh gave Israel the strength to chase the rest of the Amorites as they fled. The soldiers ran along the road to Beth Horon, and the Israelites chased them all the way to the cities of Azekah and Makedah. The Israelites cut them down, or killed them with swords. As the Amorites ran, Yahweh caused a great storm to begin. Yahweh "threw down large hailstones" on the Amorites. This lets us know that Yahweh caused the hailstorm. Hailstones are frozen drops of water that may fall during large

storms with thunder and lightning. The hailstones killed more Amorites than the Israelite soldiers killed with their swords.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How would you talk about when a god causes something like a natural disaster to happen? Here Yahweh "threw down" hailstones, which means Yahweh caused the hail. How might you talk about Yahweh causing something like that? Pause this audio here.

In the fifth scene, on the same day Yahweh gave Joshua and the Israelites victory over the Amorites, Yahweh did even more miracles for the Israelites. On that day, Joshua prayed to Yahweh in front of all the people of Israel. Joshua asked the sun and the moon to stand still. Even though Joshua spoke to the sun and moon, we know that this means Joshua was asking Yahweh to make the sun and moon stand still in the sky so that Joshua would have enough time to completely defeat the Amorites. Yahweh answered Joshua's prayers by keeping the sun and moon still in the sky over Gibeon until Israel defeated the Amorites. Because the sun did not move, the day was longer than a normal day. Someone recorded this event in the Book of Jashar, which is probably a collection of songs of praise for heroes. People would have written these songs on a long piece of paper that they rolled up. We do not have any copies of the Book of Jashar anymore, but we know it says the sun did not set as on a normal day. Never before and never since has there been a day when the sun did not move.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How do you normally talk about how the sun and moon move across the sky? How might you talk about the sun and moon staying still? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh has never responded to a person's voice, or a person praying to ask for something, in this same way since this happened.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story about a specific prayer that God answered. What words will you use to communicate how God answers prayers in different ways? Pause this audio here.

After the battle ended, Joshua and the Israelites who were with him returned to Gilgal. The story goes on to talk more about what happened to the Amorites, which makes it seem impossible that Joshua and the Israelites returned to Gilgal at this point. We are not sure why the story tells us that they returned now.

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 Joshua 10:1–15 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:

- Adoni-Zedek
- Four kings of Amorites: Hoham of Hebron, Piram of Jarmuth, Japhia of Lachish, Debir of Eglon
- Gibeonites
- Joshua
- Israelite army
- Yahweh
- And Amorite armies

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.

Adoni-Zedek, king of Jerusalem, hears that Joshua completely destroyed the cities of Jericho and Ai, and Joshua killed the kings of both cities. Adoni-Zedek also hears that Gibeon has made a covenant of peace with Israel and now serves among the people of Israel. Adoni-Zedek and his people are afraid of the covenant between Gibeon and Israel because Gibeon is a large important city full of mighty warriors.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Adoni-Zedek, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The person might answer things like:

- "I am angry that these Israelites have come into our land to attack and destroy us," or
- "I am afraid that Gibeon will lead Israel to attack and defeat us next!"

Adoni-Zedek sends messages to the other Amorite kings Hoham of Hebron, Piram of Jarmuth, Japhia of Lachish, and Debir of Eglon. Adoni-Zedek urges those kings to join him in attacking Gibeon because they have made peace with Joshua and the Israelites. All the kings agree, and together their armies surround and attack the city of Gibeon.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the five Amorite kings, "What are you thinking and feeling?" The people might answer things like:

- "We believe our cities are in danger of being conquered by Joshua and the Israelites, so we will fight," or
- "We are afraid to fight alone, so we will fight all together and hope we can defeat the Israelites."

The people of Gibeon quickly send a message to Joshua at Gilgal. They say, "We are your servants! Please do not abandon us. Come and save us from all the Amorite kings and their armies!" Joshua immediately leaves Gilgal for Gibeon. Before he leaves, Yahweh reassures Joshua that he should not be afraid. Yahweh will defeat the Amorites for Israel and the Gibeonites. Not one Amorite will stand against Yahweh and Israel.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Gibeonites, "What are you thinking and feeling?" The people might answer things like:

- "We are so afraid that the Amorites will completely destroy us," or
- "We trust that Yahweh and the Israelites will defend us because we have a covenant of peace with them."

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you thinking and feeling?" The person might answer things like:

- "I am determined to protect the Gibeonites and to honor the covenant we made with them," or
- "I know without a doubt that Yahweh will win this battle for us."

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you thinking and feeling?" The person might answer things like:

- "I will prove myself to be faithful to the Israelites by fighting this battle for them," or
- "I am happy to see the Israelites are trusting me to fight for them."

Joshua marches all night through the mountain passes and catches the Amorites by surprise. Yahweh causes the Amorites to run from the Israelites in fear. Yahweh helps the Israelites kill many Amorites at Gibeon and gives them strength to chase the Amorites from Beth Horon all the way to Azekah and Makkedah. As the Amorites run from Israel, Yahweh creates a great storm and throws large hailstones on them from Beth Horon all the way down to Azekah. Yahweh uses hailstones to kill more Amorites that day than the swords of the Israelites.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Israelite army, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The people might answer things like:

- "We celebrate in the strength and victory that Yahweh gives us over the Amorites!" or
- "We are confident that Yahweh will win this battle for us."

Ask the people playing the Amorite armies, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The people might answer things like:

- "We are scared of the Israelites and are running for our lives! What kind of God do they serve? We are more terrified than we were before!" or
- "We wish we had decided to make peace with Israel like the Gibeonites did."

On the same day that Yahweh helped Joshua defeat the Amorite armies, Joshua prayed to Yahweh in front of all the people of Israel. Joshua asked Yahweh to lengthen the day by keeping the sun and moon still in the sky. Joshua wanted to make sure he had enough time to defeat the Amorites. Yahweh answered Joshua by keeping the sun high in the sky for a full day; the sun did not set when it normally should. These events are written in the Book of Jashar. Never before and never since has Yahweh listened to the prayers of a man and acted in this way.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you thinking and feeling?" The person might answer things like:

- "I trust that Yahweh can answer my prayer and make sure we defeat the Amorites," or
- "I am nervous that night will come before we can win, but I know Yahweh can answer big prayers like this one."

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you thinking and feeling?" The person might answer things like:

- "I am happy Joshua prayed to me for help because Joshua trusts me," or
- "I am happy to answer big prayers because I love my people Israel."

When Israel defeated the Amorites completely, all of Israel returned to Gilgal.

*Filling the Gaps**Filling the Gaps*

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 10:1–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Adoni-Zedek was the king of Jerusalem. Jerusalem is a city that belonged to the Amorites. It is built on a hill, and it is an important city for the people of Israel.

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

Adoni-Zedek was a **king**. A king is someone who rules over a **city** or territory. Use the same words for city and for king as you used in previous passages. For more information on king, refer to the Master Glossary.

Adoni-Zedek heard how Joshua had **completely destroyed** Jericho and Ai and killed their kings. Yahweh had commanded Moses and then Joshua to completely destroy the Canaanite cities in the Promised Land. The original language says that the Israelites should devote, or commit, the cities to destruction, meaning that they should commit themselves to completely destroy the cities. Yahweh commanded Israel to kill the people who fought against Yahweh but to allow anyone who turned to follow Yahweh to live. Use the same word or phrase for "completely destroy" as you used in previous passages.

Adoni-Zedek is afraid because the Gibeonites had made peace with the Israelites. You will remember in the previous passage that the Gibeonites had made a covenant, or strong promise, of peace with the Israelites. In this passage it just says that they made peace, or agreed to be at peace with each other. You may simply say that they made peace, or you may say again that they made a **covenant of peace** with each other. If you say covenant of peace, use the same terms you have used in previous passages, and see the Master Glossary for covenant and peace if needed.

So Adoni-Zedek urges the other Amorite kings to join him in attacking Gibeon. The Amorites were a tribe in the land of Canaan. They lived in the hill country in the central part of Canaan and lived in cities such as Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon.

Stop here and look at a map of Canaan to see where the Amorites lived. Use the same word or phrase for **Amorite** as you used in previous passages. Pause this audio here.

Adoni-Zedek wants to attack Gibeon because they have made peace with the people of Israel, or the **Israelites**. Use the same word for Israelite as you used in previous passages. For more information on Israelite, refer to the Master Glossary.

When their city is surrounded, the people of Gibeon send a message to Joshua and beg him not to abandon his **servants**. Use the same word for servant as you used in previous passages. For more information on servant, refer to the Master Glossary.

Before Joshua and the Israelite army marched from Gilgal to Gibeon, **Yahweh** assured them they should not be afraid because Yahweh would defeat the Amorites for Israel. Use the same word or phrase for Yahweh as you used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh caused the Amorite army to run from the Israelites in fear, and the Israelites chased them from Beth Horon all the way to Azekah and Makkedah. As the Amorites fled, Yahweh threw large **hailstones** on them from the sky. A hailstone is a frozen drop of rain or snow. Sometimes hailstones can be as large as hens' eggs. Hailstones may fall from the sky during a strong storm.

Stop here and look at a picture of a **hailstone** as a group. Discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for hailstone. 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 killed more Amorites with hailstones than the Israelites killed with **swords**. Use the same word for swords as you used in previous passages.

On the same day that Yahweh defeated the Amorites, Joshua spoke to Yahweh and asked Yahweh to keep the sun and moon still in the sky so that the day would be long enough for Israel to completely defeat the Amorites. To speak to Yahweh means to **pray**. When someone prays, he or she is communicating with Yahweh. When Yahweh listens to someone's prayer and responds, we say that Yahweh has answered someone's prayer.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **pray**. This passage does not use the word for praying to Yahweh in the original language. It says that Yahweh listened to the voice of a person. However, you may use your word for pray if you like. Look up pray 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's prayer for the sun to stand still also appears in the **Book of Jashar**. This was an ancient book that was probably a collection of ancient war songs. Remember that in that time, people wrote stories and histories on scrolls, which were long sheets of paper or leather that they rolled up.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **Book of Jashar**. Look at a photo of a scroll if needed to help you decide what to call the Book of Jashar.

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.

Joshua 10:1–15

Audio Content

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Joshua 10:16–28

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 10:16–28 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 10:16–28 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 Joshua 10:16–28 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, five Amorite kings came together to attack Gibeon because Gibeon had made peace with the people of Israel. Yahweh fought for Israel and Gibeon and defeated the Amorite armies. Yahweh threw hailstones on the armies. Yahweh also answered Joshua's prayer to extend the day by keeping the sun still in the sky so the Israelite army could completely destroy the Amorite armies.

The end of the previous passage explained that Joshua and the Israelites returned to Gilgal after the battle. This passage, however, tells about events that happened before the battle ended. This story occurs before the army of Israel returns to their camp at Gilgal.

During the battle between the Amorites and Israelites, the five Amorite kings escape from Joshua and the Israelites. They flee to a cave near Makkedah to hide. When someone finds them and tells Joshua, Joshua orders soldiers to roll large stones in front of the entrance to the cave. Joshua orders a few men to remain and to keep the kings inside the cave. Joshua tells the rest of the army to continue to chase the Amorite soldiers. The Israelites chase the Amorites so none can return to their cities. Yahweh has already promised that Yahweh will defeat the Amorites.

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

Joshua and the rest of the army continue to chase the Amorites and kill almost all of the Amorite soldiers. The Israelites chase the Amorites quickly because if the Amorites make it back to their cities surrounded by walls, the Amorites will be safe. Only a small group of Amorites escape and make it back to their cities. After the battle ends, the Israelites return safely to Joshua at the Israelite army camp just outside Makkedah. Not one enemy is left who is brave enough to threaten Israel.

Stop here and look at a map that includes the route the Amorite armies took to retreat from Israel. Pause this audio here.

Joshua tells his soldiers to remove the large rocks and to bring the kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon to Joshua. Joshua commands the commanders, or officers, of his army to come and place their feet on the necks of each king. Doing this shows that the Israelites have complete power over their enemies, because Israel has defeated them. As the commanders obey, Joshua reminds them what Yahweh told him. They should never be afraid or discouraged, but they should remain strong and courageous, because Yahweh will defeat all of Israel's enemies.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a time when one people group in your area completely conquered another people group. What kinds of things did the conquerors do to show that they completely conquered the other people? Pause this audio here.

Joshua kills each king, and Joshua's men hang their bodies on five trees, or poles. This is the same thing Joshua did to the king of Ai when he destroyed that city. The bodies hang there until sunset, when Joshua orders his men to cut the bodies down and to throw them into the cave where they had hidden. In Israel at this time, people had to take down dead bodies before the sun set, or the bodies would defile the land, or make the land unclean for use for Yahweh. The men place large stones at the opening of the cave, and they remain until today.

That same day, Joshua destroys the Amorite city of Makkedah. We do not know exactly where Makkedah was located, but we know it was close to Azekah. Joshua tells his men to kill every single person in the city with swords. Then Joshua kills the king of Makkedah in the same way that Joshua kills the king of Jericho. None of the people of Makkedah escape alive.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell about how people in your culture might react if they were told to kill an entire group of people.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 10:16–28 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

This passage has four scenes.

In the first scene: During the battle between the Israelites and Amorites, the five kings of the Amorites escape and hide in a cave. When someone tells Joshua, he orders his men to pile large rocks at the cave entrance and

to place a few men as guards to keep the kings in the cave. Joshua orders the rest of the army to continue to pursue the Amorites.

In the second scene: Joshua and the army slaughter the Amorites. Only a few soldiers make it to their cities safely. The Israelite army makes it back to the camp at Makkedah, and no enemy is left to threaten Israel.

In the third scene: Joshua orders his men to remove the kings from the cave and to bring the kings to Joshua. Joshua then tells his commanders to place their feet on the necks of the kings as a sign of absolute power. Joshua kills the kings and tells his men to hang their bodies on five trees. At sunset, the men remove the bodies and throw them back into the cave, and they pile more large rocks at its entrance.

In the fourth scene: On the same day they defeat the Amorites, Joshua and the Israelite army attack the city of Makkedah. They completely destroy the city and leave no survivors. Joshua kills the king in the same way that he killed the king of Jericho.

The characters in this passage are:

- Israelite soldiers, or Joshua's men
- Amorite soldiers
- Joshua
- Five Amorite kings
- Commanders of the Israelite army
- And people who lived in the city of Makkedah, including the king of Makkedah

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

This story actually happens before the Israelite soldiers go back to their camp at Gilgal. The storytellers of that time often finished a story, and then went back and gave more details about the story.

Stop here and discuss as a group: What do you do when you finish telling a story, but then you want to go back and explain more about something that happened in the story? Pay attention to how you begin the part where you give extra information about the story you just told. Pause this audio here.

In the previous passage, the Israelites and Amorites were fighting. During that fighting, the five kings of the Amorites escape from the Israelite army. This passage describes what happens when they escape.

During the fighting, the five kings sneak away to hide in a cave near the city of Makkedah. However, someone finds them and sends a message to Joshua, who is in the Israelite camp at Makkedah. Joshua orders his men to pile large stones in front of the cave. Joshua also orders some men to stand guard at the cave entrance so that the kings cannot escape. Joshua orders the rest of the army to continue to chase the Amorite army. The Amorite soldiers are fleeing towards their cities surrounded by walls. The walls around a city made that city safe. Joshua does not want any soldiers to escape to be safe inside their cities.

In scene two, Joshua and the Israelite army completely slaughter the Amorite armies. To slaughter means to destroy or to defeat someone completely.

Stop here and discuss as a group: What words will you use to describe this type of killing? Pause this audio here.

Only a few Amorites survive to make it to their cities. The Israelite army returns safely to the camp at Makkedah with Joshua. The Israelites left no enemies alive to make trouble for Israel.

In scene three, Joshua tells his men to open the mouth of the cave, which means to remove the stones from the entrance to the cave, and to bring the five kings out to Joshua. Joshua's men bring out the kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon. Joshua then tells the commanders of his army to place their feet on the neck of each king. Each king had to lay on the ground, and the commanders of the Israelite army had to put their feet on the necks of the kings. This was an ancient custom to show total authority of one group over another. The commanders obey Joshua. Joshua reminds them, "Do not ever be afraid or discouraged, but be

strong and courageous. Yahweh will defeat every enemy you have." Joshua kills each king and orders men to hang their bodies on five trees, or poles. This means the Israelite soldiers put a sharp pole, or branch, through the body of each king. At sunset, Joshua orders the men to take the bodies down and to throw them into the cave where the men had hidden. The soldiers pile large rocks at the entrance to the cave, and the rocks remain to this day. This means the rocks at the mouth of the cave still existed at the time when someone wrote the book of Joshua. The author uses this phrase to let us know that this is a true story.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you end a story in a way that lets your audience know the story is true? What evidence do you share that tells people you are telling something that really happened? Pause this audio here.

In scene four, on that same day, Joshua and the Israelite army attack Makkedah. They strike Makkedah with the edge of the sword and devote every person in the city to destruction. This means they completely destroy the city and leave no survivors, just as Yahweh commanded. Joshua kills the king of Makkedah in the same way that he killed the king at Jericho.

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 Joshua 10:16–28 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has four scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Israelite soldiers, or Joshua's men
- Amorite soldiers
- Joshua
- Five Amorite kings
- Commanders of the Israelite army
- And people who lived in the city of Makkedah, including the king of Makkedah

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

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

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

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

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

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

During the battle between the Israelites and Amorites, the five kings of the Amorites escape from the Israelite army. The kings sneak away to hide in a cave near Makkedah. When someone finds them and sends word to Joshua, Joshua commands his men to pile large rocks in front of the entrance to the cave. Joshua also tells some men to stand guard at the cave's entrance so that the five kings cannot escape. Joshua orders the rest of the Israelite army to continue to chase the Amorite army and to attack them from behind them. Joshua does not

want any men from the Amorite army to reach their cities safely. Joshua knows Yahweh has promised victory over the Amorites to the people of Israel.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The person might answer things like:

- "I am satisfied that we found the kings so we can punish them," or
- "I am concerned that some of the army may escape safely if my men do not keep chasing them."

Ask the people playing the five Amorite kings, "What are you thinking and feeling?" The people might answer things like:

- "We thought we were safe, but now we are trapped in this dark cave!" or
- "We are afraid of Joshua and the Israelites, and we feel hopeless about our survival now."

Joshua and the Israelites continue to pursue the Amorite army and completely destroy them. Only a few Amorite soldiers manage to make it to their walled cities safely. The Israelites kill all of the rest of the five armies. The Israelites travel back to the camp where Joshua waits outside the city of Makkedah. The Israelites leave no one alive to cause trouble for Israel.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Amorite survivors, "What are you thinking and feeling?" The people might answer things like:

- "We are relieved that we made it to our cities safely," or
- "We feel guilty that we survived when most of our fellow soldiers died."

Joshua orders some men to remove the rocks from the cave entrance and to bring the five Amorite kings to Joshua. Some Israelite soldiers bring the kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon to Joshua. Joshua orders the commanders of the Israelite army to come and place their feet on the necks of each king. When the commanders obey, Joshua reminds them never to be afraid or discouraged. Joshua tells them, "Be strong and courageous because Yahweh will continue to conquer all your enemies."

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the commanders of the Israelite army, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The people might answer things like:

- "We feel pride at how Yahweh fought for us and defeated our enemies," or
- "We celebrate our victory over our enemies!"

Ask the people playing the five Amorite kings, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The people might answer things like:

- "We feel defeated and sad," or
- "We are terrified about what the Israelites might do to us next," or
- "We hope that Joshua will spare our lives and just make us servants like the Gibeonites."

Joshua kills each king and orders men to hang their bodies on five trees, or poles. As the sun sets, Joshua commands his men to cut down the kings' bodies and to throw them into the cave where the kings had hidden. Then the men pile stones in front of the entrance to the cave, where they remain to this day.

On the same day that Joshua and the Israelites defeat the Amorite armies and kill their kings, the people of Israel attack and capture the city of Makkedah. The Israelites kill every person in the city and leave no one alive. Then Joshua kills the king of Makkedah in the same way that he had killed the king of Jericho.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the people of Makkedah, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The people might answer things like:

- "We are terrified of the Israelites and wish they would leave us alone," or
- "We will fight Israel and Yahweh until we cannot fight anymore!"

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you thinking and feeling?" The person might answer things like:

- "I am confident that Yahweh wants us to destroy the people who will not follow Yahweh," or
- "I am sad that every person in this city must die because they will not follow Yahweh."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 10:16–28 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

During the battle between the Israelites and Amorites, the five **kings** of the Amorites escape to hide in a cave. A king is someone who rules over a city or territory. Use the same word or phrase for king as you used in previous passages. For more information on king, refer to the Master Glossary.

The five kings hide in a **cave** near the city of Makkedah. A cave is a large underground chamber in a hillside or cliff. Caves are usually formed naturally by water or wind. The entrance to a cave is often called its mouth.

Stop here and look at a picture of a cave as a group. Discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **cave** and what word you will use for **mouth**. 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.

Joshua commands a few men to guard the cave while the rest of the army chases the Amorite soldiers. Joshua reminds the Israelite army that **Yahweh**, their **God**, has promised to give the Amorites into their hand, or to defeat their enemies. Use the same word or phrase for Yahweh and God as you used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh and God, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh promises the **Israelites** that Yahweh will defeat their enemies. Use the same word or phrase for Israelite as you used in previous passages. For more information on Israelite, refer to the Master Glossary.

After Joshua defeats the armies, he orders men to bring the five kings out from the cave. Joshua then orders the **commanders** of the Israelite army to place their feet on the necks of the kings. A commander is a leader of an army. Use the same word or phrase for commander as you used in previous passages.

On the same day Joshua defeats the Amorite armies, Joshua and the Israelite army **strikes with the edge of the sword** every person in Makkedah. Joshua **devotes to destruction** the **city** of Makkedah. These phrases mean the Israelites completely destroy the city and its inhabitants and leave no survivors. The Israelites do this out of obedience to Yahweh's command to have nothing to do with the people of the land who do not follow Yahweh. Use the same words or phrases for city, struck with the edge of the sword, and devoted to destruction 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.

Joshua 10:16–28

Audio Content

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Joshua 10:29–43

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 10:29–43 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 10:29–43 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 Joshua 10:29–43 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Joshua and the Israelite army defeated the five Amorite armies and killed the five kings. Then the Israelites completely destroyed the city of Makkedah and left no survivors. Joshua killed the king of Makkedah in the same way he had killed the king of Jericho.

After the Israelites destroy the city of Makkedah, they continue to travel around the southern part of Canaan. As they come to each city, the Israelites destroy the cities and the people living in them in obedience to Yahweh's command. When Joshua and the Israelites kill all the people in a city, they claim that city for Yahweh.

Stop here and look at a map of Southern Canaan as a group. The map includes these cities that Joshua conquered: Makkedah, Libnah, Lachish, Eglon, Hebron, and Debir. Pause this audio here.

The city that the Israelites conquer after Makkedah is Libnah. The Israelites fight against Libnah, and Yahweh gives the Israelites victory over Libnah and its king. Joshua and the Israelites kill every person in Libnah, including the king. The Israelites do not leave any people from Libnah alive. Joshua kills the king of Libnah in the same way that Joshua killed the king of Jericho.

Next, Joshua and the Israelites move south to Lachish. They lay siege, or surround the city and attack it. On the second day, Joshua and the Israelites defeat the city and kill all who live in Lachish. Just as they killed everyone in Libnah, the Israelites kill everyone in Lachish. Again, Yahweh gives Lachish into the hands of the Israelites, which means that Yahweh gives the Israelites victory. The king of Lachish was part of the five Amorite kings who had fought against Israel. Joshua had already killed this king. As the Israelites fight against the people of Lachish, King Hiram comes from the city of Gezer to help the people of Lachish. Joshua puts everyone to the sword, or kills everyone, including Hiram and the army of Gezer. None of the army of Gezer remains alive. The Israelites do not attack the city of Gezer at this time, but they do kill all of its army.

Then, Joshua and all of Israel move southwest from Lachish to the city of Eglon. They lay siege to the city and attack it. On that same day, they capture the city and kill every person who lives there, just as they had done to Lachish. Joshua had already killed the king of Eglon at the cave.

Joshua and the Israelites move up into the hills to Hebron. They fight against the people of Hebron and its king, and kill all the people who live there, just as they had done at Eglon. They also kill all the people of the nearby towns. Joshua had killed a king of Hebron along with the other Amorite kings at the cave, but Hebron had a new king. Joshua kills the new king of Hebron. Israel leaves no survivors in Hebron, just like Israel left no survivors at Eglon.

Finally, the Israelites turn and attack Debir. They capture the king and the towns surrounding Debir and kill them with swords. The Israelites leave no people alive. They do the same thing to Debir and its king as they did to Hebron and Libnah and its king.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Yahweh commanded Joshua to kill every single person in the cities he conquered. By killing everyone in a city, Joshua devoted that city to Yahweh. How do people in your culture devote things to their god? Why would you devote something to your god? Pause this audio here.

Joshua conquered the whole land: the hill country or the central part of the country; the Negev, which is the southern wilderness region; the low hills, or the western foothills between the plains and the coast; and the slopes going down towards the Dead Sea. Joshua did not leave anyone alive but devoted them all to Yahweh, just as Yahweh the God of Israel commanded. Joshua struck them, or killed everyone in the cities, from Kadesh Barnea, which is part of the southern boundary of Judah, all the way to Gaza on the Mediterranean coast. Joshua conquered the area of Goshen. We do not know exactly where this area is, but this is not the same Goshen that is in Egypt. Joshua conquered cities all the way to Gibeon in the north. Joshua destroyed all these cities at one time, or in one continuous battle, because Yahweh, the God of Israel, fought for Israel.

Stop here and look at a map of the land Joshua and the Israelites conquered. Pause this audio here.

After defeating all the cities, Joshua and the Israelites return to the camp at Gilgal.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 10:29–43 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 six scenes.

In the first scene: After destroying Makkedah, Joshua and the Israelites travel to Libnah. They attack and destroy all who live in Libnah. They kill the king of Libnah just like they killed the king of Jericho.

In the second scene: Joshua leads the Israelites to Lachish, and they attack the city. On the second day, Yahweh gives Israel victory over Lachish. As the Israelites defeat Lachish, King Horam of Gezer arrives with an army to help the people of Lachish. Joshua destroys King Horam and his army as well.

In the third scene: Joshua and the Israelites travel to Eglon and kill everyone in that city.

In the fourth scene: The Israelites travel to Hebron and kill all who live in the city, all who live in the surrounding towns, and the king of Hebron.

In the fifth scene: The Israelites travel to Debir, where they attack and conquer the city. They kill every person including the king, just as they had done in Hebron and Libnah.

In the sixth scene: Joshua conquers the whole land: the hill country, the eastern slopes, the western foothills, and the dry country in the south. Joshua leads his army from Kadesh Barnea in the south to Gaza near the coast. Joshua leads them across the area of Goshen, and as far north as Gibeon. Joshua defeats every king in the land and puts to death all its people. Joshua spares no one because Yahweh, the God of Israel, commanded Joshua to kill them all. Joshua was able to do this because Yahweh, the God of Israel, fought for his people. When the land has been conquered, Joshua and the Israelites return to camp at Gilgal.

The characters in this passage are:

- Joshua
- Israelite army
- People and the king from Libnah
- People from Lachish
- King Horem and his army
- People from Eglon
- People and the king from Hebron
- People and the king from Debir
- And Yahweh

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

In the first scene, Joshua and all Israel move from Makkedah to Libnah. When we hear that Joshua and "all Israel" attack Libnah, it means that Joshua and the Israelite army attack. The storyteller is emphasizing that the people and army of the Israelites are all acting in a unified way. If needed, you may say that it is Joshua and "the army" who attack Libnah in your translation.

Joshua and the army of Israel attack Libnah and fight against the city. Yahweh gives the city of Libnah and its king into the hands of the Israelites. This means Yahweh gives the Israelites victory over the people of Libnah. Joshua strikes Libnah with the edge of the sword. This means that Joshua and the army kill every person in Libnah with their swords, and they leave no one alive. Joshua kills the king of Libnah just like Joshua had killed the king of Jericho. In this way, Joshua devotes each city to Yahweh, or claims each city for Yahweh. Yahweh had commanded the Israelites to completely destroy any city or tribe who worshiped idols.

Stop here and discuss the following as a group: The author repeats the same information for each city that Israel conquers, because this is the way that the Israelites tell stories about battles. You do not have to repeat information in this way if your storytelling style is different. However, it is important to remember that the storyteller wants to emphasize that in each city, the Israelites obey everything Yahweh commands them to do. Discuss how you talk about actions that someone does over and over. How do you say the same thing each time you describe the repeating action? Pay attention to the actions in each city in this story, and see if you can hear how the army of Israel does the same thing each time they come to a city. Pause this audio here.

In the second scene, Joshua and the Israelites move on to fight the city of Lachish. They lay siege, or surround the city so that no one can leave the city to get food and water, before they attack. On the second day of the battle, Joshua and all Israel capture Lachish and strike it with the edge of the sword. Again, Yahweh gives the city over to the people of Israel. They do not leave one person alive, just as they did to Libnah. At this time, Horem, the king of Gezer, brings his army to help the people in Lachish fight against Israel. Joshua kills the king of Gezer and all of his army. The Israelites do not leave anyone alive. It is important to remember that the Israelite army does not conquer the city of Gezer, but just the king and its army.

Stop here and discuss as a group: In each city we hear that Yahweh gives Israel the victory, or that Israel devotes the city to destruction. The Israelites trust that Yahweh is the one who gives them power to defeat their enemies, and they obey Yahweh because they trust Yahweh. Tell a story from your culture about when a person or group followed their god completely, and how their god gave complete victory. Pay attention to the words and phrases you use to talk about how devoted and obedient the people were to their god. Pause this audio here.

In the third scene, Joshua and all Israel travel to Eglon, where they fight against the city and defeat it in one day. The Israelites devote the city to Yahweh and kill every single person in the city, just as they had done to Lachish. Some of the same words and phrases are used in the description of each city's destruction. The storyteller repeats things in this way to emphasize Yahweh's strength and help in the battles.

In the fourth scene, Joshua and all Israel move uphill to attack Hebron and its surrounding towns. The smaller towns that surround Hebron depend on Hebron to defend them. The Israelites fight and capture the city and its smaller towns. The Israelites kill every single person including the king of Hebron. Joshua leaves no one alive just as he did in Eglon.

In the fifth scene, Joshua and the Israelites turn to attack the city of Debir and its surrounding towns. The Israelites defeat the city and capture and kill its king and all its inhabitants. Joshua kills the king of Debir just as he killed the kings of Hebron and Libnah.

In the sixth scene, we hear a summary of the battles that Joshua fights to take the southern part of Canaan. Joshua conquers the entire land from the hill country to the Negev wilderness to the lowlands to the slopes of the hills going down to the Dead Sea. Joshua and all Israel obey Yahweh's command to kill every person in every city in the land. Joshua and the Israelites kill all the people from Kadesh Barnea to Gaza, from Goshen to Gibeon. They do all this at one time in one long continuous battle, moving from city to city.

Stop here and look at a map of the cities Joshua conquered as a group. Pause this audio here.

Joshua captures and destroys all these cities and kings at one time. Because Yahweh gives victory to the Israelites, all these battles happen during one long trip from city to city. We do not know exactly how long it takes Joshua to conquer these cities and kings, but it is probably a significant amount of time.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will talk about the long, continuous battle that Joshua and the army fight against these cities. Pause this audio here.

The Israelites were able to conquer all these people because Yahweh, the God of Israel, fought for Israel and gave victory to Israel. Yahweh had told the Israelites that they were only to worship him and no other god that the Canaanites worshiped. In this story, Joshua made it clear again that it was Yahweh, not any other god, who gave the Israelites victory. We see this pattern throughout the book of Joshua as the Israelites realize that it is Yahweh, not a Canaanite god, who is helping them. When they finished conquering all the people of the land, Joshua and all Israel returned to camp at Gilgal.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell about a time when someone was able to accomplish something that seemed impossible. What words will you use to help people understand how Yahweh fought for Israel? 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 Joshua 10:29–43 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:

- Joshua
- Israelite army
- People and the king from Libnah
- People from Lachish
- King Hiram and his army
- People from Eglon
- People and the king from Hebron
- People and the king from Debir
- 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.

Joshua and the Israelites travel to the city of Libnah. The Israelites attack and fight against the people in the city. But Yahweh gives victory over Libnah and its king to the Israelites. Joshua and the Israelites kill every person in the city of Libnah. The Israelites do not leave anyone alive. And they kill the king of Libnah just as they killed the king of Jericho.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The person might answer things like:

- "I am confident in every battle because I know Yahweh is fighting for Israel," or
- "I am determined to obey Yahweh's command to completely destroy every city of those who worship idols."

Joshua and the Israelites travel to Lachish. They surround the city and attack it. On the second day of the battle, Yahweh gives victory over Lachish to the Israelites. They kill every person in Lachish just as they had done at Libnah.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Israelites, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The people may answer things like:

- "We trust Yahweh to give us the victory we need," or
- "We want to give every city completely to Yahweh because we know Yahweh fights for us."

While the battle is happening at Lachish, King Hiram and his army travel from Gezer to help the people of Lachish. Joshua and the Israelites completely destroy the king and his army, leaving no one alive.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing King Horam and his army, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The people might answer things like:

- "We wanted to help the people in Lachish in order to protect ourselves," or
- "We are fighting against Yahweh because we do not want to have to follow Yahweh, but now we are afraid!"

After Joshua and the Israelite army kill everyone in Lachish, they travel to the city of Eglon, where they surround the city and attack it. On that same day, the Israelites defeat the people of Eglon and kill every person in the city, just as they did at Lachish.

The Israelites then travel uphill to Hebron, where they attack the city and its surrounding towns. They fight and kill all the people in Hebron, including its king. Joshua makes sure that no one survives.

Finally, Joshua leads the Israelites to turn and attack Debir. They fight and destroy the city and its surrounding towns. Joshua kills all of the people including the king of Debir as he killed everyone at Hebron and Libnah.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the people of Eglon, Hebron, and Debir, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The people might answer things like:

- "We thought our idols would protect us, but they did not" or
- "We refuse to follow Israel and Yahweh. We are determined to do things our own way."

Joshua and the Israelites conquered the land including the hill country, the Negev desert, the foothills, and the slopes leading to the Dead Sea. They left no one alive in any of the cities because Yahweh commanded that every person who worshiped idols be killed. From Kadesh Barnea in the south to Gaza on the coast, from the central area of Goshen all the way north to Gibeon, Joshua and the Israelites destroyed the cities and killed every person who lived there. Joshua conquered all these cities in one long battle because Yahweh, the God of Israel, fought for Israel. When the Israelites had conquered all the cities in the area, Joshua led Israel back to their camp at Gilgal.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The person might answer things like:

- "I give victory to my people because I love them," or
- "I am very angry because of the sin of the people Israel has conquered."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 10:29–43 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Joshua and all **Israel** traveled to Libnah from Makkedah. All Israel refers to all the **Israelites** in the army. Some translations say that Joshua went with all his army, and some translations say that Joshua went with all of Israel, or the Israelites. If you say Israel or Israelite here, use the same word for Israel or Israelite as you used in previous passages. For more information on Israelites, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Israelites attacked the city, and Yahweh gave the city into the hands of Israel. This means that Yahweh gave Israel what they needed to have victory over the city of Libnah. This phrase also appears in the battle against Lachish. Use similar words as you used in previous passages when you talk about Yahweh giving people into Israel's hands.

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

Joshua then **struck with the edge of the sword** the city of Libnah. Joshua and the Israelites **devoted to destruction** the city and every person in it. This means that Joshua killed every person in the city, leaving none alive, in obedience to Yahweh's command to kill all the people who worshiped idols. This phrase, "to strike the city with the edge of the sword," also appears in the battles with Lachish, Eglon, Hebron, and Debir. Use the same words or phrases for struck with the edge of the sword and devoted to destruction as you used in previous passages.

Yahweh gave the city of Libnah and its king into the hands of Israel. A **king** is someone who ruled over a city or territory. Use the same word for king as you used in previous passages. For more information on king, refer to the Master Glossary.

Joshua and the Israelites laid siege to the city of Lachish. To lay siege means to surround a city so that no one can go in or come out. This phrase also occurs in the battle with Eglon.

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

Joshua attacked Hebron and its surrounding cities, or smaller towns around it. Both Hebron and Debir had smaller cities around them that depended on the bigger city to protect them. The same word for city is used for these smaller cities surrounding Hebron and Debir, so these are smaller cities that may or may not have had a city wall surrounding them. Use the same word for cities that may have been big enough to have walls around them.

Joshua and all Israel were able to conquer the land because **Yahweh**, the **God of Israel**, helped them. Use the same words or phrases for Yahweh, the God of Israel, as you used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh and the general term for God, 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.

Joshua 10:29–43

Audio Content

[webm.zip](#) (16611829 KB)

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Joshua 11:1–15

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 11:1–15 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 11:1–15 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 Joshua 11:1–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Joshua and the Israelites destroyed the cities of Libnah, Lachish, Eglon, Hebron, and Debir. Joshua conquered the entire land from Kadesh Barnea in the south, to Gaza on the coast, and all of Goshen all the way north to Gibeon. Joshua conquered all these cities during one trip around the land because Yahweh fought for Israel.

When Joshua and the Israelites had conquered all the cities, they returned to camp at Gilgal. Gilgal was in the northeast of the land they had conquered, close to where Jericho and Ai had been. In the last passage, Joshua and Israel conquered the southern part of Canaan. In this passage, Joshua leads Israel to conquer the northern part of Canaan.

When King Jabin of Hazor hears about Joshua's victories over the southern cities, King Jabin sends messages to other kings around him. Hazor was an important strategic city in the region of Galilee. It was larger than the other cities around it and was the leader of the other northern cities. King Jabin sends messages to many kings, including Jobab king of Madon, the king of Shimron, and the king of Akshaph. We are not certain where these cities were located. King Jabin also sends messages to the kings in the northern hills. He sends messages to the kings in the Arabah, or valley of the Jordan River south of Lake Galilee, and to those in the foothills, or low mountains, to the west. He sends a message to the king of Naphoth Dor City in the west. He sends messages to the kings of the Canaanites on both sides of the Jordan River, including the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, and Jebusites in the mountains. He sends messages to the Hivites who lived at the bottom of Mount Hermon in the land of Mizpah, which is to the northeast of Gilgal. King Jabin's message says for every king to gather their armies together to fight against Joshua and the Israelites.

Stop here and look at a map of northern Canaan as a group. Pause this audio here.

So all the kings and their armies gather together to camp at the Merom River. There are so many soldiers gathered that counting them would be impossible. It would be like trying to count how many grains of sand are on the shore of the sea. They also have many chariots that horses pull. They are ready to fight the Israelites.

Stop here and look at a picture of the sand on the shore of the sea as a group. Look at a picture of a horse and a picture of a chariot. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Joshua not to be afraid of the huge army. Yahweh promises Joshua that by that same time the next day, Yahweh will give the whole group of armies to Israel, and all the Canaanite soldiers will be dead. Yahweh tells Joshua to hamstring, or to cut the back of the legs of, the horses so that they cannot walk, and to burn all the chariots with fire after the battle.

So Joshua and all of the Israelite warriors travel to the Merom River and suddenly attack the armies. Yahweh does what Yahweh promised he would do and gives Israel victory over the armies. The Israelite army defeats them and chases them as far as Great Sidon and Misrephoth Maim, and east to the Valley of Mizpah. The Israelites keep on killing the soldiers in the army until there are no soldiers left alive. And Joshua does exactly as Yahweh had commanded. Joshua cripples the horses and burns the chariots.

After the Israelite army defeats the huge army, Joshua leads the Israelite army back towards Hazor. At that time, Hazor and its king ruled over all the other kingdoms in the territory. The Israelites capture the city and kill its king with a sword. The Israelites strike Hazor with the edge of the sword and devote the entire city to destruction. In other words, they dedicate the city to Yahweh, and they kill every person, or everything that breathes. Then Israel burns Hazor with fire.

Joshua captures all of these cities and their kings. People built large cities in that time on top of the ruins of previous cities. People usually built large walls around these cities to protect the people who lived in them. Over time, people made the new cities higher and higher with more and more layers of ruined cities below them. Therefore, Hazor and all of the cities that Joshua and the army captured were on high mounds. Joshua and the Israelite army burn Hazor down, but they do not burn down the other cities. In the cities that the Israelite army does not burn down, they keep all the valuables and livestock for themselves. But they kill every person in every city, leaving no one alive, because they obey Yahweh's command to Moses, Yahweh's servant. Yahweh had given commands to Moses long before this time, and Moses had commanded Joshua what to do when Joshua captured the land. Joshua obeys Yahweh and Moses, and he does everything that Yahweh had commanded Moses.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: When your people conquer other lands, how do they decide what to destroy and what to keep? Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a leader in your culture. What do people do when their leader commands them to do something? What happens when their leader commands them to do something someone else commanded long ago?

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 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: Jabin king of Hazor hears how Israel conquered the southern cities and sends messages out to all the neighboring kings. Jabin wants all the kings to come together with their armies to defeat Israel. So all the kings join together at Merom to fight against the Israelites.

In the second scene: Yahweh tells Joshua not to fear because by the same time the next day, Yahweh will give victory to Israel, and every soldier from the Canaanite armies will be dead. Yahweh tells Joshua to cripple the horses and burn the chariots after the battle. The next day, Yahweh gives Israel victory, and Joshua obeys all that Yahweh commands.

In the third scene: Joshua leads the Israelite army back towards Hazor in order to destroy it and to kill its king. Israel completely destroys Hazor and burns it down. Joshua and Israel do not burn any other cities on hills besides Hazor. Israel takes the valuable goods and livestock from each city but kills every person until none are left alive. As Yahweh commanded Moses, Moses commanded Joshua. Joshua does everything Yahweh and Moses commanded.

The characters in this passage are:

- King Jabin of Hazor
- Kings of neighboring tribes
- Soldiers of all the armies
- Joshua
- Yahweh
- Israelite soldiers
- People who live in Hazor
- And horses

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

In scene one, when Jabin the king of Hazor hears about Israel's defeat of the southern part of Canaan, Jabin sends messages to the neighboring kings in the northern part of Canaan. These kings include Jobab king of Madon, the king of Shimron, and the king of Akshaph. Jabin also sends messages to the kings in the northern hill country. He sends messages to kings in the wilderness area, or Arabah, south of the Sea of Galilee, and to kings in the lowlands, or low mountains, that lead to the coast. And he sends messages to Dor in the west. Jabin sends messages throughout the northern part of Canaan on the east and west of the Jordan River. He sends messages to the kings of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, and Jebusites, and to the king of the Hivites at the bottom of Mount Hermon. The message King Jabin sends says that every king should gather his army and come together to fight against Israel. Every king who receives the message gathers his army, and they all meet together at the Merom River. They are ready to fight Israel. The soldiers who gather together are as many as there are grains of sand on the seashore. This means that there are so many soldiers that it would be impossible to count them. Every army also has chariots that horses pull. A chariot was the most advanced weapon that people used at the time. It was a symbol of the power of an army. Chariots helped armies by moving soldiers and materials much more quickly. A horse is a large animal people use to pull or carry heavy loads.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story about a group that is so large it is impossible to count. What words help the audience understand how large the group is? Pause this audio here.

In scene two, we know that Joshua hears about all of these kings' armies who gather together. Joshua and the Israelite army may be near the Merom River at this time. Yahweh says to Joshua, "Do not be afraid of the Canaanite armies, because I am going to give them to Israel. By this time tomorrow, they will all be dead. Then you must hamstring their horses and burn their chariots." Yahweh promises that Yahweh will make sure Israel will defeat the Canaanite army by the same time the next day. That means that the fighting will probably begin before then, but the fighting will be finished by the same time the next day. Yahweh tells Joshua to hamstring the horses. To hamstring a horse means to cripple it by cutting the muscle at its ankle so that the horse is not able to walk. Yahweh also tells Joshua to burn the chariots. Yahweh does not want Israel to use the horses or chariots in battle. So Joshua and all the Israelite army attack the Canaanite army suddenly at Merom. Yahweh gives the Canaanite army into the hands of Israel, which means that Israel completely defeats the Canaanites. The Israelite army then chases the Canaanite army all the way north and west to Great Sidon and Misrephoth Maim, and east to the Valley of Mizpah. They kill every Canaanite soldier until none are left alive. Joshua obeys Yahweh's command. The soldiers in Joshua's army hamstring the horses and burn the chariots. Again the author tells us that Joshua obeys Yahweh's commands.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story in which someone obeys orders. How do you emphasize in a story that someone obeyed an order well? Pause this audio here.

After the battle, Joshua leads the Israelite army towards Hazor. They capture Hazor and its king and kill every person with the sword. The Israelites destroy the city of Hazor because it is the head city of all the tribes in the north. The Israelites strike the city of Hazor with the edge of the sword and devote it to destruction. This means they kill every person because they obey Yahweh's command. Then Israel burns the city of Hazor. Joshua captures and destroys every city and its king. Joshua and the Israelites kill every living person in order to obey Yahweh's commands. The storyteller repeats what Joshua and the Israelites do to each person in each city. It is important to the storyteller that we know the Israelites destroy everyone and obey Yahweh's commands. Yahweh commands Moses, Joshua, and the Israelites to devote every person in every city to destruction. However, the Israelites do not burn any other city on a mound besides Hazor. People in those days built cities on top of the remains of cities that had existed previously. This made the cities higher and higher so that cities were on top of hills. Israel takes all the plunder, or valuables and livestock, of each city so that they can use them, but they kill every person.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How will you describe cities that people have built on a mound? Pause this audio here.

Now the storyteller gives a summary of what happened. Just as Yahweh commanded Moses, Moses commanded Joshua. Joshua fully obeys every command Yahweh gave to Moses.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story about a time when your people won a huge battle. Pay attention to how you end the story. How do you summarize what happened at the end? 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 Joshua 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:

- King Jabin of Hazor
- Kings of neighboring tribes
- Soldiers of all the armies
- Joshua
- Yahweh
- Israelite soldiers
- People who live in Hazor
- And horses

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.

King Jabin of Hazor hears about how Joshua and the Israelites defeated all the Canaanite kingdoms in the south. Then King Jabin sends messages out to all his neighboring kings and asks them to bring their armies to attack Israel together. So all the neighboring kings join together with their armies at Merom. So many soldiers gather together that counting them would be impossible. Each army also has horses that pull chariots.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing King Jabin, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The person might answer things like:

- "I believe all these soldiers can destroy Joshua and the Israelites!" or
- "I trust that all my soldiers and horses and chariots can defeat Yahweh, the God of Israel," or
- "I am proud of all the armies I have been able to bring together!"

Ask the people playing the kings of neighboring tribes, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The people might answer things like:

- "We trust Jabin to lead us to defeat Israel," or
- "We are afraid, but we believe having more soldiers plus chariots and horses will help us defeat Israel."

As Joshua sees the armies gathered to fight Israel, Yahweh speaks to Joshua. Yahweh tells Joshua, "Do not be afraid of the Canaanite armies. I will give you victory over them. By tomorrow, they will all be dead. After that, you must cripple their horses and burn their chariots."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The person might answer things like:

- "I know Yahweh is on our side, but I am encouraged by what Yahweh told me because I am afraid!" or
- "I feel confident that Yahweh will defeat these armies for us."

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The person might answer things like:

- "I want to show Joshua and the Israelites that I am more powerful than any army or horses or chariots," or
- "I will show the Canaanite army that their idols will never be strong enough to defeat me and my people Israel."

The next day Joshua and the Israelite army attack the Canaanite army suddenly. Yahweh gives Israel victory over the Canaanites, and the Israelites chase the Canaanites east and west and north until every Canaanite soldier is dead. Joshua and his army cripple the horses and burn the chariots just as Yahweh commanded.

At that time, Joshua leads the Israelite army to turn and to attack Hazor. They kill every person in Hazor including King Jabin. Then Joshua burns the city to the ground. The Israelites destroy and burn Hazor, because Hazor was the leader of the northern Canaanite kingdoms. They put Hazor to the edge of the sword and devote it to destruction in obedience to Yahweh. They do not leave even one person alive.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the inhabitants of Hazor, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The people might answer things like:

- "We are terrified of Yahweh and the Israelites," or
- "We will follow our King Jabin and fight against Israel until we cannot fight anymore."

Joshua and the Israelites conquer every kingdom along with their kings. They kill everyone in order to obey the command of Moses. However, the only city Israel burns is Hazor. They leave every other city on a hill standing even though they kill all the people. They keep the plunder, or valuable goods, along with the livestock, but they kill every person in every city. Yahweh had commanded Moses, and Moses commanded Joshua. Joshua fully obeys every command Yahweh gave through Moses.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The person might answer things like:

- "I obey Yahweh, because I respect Yahweh," or
- "I obey Moses, because I know Yahweh spoke through Moses," or
- "I know when I obey Yahweh, Yahweh blesses me and the Israelites."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 11:1–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Jabin, the **king** of Hazor, hears about Israel's victories over the southern tribes and sends messages to all the neighboring kings and **kingdoms**. A king is someone who rules over a city or territory. A kingdom is the territory or people that a king rules. Use the same word for king as you used in previous passages. For more information on king and kingdom, refer to the Master Glossary.

In response to King Jabin's message, all the kings bring their troops together to fight against Israel. So many troops gather together that they are in number "like the sand on the seashore." This is an expression that means there are too many troops to count, or that trying to count them would be impossible.

Stop here and look at a picture of sand on the seashore as a group. Discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **like sand on the seashore**. If you have already translated this phrase in another book of the Bible, use the same words you have used there. Pause this audio here.

The Canaanite armies also bring many **horses** who pull **chariots**. A horse is a large animal used to pull or carry heavy loads. A chariot is a two-wheeled, horse-drawn vehicle used in ancient times for battle or in parades.

Stop here and look at a picture of a **horse** and **chariot** as a group. Discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for horse and chariot. 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 Canaanite armies come to fight against Israel. In this passage, Israel refers to the people who descended from Abraham. Use the same word for **Israel** or **Israelites** as you used in previous passages. For more information on Israel or Israelites, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh speaks to Joshua to assure Israel that **Yahweh** will give them victory over the Canaanite army. Use the same word for Yahweh as you used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh also tells Joshua that, after Yahweh defeats the armies, Joshua should "hamstring the horses" and burn the chariots. To hamstring a horse means to cut the muscle above the horse's ankle, crippling the horse so it cannot walk.

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

Yahweh gives the Canaanites **into the hands of Israel**. Into the hands of Israel means that Yahweh gives Joshua and Israel the power to defeat the Canaanite armies and destroy the cities. The Israelites take away the **plunder** and **put every city to the edge of the sword** and **devote it to destruction**. These phrases mean that the Israelites kill every single person in every city and leave no one alive. They do this out of obedience to Yahweh's command through Moses. Use the same words or phrases for plunder, city, and for the phrases "into the hands of Israel," "put to the edge of the sword," and "devote to destruction" 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.

Joshua 11:1–15

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (15965975 KB)

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Joshua 11:16–23

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 11:16–23 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 11:16–23 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 Joshua 11:16–23 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Yahweh gave victory to Joshua and the Israelites over the northern kingdoms of Canaan. The Israelites killed every person in every city, but they left all the cities standing except for Hazor, which Joshua burned. Joshua fully obeyed every command Yahweh gave to Moses.

This passage retells the story and gives a summary of all that Joshua and the Israelites do when they enter the land of Canaan that Yahweh promised to give them. Yahweh gives victory to Joshua and the Israelites wherever they fight. Joshua obeys Yahweh's commands that Yahweh gave through Moses.

Even though this passage says Joshua conquers the whole land, some Canaanites still live in Israel. However, Joshua and the Israelite army conquer so much of the kingdoms that the Canaanites are no longer in charge of the land. The Canaanites cannot fight against Israel or prevent Israel from taking possession of the land. In this way, Joshua and Israel conquer the whole land.

Joshua and the Israelite army conquer all the land as far south as Mount Halak near Edom and as far north as the city of Baal Gad in the valley between Mount Hermon and the Lebanon Mountains. They conquer the central hill country and foothills, the Negev wilderness in the south, all the area of Goshen and the dry country south of it, and the Arabah, also called the Jordan River Valley. The foothills were low hills in between the sea and the hill country. This Goshen is not the same Goshen that exists near Egypt. The Israelites capture and kill all the kings from this territory.

Stop here and look at a map of the land Joshua conquered as a group. Pause this audio here.

Joshua fights against the kings for a long time. We do not know exactly how long it takes to conquer all the land, but it may take up to seven years. During this time, only the Hivites in the city of Gibeon make peace with Israel. Israel defeats every other city in battle.

Yahweh hardens the hearts of every other king and inhabitant of every city. The people of Canaan become proud and stubborn, and they are ready to fight the Israelites. Yahweh knows this will happen, so Yahweh commands Moses to kill all the people who live in Canaan. Yahweh does not have mercy on the people, because they are stubborn and want to fight the Israelites.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story in which someone acted in a very stubborn way, and their stubborn actions led to bad things happening to them. Pause this audio here.

During this time, Joshua also destroys the Anakites who live in Hebron, Debir, Anab, and the hill country of Judah and Israel. Joshua removes the Anakites from all over Israel. The Anakites are descendants of Anak, and they are very tall warriors. Joshua completely destroys the Anakites and their cities. Joshua kills all the Anakites in the land except for a few in Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod, which were cities on the Mediterranean coast.

In this way, Joshua and all Israel conquer the entire land in order to obey the command Yahweh gave Moses. Joshua divides all the land among the Israelites. Joshua gives each of the 12 Israelite tribes their inheritance, or possession, from Yahweh. You remember that from the time of Abraham, of Jacob, and of Moses, Yahweh had promised Abraham's and Jacob's descendants that one day this land would belong to them. Now Yahweh is making this promise come true. Yahweh also keeps another promise he had given to the Israelites. Yahweh gives the Israelites rest, or peace, in this land that he has given them.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story about how people in your culture divide the land they live on. How do they know who owns each section of land? Pause this audio here.

*Defining the Scenes**Defining the Scenes*

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 11:16–23 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: Joshua and the Israelite army conquer the entire land from south to north and from east to west. They capture and kill every king from the land. They fight against all the kings for a long time.

In the second scene: No city except Gibeon makes peace with Israel. Yahweh makes the rest of the inhabitants of the land stubborn, and they want to fight against Israel. Yahweh does this so that Israel will completely destroy the Canaanites without mercy. Yahweh had commanded Moses to completely destroy the people of Canaan.

In the third scene: During the time he is fighting the kings, Joshua also destroys the Anakites. These are the people who lived in Hebron, Debir, Anab, and the hill country of Israel and Judah. Only a few Anakites remain in Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod. So Joshua obeys Yahweh's commands to Moses and conquers the land. Joshua divides the land among the tribes of Israel as their inheritance, or possession, and the people have peace in the land.

The characters in this passage are:

- Joshua
- Israelites
- Canaanites
- Anakites
- And Yahweh

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

This passage gives a summary of Joshua's battles to conquer all of Canaan. Scene one reminds us that Joshua and the Israelites take all the land in the hill country and the lowlands, in the Negev wilderness, in all the land of Goshen, and the Arabah, also called the Jordan River Valley. The Israelites capture and kill all the kings from Mount Halak in the south all the way to the Valley of Lebanon at the base of Mount Hermon in the north. The broad description of all the land Joshua conquers helps us understand that Joshua fights and is victorious all over the land of Canaan. Joshua and the army of Israel fight against the kings for about seven years, and Yahweh gives them victory.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story where you are describing an area of land, especially how big the area of land is and how far it goes. Pay attention to the way you describe the large area of land and its boundaries. Now practice the most natural way to describe the boundaries of the territory that Joshua and the Israelite army conquered. Pause this audio here.

In scene two, none of the cities in Canaan make peace with Israel except the Hivite people who live in Gibeon, which we heard about in a previous story. Israel defeats all the rest of the cities in battle. Yahweh hardens the hearts of the people of Canaan. This means that Yahweh makes them proud and stubborn and ready to fight against Israel. Yahweh does this so that the Israelites will devote the Canaanites and their cities to destruction and will completely destroy them without mercy. Yahweh had already commanded Moses to completely destroy all of the Canaanite people.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Remember the story you told in the previous step about the person who acted in a stubborn way. Now, tell the story again and pay attention to the words you use to describe the stubbornness. How will you talk about the people of Canaan who have hardened hearts? Pause this audio here.

In scene three, during the long time Joshua and the army fights the Canaanite kings, Joshua also fights against the Anakites. The Anakites were giant warriors who were descendants from Anak, and they also lived in Canaan. Joshua cuts the Anakites off, or destroys them and their cities. The Anakites lived in Hebron, Debir, Anab, and the hill country of Judah and Israel. Joshua does not leave any Anakites in the land, but some Anakites

survived in Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod. So Joshua takes, or conquers, the whole land in order to obey the command that Yahweh gave to Moses. Joshua gives the land to Israel as their inheritance, or possession. An inheritance is a gift Yahweh gives to his people that no one can take away. Here, Joshua gives portions of the land to each tribe of Israel as their inheritance that Yahweh has promised to give them. When each tribe receives their land, they finally experience the rest from fighting that Yahweh has promised them. In this way, the storyteller finishes the first part of the book of Joshua by summarizing that Yahweh gives his people victory and their promised inheritance, or possession. This story also looks forward to the next part of Israel's history, a time of rest and peace.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about a period of time when your family or community felt like it had peace or rest as a community. Tell the story, and pay attention to the words you use as you talk about this period of time. 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 Joshua 11:16–23 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:

- Joshua
- Israelites
- Canaanites
- Anakites
- 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.

Joshua and the Israelite army conquer the entire land of Canaan. They take the land from Mount Halak in the south all the way to Mount Hermon in the north. Yahweh gives Joshua victory over all the kings and kingdoms in the land. Even though it takes a long time, Joshua captures and kills all the kings.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you thinking and feeling?" The person might answer things like:

- "I am grateful Yahweh has fought for us and given us the land," or
- "I am weary from fighting against all these kings," or
- "I am confident that my people will continue to take over the land even though we are not finished yet."

None of the kingdoms make peace with Israel except the people in Gibeon. Joshua and the Israelites defeat all the other kings and kingdoms in battle. The people of Canaan fight against Israel because Yahweh causes their hearts to be stubborn and proud and ready to fight Israel.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Canaanites, "What are you thinking and feeling?" The people might answer things like:

- "We are determined to hold onto our land and our authority!" or
- "We refuse to worship Yahweh, the God of Israel."

Yahweh causes the hearts of the Canaanites to become hardened, because Yahweh wants Israel to devote the Canaanites to destruction and to destroy them completely. Yahweh has already commanded Moses that all the Canaanite tribes should be destroyed without mercy.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you thinking and feeling?" The person might answer things like:

- "I know the Canaanites will not stop sinning, so I will completely destroy them," or
- "I know if Israel does not completely destroy the people of Canaan, Israel will begin to follow the idols."

Ask the people playing the Israelites, "What are you thinking and feeling?" The people might answer things like:

- "We do not trust the Canaanites and are glad to destroy them completely," or
- "We will show no mercy to the Canaanites, because we want to obey Moses and Yahweh."

During the time Joshua and the Israelites are fighting all the Canaanite kings, Joshua also conquers the Anakites. The Anakites lived in Hebron, Debir, Anab, and in the hill country. Joshua completely destroys the Anakites and their cities, although a few Anakites continue to live in Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Anakites, "What are you thinking and feeling?" The people might answer things like:

- "We are big and strong and will fight against Israel as long as we can," or
- "We are not afraid of the Israelites even though they have defeated many of our people."

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you thinking and feeling?" The person might answer things like:

- "I am glad to destroy the Anakites, because they scared the spies who first came into the land," or
- "I trust Yahweh to completely defeat the Anakites for Israel."

So Joshua and all Israel take the whole land according to what Yahweh commanded Moses to do. Joshua gives the land to Israel as their inheritance, or possession, from Yahweh. Joshua divides the land into portions for each tribe. When Joshua has divided the land, Israel is at peace within the land.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Israelites, "What are you thinking and feeling?" The people might answer things like:

- "We are grateful that Yahweh continues to be faithful to keep his promises to give us this land," or
- "We rejoice that we are now in control of the land Yahweh promised us."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 11:16–23 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

After fighting against the kings in Canaan for a long time, Joshua takes the whole land for **Israel**. Israel is all the people who descended from Abraham, also called the **Israelites**. Use the same word or phrase for Israel and Israelites as you used in previous passages. For more information on Israel and Israelites, refer to the Master Glossary.

Joshua and Israel capture and kill all the **kings** in Canaan. A king is someone who rules over a city or territory. Use the same word or phrase for king as you used in previous passages. For more information on king, refer to the Master Glossary.

Except for the people in Gibeon, none of the other Canaanite people made **peace** with Israel. When people live in harmony without fighting, they are living in peace. Use the same word or phrase for peace as you used in previous passages. For more information on peace, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh hardens the hearts of all the other Canaanite kings and cities aside from Gibeon. Use the same word for Yahweh as you have used in previous passages, and remember that Yahweh is in the Master Glossary. To "harden someone's heart" is an expression that means to cause someone to be unfeeling and unresponsive to the work of God in his or her life. When Yahweh hardens the hearts of the Canaanites, they become proud and stubborn and want to fight against Yahweh and Israel.

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

Yahweh hardens the hearts of the Canaanites so that Israel will destroy them completely and give them no mercy, or kindness. To destroy them completely is a phrase similar to devote to destruction. It means to destroy a group of people and leave no survivors in order to obey Yahweh's command.

Stop here and discuss how you will talk about **destroying them completely** and how you will talk about **mercy**. Mercy is in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

After Joshua conquers all the land, Joshua gives the land to the people of Israel as an inheritance, or possession. An inheritance, or possession, is a gift Yahweh gives to his people, and no one can take the gift away.

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

When Joshua has distributed all the land to the tribes of Israel, the land has rest from war. This is an expression that means all the people in the land stop fighting and live in peace.

If needed, stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **land had rest from war**. 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.

Joshua 11:16–23

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (13295814 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Joshua 12:1–6

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 12:1–6 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 12:1–6 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 Joshua 12:1–6 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Joshua gave a summary of how the Israelites conquered the people in Canaan. Joshua and the Israelites fought the kings in northern and southern Canaan for a long time, and Yahweh gave them victory over every king and kingdom. Joshua divided the conquered land among the tribes of Israel as their inheritance from Yahweh.

This passage begins a list of all the kings and areas that the Israelites conquered in the land Yahweh had promised them. When the author lists these kings, it is like he is praising Yahweh for helping his people conquer the land. In this passage, we hear the summary of the kings and land Israel conquered before they crossed the Jordan River and entered the land of Canaan. These kings lived east of the Jordan River. Yahweh had already helped Moses and the Israelites defeat these kings and take over their territory. This happened before Joshua became the leader of Israel. In Numbers 21:21–35, Moses tells the story of how the Israelites defeated the Amorite kings Sihon and Og.

Stop here and look at a picture of the Jordan River as a group. Pause this audio here.

The land that Moses and the Israelites conquered begins in the south at the Arnon Valley. The Arnon River flows through the valley into the Dead Sea about halfway between the northern and southern parts of the Sea. The land extends all the way north to Mount Hermon and includes all the land to the east of the Jordan River, including the wilderness area called the Arabah that is sometimes called the Jordan River Valley because it is near the Jordan River. People call this entire area the Transjordan. It is a part of the land Yahweh promised to Israel as an inheritance.

Stop here as a group and look at a map of the land east of the Jordan River that Israel conquered. Look for the areas listed above: Arnon Valley, Arnon River, Dead Sea, Mount Hermon, and the wilderness of Arabah. Pause this audio here.

One of the kings that Moses and the Israelites defeated is Sihon, king of the Amorites. King Sihon lived in Heshbon. This city was located east of the northern tip of the Dead Sea. King Sihon ruled the southern part of the land of Gilead, which is between the Jabbok River to the north and the Arnon River in the south. King Sihon ruled from Aroer, which is at the edge of the Arnon Valley. His territory extended from the middle of the Arnon Valley to the area between Aroer and the Dead Sea. King Sihon also ruled over the Jordan Valley to the east from the Sea of Chinnereth, or Sea of Galilee, in the north, to the Dead Sea in the south. King Sihon's territory included areas east of the Dead Sea as far as Beth Jeshimoth and Mount Pisgah.

Stop here and look at a map of King Sihon's land as a group. Pause this audio here.

Moses and the Israelites also defeated King Og of Bashan. He was one of the last of the Rephaim. The Rephaim were an ancient race of giant warriors who used to live in Canaan. King Og ruled from the cities of Ashtaroth and Edrei. These cities were east and southeast of the Sea of Galilee, about 25 kilometers apart. He ruled land

as far to the north as Mount Hermon and as far east as the city of Salekah. King Og also ruled all of Bashan, which is located east and northeast of the Sea of Galilee. Bashan extended to the territories of Geshur and Maakah to the east. King Og ruled the northern half of Gilead all the way south to the land of King Sihon of Heshbon.

Stop here and look at a map of King Og's land as a group. Pause this audio here.

Moses was Yahweh's servant. He and the Israelites defeated King Sihon and King Og. Moses gave their land to the Israelite tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half of the tribe of Manasseh as their inheritance and possession from Yahweh.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 12:1–6 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 four scenes.

In the first scene: Moses and the Israelites defeated kings east of the Jordan River and took their territory. Their land extended from the Arnon Valley to Mount Hermon and included all the land east of the Jordan River.

In the second scene: Now we hear about the southern part of the land east of the Jordan River. Moses and the Israelites defeated King Sihon of Heshbon. King Sihon ruled over the southern part of Gilead. King Sihon controlled the land east of the Jordan River from the Sea of Galilee to the Dead Sea, all the way south to Mount Pisgah.

In the third scene: Now we hear about the northern part of the land east of the Jordan River. Moses and the Israelites defeated King Og of Bashan. King Og was the last of the Rephaim people, and he lived at Ashtaroth and Edrei. King Og ruled the northern part of Gilead, from the boundaries of the land of King Sihon in the south to Mount Hermon in the north and west to the borders of Geshur and Maakah.

In the fourth scene: Moses, Yahweh's servant, conquered these kings and gave their land as an inheritance to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half of the tribe of Manasseh.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Israelites
- King Sihon of Heshbon
- And King Og of Bashan

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

In scene one, we are looking back at something that has already happened. Yahweh had already given Moses and the Israelites victory over the kings who ruled east of the Jordan River. Moses had already given the land of those kings to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half of the tribe of Manasseh. All of this happened before Joshua became the leader of Israel and before the Israelites crossed the Jordan River to conquer the land of Canaan. The land Moses gave to the tribes had the Arnon Valley as a southern border and Mount Hermon for a northern border. This was all the land east of the Jordan River, including the Arabah wilderness.

Stop here and discuss as a group: This story starts with a list of kings who the Israelites had conquered at the very beginning of their conquest of Canaan. This event happened before the events of the previous stories. How will you start this story to show that this is a list of kings the Israelites had previously conquered? Pause this audio here.

In scene two, Moses and the Israelites defeated King Sihon of Heshbon first. King Sihon ruled over the southern part of Gilead. His land ran from the Jabbok River in the north to the Arnon River valley in the south. His territory extended southeast to Aroer on the edge of the Arnon Valley and southwest halfway between Aroer and the Dead Sea. He ruled the land west of the Jordan River from the Sea of Galilee to the Dead Sea. His land included the town of Beth Jeshimoth and Mount Pisgah.

Stop here and look at a map of the boundaries of King Sihon's land. Discuss as a group: If you were describing these boundaries, how would you do it? How would you make the order of the boundaries different in your description than in the Bible's description? You may feel free to change the order if you would like. Pause this audio here.

In scene three, Moses and the Israelites also defeated King Og of Bashan. King Og was one of the last of the Rephaites. The people of Rephaim were great warriors who were also very big. They lived in Canaan before Moses and the Israelites entered the land. King Og lived at Ashtaroth and Edrei. King Og ruled the northern part of Gilead. King Og's territory included all the land of Bashan to the east, the land north to Mount Hermon and the city of Salekah, and the land to the west to the territories of Geshur and Maakah. King Og's land extended south to the boundary with the land of King Sihon.

Scene four makes a concluding statement: Moses, Yahweh's servant, conquered and killed these kings, and he took their land. The author describes Moses as Yahweh's servant two times in this verse. This might be a way the author emphasizes that the tribes of Israel did have a real claim to the land east of the Jordan River. Moses gave the land as an inheritance and possession to the Israelite tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh.

Stop here as a group and look at a map of the land Moses and the Israelites conquered east of the Jordan River. 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 Joshua 12:1–6 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
- Israelites
- King Sihon of Heshbon
- And King Og of Bashan

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

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

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

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

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

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

Moses and the Israelites had defeated kings east of the Jordan River and conquered their land before the Israelites crossed the Jordan into the land of Canaan. The land they conquered extended from the Arnon River Valley to Mount Hermon and included all the land east of the Jordan Valley.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Israelites, "What are you thinking and feeling?" The people might answer things like:

- "We remember when Moses led us to defeat these kings and how it gave us confidence in Yahweh's power," or
- "We trusted Yahweh even more when Yahweh gave us this land."

Moses and the Israelites defeated King Sihon of Heshbon. King Sihon ruled the southern part of Gilead. His kingdom ran from the middle of the Arnon River Valley to the Jabbok River. King Sihon ruled over the Jordan River Valley to the east from the Sea of Galilee to the Dead Sea all the way to Mount Pisgah.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you thinking and feeling?" The person might answer things like:

- "I rejoice that Yahweh gave us victory over this king and his land," or
- "I know Yahweh's good plan is to protect Israel by destroying the idol-worshipping tribes around them."

Ask the person playing King Sihon of Heshbon, "What are you thinking and feeling?" The person might answer things like:

- "I believed I could defeat Israel because my gods are strong," or
- "I wanted to keep Israel out of my land."

Moses and the Israelites also conquered King Og of Bashan. King Og ruled over the northern part of Gilead. King Og was a part of the Rephaim, who were large and powerful warriors. His land extended from Mount Hermon in the north, to all of Bashan in the east, to the territories of Geshur and Maakah in the west, and south to the boundary of King Sihon's land.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing King Og of Bashan, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The person might answer things like:

- "I believed I would defeat Israel because I am a great warrior," or
- "I cannot believe Israel conquered my land."

Moses, Yahweh's servant, conquered King Sihon and King Og and took their territories. Moses gave the land as Yahweh's inheritance to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The person might answer things like:

- "I was happy that Yahweh's plan to give an inheritance to Yahweh's people is already happening," or
- "I know Yahweh chose these tribes to live in this place even though the other Israelite tribes will live on the other side of the Jordan River," or
- "Yahweh will protect Israel by placing these tribes on the border of the land."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 12:1–6 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Moses and the Israelites had previously defeated two **kings** east of the Jordan River. A king was someone who ruled over a city or territory. Use the same word or phrase for king as you used in previous passages. For more information on king, refer to the Master Glossary.

The kings Moses defeated ruled land east of the **Jordan River**. The Jordan River is a long river that runs through Israel from north to south. Use the same word or phrase for Jordan River as you used in previous passages. For more information on Jordan River, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses and the **Israelites** killed the kings and took their land. The Israelites are descendants of Abraham. The land of Canaan was divided among the tribes of Israel. Use the same word or phrase for Israelite as you used in previous passages. For more information on Israelite, refer to the Master Glossary.

King Sihon ruled the southern part and King Og ruled the northern parts of **Gilead**. Gilead was an area east of the Jordan River. We do not know for certain what the ancient boundaries of Gilead were, but we do know that the area of Gilead covered much of the area that the Israelites conquered east of the Jordan River.

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

King Og of Bashan was from the group of people called the **Rephaim**. The Rephaim were a group of people who lived in Canaan. They were very tall and were great warriors.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **Rephaim**. 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 was a **servant** of Yahweh. A servant is a man or woman who works for another person. Use the same word or phrase for servant as you used in previous passages. For more information on servant, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh is a personal name for God that showed the close relationship God had with the people of Israel. Use the same word or phrase for Yahweh as you used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

Moses gave the land that he and the Israelites conquered east of the Jordan River to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half of the tribe of Manasseh as their **inheritance**, or possession. An inheritance is a gift from Yahweh. Use the same word or phrase for inheritance 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.

Joshua 12:1–6

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Joshua 12:7–24

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 12:7–24 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 12:7–24 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 Joshua 12:7–24 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, the author told how Moses and the Israelites had already defeated the kings east of the Jordan River. Moses then gave that land to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half of the tribe of Manasseh as their inheritance from Yahweh.

This passage continues reminding the people of Yahweh's victory. It is like a praise to Yahweh. The passage describes all the kings and territories Joshua and the Israelites conquered on the west side of the Jordan River. The author of Joshua has already described some of the battles in which Israel defeated these kings. However, the author of Joshua has not previously mentioned some of these kings and territories. We know where some of these cities were located, but we do not know exactly where other cities may have been.

Joshua and the Israelites defeated kings on the west side of the Jordan River. The boundaries of this land went from Baal Gad in the Lebanon Valley in the north all the way to Mount Halak near Edom in the south. Joshua gave all this land to the rest of the nine and a half tribes of Israel as their possession. The land Joshua gave included the central mountains, the western foothills, the valley of the Arabah, the eastern slopes or places where the land moves from a higher to a lower elevation, the wilderness that was in Judea, and the Negev wilderness in southern Canaan. Before Joshua and the Israelites took the land, it belonged to the tribes of the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites.

Stop here and look at a map of all the land Joshua and the Israelites conquered west of the Jordan River as a group. Listen again to the Bible passage and notice where each place is on the map. Pause this audio here.

Then the author lists the names of the kings and their cities that the Israelites defeated. The author listed them in the order in which Joshua and Israel defeated them. Joshua and Israel defeated the king of Jericho and his city first. Then they defeated the king of Ai, which is located next to Bethel. Next, Joshua and the Israelites defeated the kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon. Earlier we read the story of the long battle in which Joshua defeated these kings in the south. Joshua then defeated the king of Gezer, the king of Debir, the king of Geder, the king of Hormah, and the king of Arad. We do not have a record of these battles, but we do know that these kings lived in the southern part of Canaan. Joshua then defeated the king of Libnah, the king of Adullam, and the king of Makkedah. These cities were also in the southern part of Canaan.

Stop here and look at a map of the cities of the kings Joshua conquered in the southern part of Canaan as a group. Pause this audio here.

Joshua continued fighting against kings in the central and northern part of Canaan. He and Israel defeated the king of Bethel, the king of Tappuah, the king of Hephher, the king of Aphek, the king of Lasharon, and the king of Madon. We do not know for certain where these kings lived. Joshua defeated the king of Hazor, the king of Shimron Meron, the king of Akshaph, the king of Taanach, the king of Megiddo, the king of Kedesh, the king of Jokneam in Carmel, the king of Dor in Naphoth Dor, the king of Goyim in Gilgal, and the king of Tirzah. Some of these kings fought together against Joshua and the Israelites, but the Israelites defeated them all. These kings all lived in the northern part of Canaan.

Stop here as a group and look at a map of the kings Joshua conquered in the northern part of Canaan. Pause this audio here.

Altogether, Joshua and the army of Israel conquered 31 kings in Canaan. This is the end of this part of the book of Joshua, and it reminds us of the great victory that Yahweh gave the Israelites over their enemies in Canaan. Now we move into the story of the Israelites when they have settled in the land.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 12:7-24 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 three scenes.

In the first scene: As the author reminds the people of the kings that the Israelites conquered on the west side of the Jordan River, the author begins by describing the boundaries of the land. The land includes the central mountains, eastern and western slopes, Jordan River Valley, and the wilderness of Judea and southern Canaan. Before Joshua conquered these kings, Canaanites lived there.

In the second scene: Joshua conquered kings from the southern part of Canaan.

In the third scene: Joshua conquered kings from the central and northern part of Canaan next. In all, Joshua defeated 31 kings.

The characters in this passage are:

- Joshua
- Israelites
- Canaanites
- Kings from southern Canaan
- And kings from northern Canaan

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

In the first scene, the author describes how Joshua and the Israelites defeated kings on the west side of the Jordan River. These kings lived from Baal Gad in the Lebanon Valley in the north to Mount Halak, near Seir in the south. Joshua gave all the land to the tribes of Israel as their possession, or inheritance. This land was a gift, or inheritance, from Yahweh that Yahweh had promised to give Israel. Each tribe would own their land. This land included all of Canaan, from the hill country and eastern and western foothills to the mountains. The hill country had many places where some land was higher than other areas, but these hills were small. The foothills are low hills at the base of a group of mountains. Foothills are bigger than hills but smaller than mountains. Mountains are large steep hills that rise suddenly out of the land around them. The land Yahweh gave the Israelites included the Arabah, or Jordan River Valley, the wilderness of Judea, and the Negev wilderness. The wilderness is a lonely, barren place with no water and almost no plants or trees. Before Joshua conquered the kings of the land, other people lived there such as the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How will you describe the entire land that Joshua gave the people as their inheritance, or possession, from Yahweh? How will you talk about the hill country, the eastern and western foothills, and the mountains? How will you talk about the wilderness of Judea and the Negev wilderness? Pause this audio here.

In the second scene, Joshua defeated kings in the southern part of Canaan. The author lists these kings in the order in which Joshua conquered them. Each king's name is listed with the number "one" so we can understand

that Joshua defeated one king from each city. We know that several smaller cities and villages probably surrounded each city, and the king of the larger city ruled over each of these. First Joshua and Israel defeated the kings of Jericho and Ai. The author of Joshua tells the stories of these battles earlier in the book of Joshua. Next Joshua defeated the kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon. These kings fought against Israel as a group, and Israel defeated them and killed the kings. The author of Joshua describes this battle earlier in the book of Joshua. Next, Joshua defeated the kings of Gezer, Debir, Geder, Hormah, Arad, Libnah, Adullam, and Makkedah. The author mentions the battles against the kings of Debir, Libnah, and Makkedah earlier in the book of Joshua.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story that includes a list of similar items. How do you tell that list of items to someone else so that they can remember the list? Pause this audio here.

In the third scene, Joshua defeated kings in the central and northern part of Canaan. The author lists these kings generally in the order in which Joshua defeated them. Joshua defeated one king from each city, each probably with its group of smaller cities and villages. Joshua and the Israelites defeated the kings of Bethel, Tappuah, Hopher, Aphek, and Lasharon. We do not have any record of these battles. Joshua then defeated the kings of Madon, Hazor, Shimron Meron, and Akshaph. We do have a short description of the battle against the kings of Madon, Hazor, and Akshaph from earlier in the book of Joshua. Joshua defeated the kings of Taanach, Megiddo, Kedesh, Jokneam in Carmel, Dor in Naphoth Dor, Goyim in Gilgal, and Tirzah. Altogether, Joshua and the Israelites defeated 31 kings in Canaan and took their land.

Stop here and look at a map of all the kings Joshua defeated in Canaan as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How do you end a long list to show that it is finished? 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 Joshua 12:7-24 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:

- Joshua
- Israelites
- Canaanites
- Kings from southern Canaan
- And kings from northern 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.

Joshua and the Israelites defeated many kings on the west side of the Jordan River, from Baal Gad in the north to Mount Halak in the south. Joshua gave all this land to each of the tribes of Israel to own. The land included the foothills, the mountains, the desert, and the Jordan River Valley. Before Joshua and the Israelites defeated all the kings, other Canaanite people lived in the land.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Canaanites, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The people might answer things like:

- "We are defeated by the Israelites and feel sad and angry," or
- "We see that our gods were not powerful enough to defeat Israel's God, Yahweh."

Joshua and the Israelites defeated a long list of kings. The defeated kings begin in the southern part of Canaan. Joshua defeated the kings in Jericho and Ai first. Next Joshua defeated a group of kings who worked together to fight. These were the kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon. Joshua then defeated kings from Gezer, Debir, Geder, Hormah, Arad, Libnah, Adullam, and Makkedah. Joshua defeated all these kings from the southern part of Canaan.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Israelites, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The people might answer things like:

- "We are grateful that Yahweh defeated all these kings for us," or
- "We know that Yahweh is greater than any other god these people might worship."

Joshua and the Israelites then began to defeat the kings in central and northern Canaan. They defeated the kings of Bethel, Tappuah, Hephher, Aphek, and Lasharon. Joshua and Israel then fought against and defeated the kings of Madon, Hazor, and Shimron Meron and Akshaph.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the kings of northern Canaan, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The people may answer things like:

- "We thought we could defeat Israel together, but we were wrong," or
- "We thought we were more powerful than Israel, but their God, Yahweh, defeated us."

Next Joshua defeated the kings of Taanach, Megiddo, Kedesh, Jokneam, Dor, Goyim, and Tirzah. Altogether, Joshua and Israel defeated 31 kings.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you thinking or feeling?" The person might answer things like:

- "I feel grateful that Yahweh defeated all these kings for us," or
- "I am relieved that Yahweh helped us conquer kings and gave us the land Yahweh had promised to us. Now we can rest fully in the land Yahweh gave us."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 12:7–24 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

This passage gives a list of the **kings** Joshua and the **Israelites** defeated in Canaan. Use the same word or phrase for king and Israelites as you used in previous passages. For more information on king and Israelites, refer to the Master Glossary.

The kings Joshua defeated lived west of the **Jordan River**. The Jordan River is an important river in Israel that flows from north to south. The Israelites crossed the Jordan River from east to west when they entered Canaan. Use the same word or phrase for Jordan River as you used in previous passages. For more information on Jordan River, refer to the Master Glossary.

The land Joshua and the people conquered included the **wilderness** of Judea and the wilderness of the Negev. A wilderness is a desert or lonely, barren place without water. There are almost no trees or bushes in a wilderness. Use the same word for wilderness as you used in previous passages. For more information on wilderness, refer to the Master Glossary.

Joshua divided the land among the tribes of Israel to be their **inheritance**, or **possession**. A possession, or an inheritance, is something that is owned by someone else. When Joshua gave the land to each tribe, that tribe owned that land as their inheritance that Yahweh had promised them. You can use the same word you used for inheritance, or possession, in the previous passage.

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.

Joshua 12:7–24

Audio Content

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Joshua 13:1-7

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 13:1-7 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 13:1-7 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 Joshua 13:1-7 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last story, Joshua listed the 31 kings he and the Israelites defeated in the Promised Land, or Canaan, west of the Jordan River.

This story starts the second part of the book of Joshua. The author of Joshua gives a summary of the lands and people that the Israelites conquered or did not conquer. Joshua divides the land into the inheritance, or possession, for each of the tribes of the Israelites.

The story starts when Joshua is between the ages of 90 and over 100 years old. You will remember in a previous story, Yahweh commands Joshua to divide the Promised Land and give each tribe of Israel a part of the land as an inheritance, or possession, before Joshua dies. Years before, Yahweh had commanded Joshua to conquer the Promised Land. Joshua is now old, but the Israelites still have not conquered much of the Promised Land. Yahweh tells Joshua to finish dividing the Promised Land for the tribes of Israel as Joshua is now old. Joshua must divide the Promised Land for the Israelites before he dies.

Stop here and discuss the following as a group: Tell a story from your culture in which an old person has one last important task to do before they die. Pause this audio here.

In this story, Yahweh tells Joshua about all the land that remains for the nine and a half tribes of Israel to conquer in the Promised Land west of the Jordan River. It is important to note that the areas of land with the fewest Canaanites were the regions that the Israelites defeated and settled in while Joshua was leading them. The Israelites still had not conquered the regions with the most Canaanites.

Yahweh describes to Joshua the southern part of Canaan that the Israelites still need to conquer. Yahweh names four areas: First, the large territory of Canaan that extended from the Shihor River, or Brook of Egypt, in the south to the city of Ekron in the north. Second, the area that belonged to the Philistine people. Third, the area that belonged to the Geshurite people. And fourth, the area that belonged to the Avvite people. It is possible that the Philistines and Geshurites actually lived within the larger area of Canaan, making this only three separate areas.

Stop here as a group and look at the map of the land of Canaan, noting the Shihor River and the boundary of Ekron. Pause this audio here.

The Philistines lived in a territory that included five major cities that five major Philistine rulers ruled. These were the cities of Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Gath and Ekron. These cities were all within the land Yahweh had given to the Israelites. The Philistines were not originally from the land of Canaan, but they had conquered part of the land and were living there. Yahweh wanted the Israelites to conquer the Philistines also.

Stop here and look at the map of Canaan as a group and note the five cities: Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Gath, and Ekron. Pause this audio here.

The Geshurites and Avvites probably lived near each other, in the southern part of Canaan, southeast of the Philistine city of Gaza.

Now Yahweh describes to Joshua the northern part of Canaan that the Israelites still need to conquer. Yahweh says that all the land of the Canaanites remains. You may remember that Canaanites is a title that can include several different tribes of people. In this area of Canaan, Yahweh describes the areas of the Sidonians and the Gebalites.

Yahweh says that Joshua should take the city of Arah, which belongs to the Sidonians, and the land from there all the way north to the city of Aphek, which was on the border of the land of the Amorites. Remember that in a previous story, Joshua conquered the city of Aphek.

Stop here and look at the map of Canaan as a group, noting the city of Arah and the city of Aphek. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh says that Joshua should conquer the region of the Gebalites. The Gebalites lived in the area of Gebal, from Byblos, a town on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, north of Sidon all the way through modern-day Lebanon to the east. The southern boundary of this area is the city of Baal Gad at the bottom of Mount Hermon in the valley between the mountains of Lebanon. The northern boundary of this area is the city of Hamath, or Lebo Hamath, which is probably near the northern point of the Lebanon Valley. We know from later stories that the Israelites never fully conquered this land.

Yahweh finishes by telling Joshua that Yahweh will drive out all the people from the mountains of the area of Lebanon all the way south to the city of Misrephoth Maim. This area includes all the lands of the Sidonians.

Stop here and look at a map of Canaan as a group, noting Sidon, Baal Gad, Mount Hermon, the mountains of Lebanon, Hamath, and Misrephoth Maim. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh then commands Joshua to distribute the land of Canaan to the nine and a half tribes of the Israelites who will live on the west side of the Jordan River. This will be their inheritance from Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Why do you think Yahweh tells Joshua to distribute the land of Canaan to the tribes of Israel even before they have fully conquered it? How will this help the tribes of Israel win the battles?

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 13:1-7 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

This passage has three scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh tells Joshua that Joshua is now an old man, but there is still a lot of land the Israelites still need to conquer in the land of Canaan. Yahweh then describes the boundaries of the unconquered land in southern Canaan and the people who live in them.

In the second scene: Yahweh describes the boundaries of the unconquered land in northern Canaan and the peoples who live in them.

In the third scene: Yahweh commands Joshua to distribute the land west of the Jordan River to the nine and a half tribes of Israel as an inheritance.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Joshua
- Philistines
- The five Philistine rulers of Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron
- Geshurites
- Canaanites
- Avvites
- Sidonians
- Amorites
- Gebalites
- And the nine and a half tribes west of the Jordan River

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

In the first scene, we hear that Joshua is old. Then, we hear Yahweh tell Joshua that he is old. The author repeats this to emphasize that Joshua is truly old and will die soon. Yahweh then goes on to tell Joshua that even though Joshua and the Israelites have conquered much of the Promised Land during many years, the Israelites still have a lot of land to conquer and settle in.

First Yahweh describes the land in the south of Canaan that the Israelites still need to conquer. Yahweh seems to describe four areas of land in southern Canaan: First, the areas of the Philistines, the Geshurites, the Avvites, and a larger area of Canaanites. It is unclear whether the Philistines and Geshurites lived within the larger area that belonged to the Canaanites, or if these are separate areas. The Shihor River, which is the southern boundary of this area, is also called the Brook of Egypt. This river is dry during the time of year that it does not rain, and it is full of water during the time of year when it rains often.

Stop here and look at the map of Canaan again. Discuss as a group how you will talk about the southern part of Canaan that Yahweh describes to Joshua. How will you describe the area of the Philistines and the five rulers and their cities? How will you describe the area of the Geshurites and the larger area of the Canaanites? Pause this audio here.

In the second scene Yahweh describes the land in the north of Canaan that the Israelites still need to conquer. Yahweh mentions that Arah belongs to the Sidonians. We are not sure if Arah is a cave, which is the meaning of its name, or if it is a city with the name Arah. In any case, it is probably along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. Yahweh speaks of the land extending to all of Lebanon toward the east, or towards the sunrise.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How do people in your culture talk about directions such as north, south, east, and west? Here, the people talked about the east in terms of the direction that the sun rises. How will you describe that the land goes from the cities on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea eastward? Pause this audio here.

The area of Lebanon has two tall mountain ranges with a fertile valley in between. The Lebanon Mountains reach a height of over 3,300 meters and extend for over 150 kilometers. Mount Hermon is a mountain at the southern end of the eastern range. Mount Hermon is about 40 kilometers northeast of the Sea of Galilee, Israel's northeast boundary. Mount Hermon is the tallest mountain with multiple mountain peaks in ancient Israel, and the highest peaks are usually covered by snow. The story describes the eastern boundary of this land as between the city of Baal Gad at the base of Mount Hermon, at the most southern point of the Lebanon Valley, and Lebo Hamath, or the city of Hamath, at the northernmost point of the Lebanon Valley.

Stop here and look at a picture of the snow-covered mountains of Lebanon as a group. Look at a picture of Mount Hermon as a group. Pause this audio here.

Then Yahweh describes the western boundary of this land as the western mountain range of Lebanon, which is along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. This is the land of the Sidonians, and it goes from the mountain areas in the north of Lebanon to the city of Misrephoth Maim in the south.

Stop here and look at the map of Canaan again. Describe as a group how you will talk about the boundaries of the northern part of Canaan that Yahweh describes to Joshua. How will you describe the two mountain regions of Lebanon? Pause this audio here.

In the third scene Yahweh tells Joshua that Yahweh will drive them out from the land. Most likely, Yahweh is saying that Yahweh will drive out all of the remaining nations. The Israelites will need to physically fight the nations in Canaan, but Yahweh is going to give them victory over these nations still living in Canaan. Yahweh describes the boundaries of these lands to show the Israelites that Yahweh is serious about his promise to them.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a true story in which you describe an area of land or a city. How do the details in a story like this prove to your audience that it is a true story? How do you share the details in such a way that the audience is convinced that you have been there and you know the area? How will that affect the way you tell this description of the area? Pause this audio here.

Even though there are other nations still living in Canaan, Yahweh commands Joshua to divide Canaan and give the land as an inheritance, or possession, to the tribes of Israel. Yahweh then makes it clear that Yahweh is speaking of dividing the land west of the Jordan River to the remaining nine and a half tribes, not including Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh who live to the east of the Jordan River.

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 Joshua 13:1-7 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has three scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Joshua
- Philistines
- The five Philistine rulers of Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron
- Geshurites
- Canaanites
- Avvites
- Sidonians
- Amorites
- Gebalites
- And the nine and a half tribes west of the Jordan River

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 Joshua that Joshua is now an old man, but Israel still has a lot of land left to conquer in the land of Canaan. Yahweh then describes the boundaries of the unconquered land.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I am glad Yahweh has given us a clear description of all the land and people that the Israelites still have to conquer," or
- "I hope that the Israelites and the next Israelite leaders will conquer all this land like Yahweh has commanded them to after I die."

Ask the people playing the nine and a half tribes of Israel, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "I trust Yahweh to do this for us! Look! He has given us details about the land. He must be serious about giving it to us!"

Yahweh tells Joshua that Yahweh will drive out the people who live in the land. Yahweh also commands Joshua to distribute the parts of Canaan west of the Jordan River to the nine and a half tribes of Israel living in the Promised Land as an inheritance, or possession.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I know that Yahweh will continue to drive the people out of the land for the Israelites, just like he has been doing for the last few years," or
- "There is still a lot of land and people left for the Israelites to conquer. I hope that the Israelites will carry on diligently fighting their enemies," or
- "I am glad that Yahweh has fulfilled his promises to the Israelites by driving out the nations from before us. I am also glad the Israelites will now receive their promised inheritance."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 13:1-7 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Yahweh tells Joshua that there is still a lot of land left to possess. Yahweh is a name that God gives himself. Use the same word or phrase for Yahweh as you used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

To **possess** something is to take possession of something that someone else owned and to become the new owner. Generally, people take possession of something by buying and selling or through warfare. Use the same word or phrase for possess as you used in previous passages.

Yahweh will **drive out** the people before the **Israelites**. Use the same words or phrases for Israelites and for "drive out" as you used in previous passages. For more information on Israelites, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh commands Joshua to **allot**, or **distribute**, the Promised Land of Canaan as an inheritance, or possession, to the nine and a half tribes of the Israelites west of the Jordan River. To allot something is to assign and distribute something as a share or portion of a whole.

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

An **inheritance** is something someone receives and comes into possession of from their ancestor. An inheritance is usually possessions, business, money, houses, or land. Use the same word or phrase for inheritance, or possession, 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.

Joshua 13:1-7

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (10010808 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Joshua 13:8-13

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 13:8-13 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 13:8-13 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 Joshua 13:8–13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This passage follows the previous story where Yahweh tells Joshua how much land the Israelites still have left to conquer in the Promised Land, west of the Jordan River.

This passage talks of how Moses had already allotted, or distributed, the whole land east of the Jordan River as an inheritance, or possession, to the tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh. Moses had already distributed the land to these tribes east of the Jordan, while Joshua distributed the land to the nine and a half tribes west of the Jordan. We hear this information again because it is important to remember that though the Jordan River separated the tribes, all the tribes were still the Israelites and they all received land as an inheritance except for the Levites.

This passage describes the boundaries of the entire land that Moses distributed to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh on the east side of the Jordan River. The southern boundaries of the land go from the city of Aroer on the northern bank of the Arnon River in the valley, including the city in the valley of Arnon, to the plain of Medeba as far as Dibon. The city of Aroer was on the northern bank of the Arnon River, east of the Dead Sea.

Stop here and look as a group at a map of the Israelite land east of the Jordan River. Notice the location of Aroer, the Arnon River Valley, the plain of Medeba, the Dead Sea, and Dibon. Note the location of the city of Aroer on the river bank. Look at a photo of a river valley and a plains area. Pause this audio here.

Dibon was a Moabite city in the Plain of Medeba that the Israelites captured from the Moabites. Then the land goes northward through the Plain of Medeba, which is a high, flat area between the Arnon River in the south and the city of Heshbon in the north. You will remember from the book of Numbers that the city of Medeba was a Moabite city that the Israelites captured from King Sihon of the Amorites, when King Sihon refused to let the Israelites cross his land peacefully.

The territory east of the Jordan River includes all of the towns that King Sihon of the Amorites had ruled in Heshbon. Heshbon is another flat, fertile plain area. The land continued to the border of the Ammonites.

Stop here and look at the map again as a group. Notice the location of Heshbon and the border of the Ammonites. Pause this audio here.

The territory includes the area of Gilead. Gilead covers the eastern slopes, or mountainsides, of the Jordan River Valley and the flat land above it to the east.

Stop here and notice the location of Gilead on the map as a group. Pause this audio here.

The territory also includes the kingdom of the Geshurites and the kingdom of the Maakathites, two small kingdoms northeast of the Sea of Galilee.

Stop here as a group and notice the location of Geshur and Maakah on the map. Pause this audio here.

The territory also includes the former Kingdom of Og, which started at Mount Hermon. Mount Hermon is about 40 kilometers northeast of the Sea of Galilee, Israel's northeast boundary. Mount Hermon is the tallest mountain in ancient Israel, with several mountain peaks. The highest peaks usually have snow.

Stop here and look at a map and photo of Mount Hermon as a group. Pause this audio here.

The land extends to cover the whole valley of Bashan as far as Salekah and all the territory of Og king of Bashan who reigned in Ashtaroth and Edrei. Bashan is northeast of the Sea of Galilee. Bashan is a fertile valley for agriculture. Salekah is a town on the eastern border of Bashan.

Og was the Amorite king of Bashan who reigned in the capital city of Ashtaroth and the town of Edrei. Og was one of the last of the Rephaim, the race of giants known for their great height. The Rephaim were mentioned in previous stories. Joshua reminds the Israelites that Moses had killed and driven out Og and all the Rephaim giants from the Promised Land.

Stop here and look as a group at the location of Bashan, Salekah, Ashtaroth, and Edrei on the map. Pause this audio here.

However, the Israelites had not killed or driven out the Geshurites and Maakathites from the land that Moses distributed to the half-tribe of Manasseh. To the time of the writing of Joshua, the Geshurites and Maakathites lived in the land. The author of this passage gives a warning to the Israelites—they have failed to do what Yahweh told them to do.

Stop here and look as a group at the location of Geshur and Maakah on the map.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 13:8–13 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: Joshua reminds the Israelites that Moses had already given the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh their land of inheritance to the east of the Jordan River.

In the second scene: Joshua mentions certain cities, towns, and regions of land along with two kings and four kingdoms. The two kings are King Sihon of the Amorites and King Og of Bashan. Joshua reminds the Israelites that Moses had killed and driven out King Og of Bashan along with the Rephaim. Joshua reminds the Israelites that they had failed to kill and drive out the Geshurites and the Maakathites from the Promised Land.

The characters in this passage are:

- The Israelites, specifically the people from the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh
- Moses
- Sihon, king of the Amorites, at Heshbon
- Ammonites
- Geshurites
- Maakathites
- Og, king of Bashan
- And the Rephaim

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

The storyteller begins his passage by reminding the Israelites that Moses had already given the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh their land to the east of the Jordan River. Again, the storyteller calls Moses a "servant of Yahweh" to remind the Israelites that it was Yahweh who gave his people the land he had promised them. Moses was acting as Yahweh's servant and obeyed everything Yahweh told him to do.

Joshua tells the Israelites twice that it was Moses who gave the land to the tribes of Reuben and Gad and to the half-tribe of Manasseh. This is so that they will remember that the two and a half tribes who lived east of the Jordan River were included in the inheritance. Moses had given them that land to possess.

This passage describes an overview of the entire land the Israelite tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh inherited, or received. This passage is just an overview, but the next passages will speak of the specific borders for each tribe.

It is important to remember that in the land of the Israelites, rivers often flowed through valleys, which was lower land in between higher land on both sides of a river. These valleys may be called gorges, or valleys. Plateaus, or plains, are higher, flat lands, and they are often good fertile land for planting crops.

Stop here and look at a photo of a river valley, a plains area, and Mount Hermon as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Describe your own country's or area's boundaries, including the rivers and flat lands that make up the boundaries. Think about the ways you describe boundaries and lands of the territories that your people live in. How is that the same or different from the way that the storyteller describes this land in this passage? You may look at the map again if it is helpful. Pause this audio here.

The storyteller tells us about King Og of Bashan. King Og ruled over the city of Bashan, and also over the cities of Ashtaroth and Edrei. The storyteller reminds us that King Og was the only one left of a small group of very tall people called the Rephaim, because Moses had attacked and killed all the rest of the Rephaim.

Stop here and discuss as a group: How will you give the extra information about King Og and the Rephaim? Pause this audio here.

This story ends by saying that the Israelites did not completely drive out, or completely send away or kill, all the people who lived in the land before them like Yahweh told them to. In fact, the people of Geshur and Maakah still lived among the Israelites.

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 Joshua 13:8–13 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:

- The Israelites, specifically the people from the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh
- Moses
- Sihon, king of the Amorites, at Heshbon
- Ammonites
- Geshurites
- Maakathites
- Og, king of Bashan
- And the Rephaim

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.

Joshua describes the overall land that Moses distributes as an inheritance, or possession, to the half-tribe of Manasseh and the tribes of Reuben and Gad east of the Jordan River. Joshua mentions certain cities, towns, and regions of land along with two kings and four kingdoms. The two kings are King Sihon of the Amorites and King Og of Bashan.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I am glad that Yahweh gave the tribes east of the Jordan River their land. Yahweh always keeps his promises!"

Joshua reminds the Israelites that Moses had killed and driven out Og king of Bashan along with the Rephaim. Joshua reminds the Israelites that they had failed to kill and drive out the Geshurites and the Maakathites from the inheritance of the half-tribe of Manasseh. The Geshurites and the Maakathites continue to live with the half-tribe of Manasseh in the Promised Land.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Moses, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Before I died, I told Israel of all the inhabitants they still had to drive out of the land. I am disappointed they have not driven them all out," or
- "I am worried that one day the people will regret that they have not destroyed all their enemies."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 13:8–13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Moses, **Yahweh's servant**, had distributed the **inheritance** of land to the Reubenites, Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh. An inheritance, or possession, is something someone receives and comes into possession of from their ancestor. An inheritance is usually possessions, business, money, houses, or land. Use the same word or phrase for inheritance, Yahweh, and servant as you used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh and servant, refer to the Master Glossary.

To **allot** something is to distribute something as a share or portion of a whole. Use the same word or phrase for allot as you used in previous passages.

Joshua speaks of the **valley** of Arnon and all the **tableland** or plain of the Medeba as far as Dibon. A valley is a long piece of land at a lower level, usually between ranges of hills or mountains. Use the same word or phrase for valley as you used in previous passages. A tableland or plain is a broad, flat piece of land that is at a higher region.

Stop here and look at a picture of a **tableland** or plain as a group. Discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for tableland. 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 mentions Sihon and Og as **kings**. Use the same word for king as you have used in previous passages, and remember that king is in the Master Glossary.

Joshua mentions all the **kingdom** of Og, who was the remnant, or the only person left, of the people group called **Rephaim**. Use the same word or phrase for kingdom that you used in previous passages, and remember that kingdom is in the Master Glossary. Rephaim is the name of a giant people who lived in Canaan before Moses killed them. Use the same word or phrase for Rephaim as you used in previous passages.

The **Israelites** did not drive out, or destroy, the people of Geshur and Maakah. This is not the same Geshur that is west of the Jordan River. Use the same word or phrase for Israelites as you used in previous passages. For more information on Israelites, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Israelites and Yahweh **drive people out** of the land, or destroy them so that they leave the land completely. Describe this action in the same way here as 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.

Joshua 13:8–13

Audio Content

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Joshua 13:14–23

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 13:14–23 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 13:14–23 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 Joshua 13:14–23 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This passage follows the previous story where Joshua describes the entire land east of the Jordan River that Moses gave to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Mannaseh. Moses had allotted, or distributed, the land to these tribes east of the Jordan River before he died, but Joshua distributed the land west of the Jordan River to the other nine and a half tribes. It is important to remember that though the Jordan River separated the tribes, all the tribes were still the Israelites and they all received land as an inheritance, except the Levites.

This passage starts with Joshua explaining why the Levites did not receive a land inheritance. Instead, Yahweh promised to give part of the food offerings that the Israelites present to him to the Levites as an inheritance. You will remember that although sometimes the Israelites burned the whole animal as an offering to Yahweh, sometimes they only burned part of the animal, and the rest of the animal was for the Levites and their families to eat. This helps explain why we will not hear about any land that the Levites receive.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture divide up inheritances and why? How do people respond when their portion of the inheritance seems to be different from others? How do people in your community decide who does not receive land? Pause this audio here.

In this passage Joshua describes the land that Moses gave to the tribe of Reuben according to its clans or family groups. The tribe of Reuben's territory is the southern part of the eastern side of the Jordan River. Their territory consists mostly of Sihon's former kingdom.

Joshua describes the land starting in the south from the city of Aroer on the bank of the Arnon River in the Arnon River valley, including the city in the valley of Arnon, to the plain of Medeba in the north. Their territory includes Heshbon as the very northern city as well as nine other cities on the plains of Medeba. The city of Aroer was on the northern bank of the River of Arnon, around 15 miles upstream from where the River of Arnon empties into the Dead Sea. The edge of the valley of Arnon refers to the River of Arnon that flowed through the valley of Arnon. Joshua then mentions a second city. The second city is in the center of the valley of Arnon, not on the Arnon River bank.

Stop here and look at a map of the territory of the tribe of Reuben as a group. Note the location in the south of the city of Aroer on the bank of the Arnon River, as well as the plains of Medeba in the north. Note the location of the city of Heshbon, Mount Pisgah, and Beth Jesimoth. Pause this audio here.

The Plain of Medeba refers to a high, flat area between the Arnon River in the south and the city of Heshbon in the north. The Plain of Medeba was 600 to 700 meters high, south of the city of Heshbon and north of the city of Dibon. Remember that the city of Medeba was a Moabite city northeast of the Dead Sea that the Israelites captured from Sihon, king of the Amorites, when king Sihon refused to let the Israelites cross his land peacefully.

Heshbon was an Amorite city that the Israelites captured from King Sihon. It is just west of Ammon on the border of the territory of Gad and Reuben. Beth Peor was a city on the slopes, or mountainside, of Mount Pisgah in the northwest part of the plains along with Beth Jesimoth. Beth Peor is where Moses last spoke to the Israelites before he died.

The territory for the tribe of Reuben included all of the cities of King Sihon of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon. Moses defeated King Sihon along with the kings who helped him from Midian. You will remember from a previous story that Moses had sent Israelites to King Sihon to request permission to pass through his land. King Sihon refused and came out to attack the Israelites. However, the Israelites, led by Moses, killed Sihon and took his land.

Several Midianite rulers or princes were servants of, or allied with, King Sihon. Moses also killed these princes. Midian was the territory east of the Gulf of Aqaba and south of Edom. In addition to Sihon and the Midianite rulers, the Israelites had also killed Balaam the magician, who tried to predict the future, and who was the son of Beor. Throughout the history of the Israelites, we hear how Yahweh punished people who did not follow Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What are the different ways that people in your culture have received land? Who are the people who they replaced or defeated in the process? Pause this audio here.

The Jordan River, including part of the Dead Sea, was the western boundary for the tribe of Reuben.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 13:14–23 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

This passage has four scenes.

In the first scene: Moses did not give the Levites any land inheritance since Yahweh promised that their inheritance was the food offerings the Israelites gave to Yahweh.

In the second scene: Moses gave the Reubenites their land according to their clans or family groups. Their territory extended from Aroer on the Arnon River in the south, to the plain of Medeba in the north. It included

Heshbon as well as nine other cities on the plain. It also included Zereth Shahar on the hill as well as Beth Peor on the slope of Mount Pisgah and Beth Jeshimoth.

In the third scene: Moses gave Reuben all of the cities and territories of King Sihon of the Amorites. Moses had killed King Sihon as well as King Sihon's allies who were Midianite princes. The Israelites also killed Balaam who practiced witchcraft.

In the fourth scene: The storyteller concludes by telling us that the Jordan River to the west was the border of the tribe of Reuben.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Joshua
- Yahweh
- The Levites
- The tribe of Reuben
- King Sihon
- Midianite rulers
- And Balaam

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

Joshua mentions the tribe of the Levites here in order to explain that they have no land inheritance. Yahweh promised the Levites a different inheritance. In this passage Joshua says that the Levites receive the burned offerings or food offerings that the people gave to Yahweh. Joshua adds this information to the list of what each tribe receives, to explain why there is no mention of land for the Levites in these passages.

Remember that Joshua is describing the land borders that Moses already gave to the tribe of Reuben on the east side of the Jordan River. Joshua first describes the southern and northern borders. The southern border is Aroer which is in the gorge, or deep valley where the Arnon River runs. The northern border is the plateau or plains, or the large flat area of land, of Medeba all the way to the city of Heshbon. The cities that Joshua lists in the Reubenite territory are Aroer, Heshbon, Dibon, Bamoth Baal, Beth Baal Meon, Jahaz, Kedemoth, Mephaath, Kiriathaim, Sibmah, Zereth Shahar, Beth Peor on the slopes of Pisgah, and Beth Jeshimoth. Remember that slopes are the slight incline of the mountains, typically towards the bottom of the mountain.

Stop here and do this activity together as a group: Use items to represent the different towns Joshua mentions and try arranging them on the ground as they are located in the text. Practice how you will pronounce the names in your language. Look at the map again if needed. Pause this audio here.

Joshua mentions that the whole area of the kingdom of King Sihon went to the tribe of Reuben. However, Moses gave the tribe of Reuben the part of the kingdom of King Sihon that was on the plains of Medeba. Moses gave the rest of Sihon's territory to another tribe of Israel.

The author gives background historical information to remind the Israelites of all the things that Yahweh had done for them, and all the ways that Yahweh punished and drove out the people in the land. Moses and the Israelites previously killed King Sihon and his Midianite princes as well as Balaam, the son of Beor. Balaam had practiced witchcraft. Joshua explains the extra information about Balaam to remind his audience of who Balaam was.

The Reubenite boundary to the west is the Jordan River and the Dead Sea, even though the passage only mentions the Jordan River.

The author finishes with a summary statement that these cities and their villages were the inheritance of the families, or clans, of the tribe of Reuben.

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 Joshua 13:14–23 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has four scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Joshua
- Yahweh
- The Levites
- The tribe of Reuben
- King Sihon
- Midianite rulers
- And 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.

Moses did not give the Levites a land inheritance since Yahweh promised that their inheritance was the food offerings given to Yahweh.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Levites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Where are we supposed to live if we do not get any land?" or
- "I am thankful we will always have enough food to eat," or
- "I am so honored to serve Yahweh and to have Yahweh as an inheritance."

Moses gave the Reubenites their land according to their clans or family groups. Their territory extended from Aroer on the Arnon River in the south, to the plain of Medeba in the north. It included Heshbon as well as nine other cities on the plain. It also included Zereth Shahar on the hill as well as Beth Peor on the slope of Mount Pisgah and Beth Jeshimoth.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Reubenites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I feel like we are getting a good area of land with many different landscapes," or
- "I am thankful for all of this area and that Moses let us stay on this side of the Jordan."

Moses had given Reuben all of the cities and territories of King Sihon of the Amorites. Moses had killed King Sihon as well as his allies who were Midianite princes. The Israelites also killed Balaam who practiced witchcraft.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I want the Israelites to remember that I have protected them and gave them this land," or
- "I hope that the Israelites will not make the same mistakes that these kings and Balaam made. I hope that the Israelites will follow me completely."

The Jordan River to the west was the border of the tribe of Reuben. These are the territories of Reuben according to its clans or family groups.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 13:14–23 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Moses did not give the **Levites** a land inheritance since **Yahweh**, the **God** of **Israel** promised that their inheritance was the **burnt offerings**, or **offerings by fire**, or food offerings given to Yahweh. The priests received some of the burnt offerings as their food. The Levites are one of the 12 tribes of Israel and were the ones who made sacrifices to Yahweh on behalf of the people. Yahweh is the personal and proper name of God. God is the one true creator God. The burnt offerings are usually the sacrifices made to Yahweh and burned completely on the altar in the tabernacle, or temple. Here, these offerings probably refer to the other types of offerings when some of the animal was burned, but the rest of the animal was for the Levites to eat. Use the same words you've used for Levites, Yahweh, God, Israel, and burnt offerings in previous passages. For more information on Levites, Yahweh, God, Israel, and burnt offerings, refer to the Master Glossary.

Use the same word for **inheritance** from Yahweh, or **possession**, that you have used in previous passages.

Moses gave the Reubenites their land according to their **clans** or family groups. Use the same word for clans that you have used in previous passages.

The Reubenites are one of the 12 tribes of Israel, named after Jacob's first son. The territory that Moses had given the tribe of Reuben was on the edge and in the middle of the **valley** of Arnon. A valley is a riverbed that may be dry when there is little rain. Use the same word for valley that you have used in previous passages.

Moses gave the tribe of Reuben all of the cities and territories of **King** Sihon of the Amorites. Use the same word for king as you have used in previous passages, and remember that king is in the Master Glossary.

Moses had killed King Sihon as well as his allies who were Midianite leaders or princes. The storyteller uses both a general term for leaders and another term for princes, who are leaders a bit lower than kings. Princes can be part of a king's family. Both are types of rulers like tribal chiefs.

Stop here and discuss as a group what words you will use for the **leaders** or **tribal chiefs** of the Midianites, and Midianite princes. Remember that these chiefs or princes were probably servants of King Sihon. Pause this audio here.

The Israelites also put Balaam **to the sword**, or killed Balaam. Balaam practiced witchcraft or divination. This means that Balaam communicated with spirits or other gods. Use the same phrase for "put Balaam to the sword" as you have in previous passages.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **divination**. Look up divination 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 **Jordan River** to the west was the border of the tribe of Reuben. These are the territories of Reuben according to its clans or family groups. The Jordan River runs north to south through Israel. Use the same word you have used for Jordan River in previous passages. For more information on Jordan River, refer to the Master Glossary.

This was the inheritance of the tribe of Reuben according to their families or clans, **cities** and **villages**. Cities are larger towns that have walls around them for protection. Villages are smaller than cities and often relied on the cities for protection. Use the same word for cities and villages 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.

Joshua 13:14–23

Audio Content

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Joshua 13:24–33

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 13:24–33 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 13:24–33 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 Joshua 13:24–33 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Joshua has been describing the territory that Moses gave to the two and a half tribes on the east of the Jordan. You will remember that when the Israelites came to the eastern side of the Jordan River, the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half of the tribe of Manasseh had requested to stay in that area. These two and a half tribes did not

want to go farther into the Promised Land. Moses did not like their request but agreed because the two and a half tribes promised to fight for Yahweh alongside the rest of Israel to drive out the inhabitants of the land.

Now, Joshua describes the land that Moses gave to the tribe of Gad according to their families or clans, on the east side of the Jordan River. This territory went from Jazer in the east, and included all of Gilead. Gilead referred to the mountain region east of the Jordan River all the way to the edge of the wilderness in the east. Moses also gave Gad half of the land of Ammon as far as the town of Aroer. This town of Aroer was not the same as the town that Moses gave to the tribe of Reuben. This town was further north and next to, or in front of, Rabbah. It is unclear whether this Aroer is to the east or to the west of Rabbah. The southern border goes as far as Heshbon, the capital city of King Sihon. Moses gave Heshbon to the tribe of Reuben, but Heshbon is on the border between the two tribes.

We do not know where many of the cities are today that we hear in this passage. Mahanaim was a place in Gilead where Jacob saw the angels of God. Mahanaim was on the border of Gad with the half-tribe of Manasseh who also lived in Gilead. We think it is about 20 kilometers north of the Jabbok River. The territory also went up north to Lo-debar just east of the Jordan River. Four cities were in the Jordan Valley, or the lower land near the river. The western border of the territory was also the Jordan River, and went as far north as the southern tip of the Sea of Galilee. Then the border turned east.

Stop here and look at a map that includes the territory of the tribe of Gad as a group. Pause this audio here.

Joshua then describes the land that Moses gave to the clans of the half-tribe of Manasseh. This land is directly north of the tribe of Gad. Their land included Mahanaim, which was further south of Gad's most northern point. It was in Gilead and on the border with Gad and included all of Bashan. The capital of Bashan was Ashtaroth in the north and was under the rule of King Og. The Israelites defeated King Og at Edrei, and took his land which Moses gave to the half-tribe of Manasseh.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture divide land and territory between one another? Who decides who gets which parts of the land? Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look together at the map that includes the territory of the half-tribe of Manasseh as a group. Note the location of Gilead, Ashtaroth, and Edrei.

Joshua makes a summary statement of the division of the land east of the Jordan River. Moses had given this land to Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh while the Israelites were camped in the plains of Moab, east of Jericho. However, Moses did not give land to the tribe of Levi because Yahweh, the God of Israel, promised to be the Levites' inheritance. Yahweh promised to give the food offerings that are presented to Yahweh to the Levites as their inheritance, or gift, from Yahweh.

Stop here and if needed, look together at the map and locate the plains of Moab.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 13:24–33 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

This passage has three scenes.

In the first scene: Joshua describes the land that Moses gave to the clans of the tribe of Gad.

In the second scene: Joshua describes the land that Moses gave to the clans of the half-tribe of Manasseh, who was Makir's son.

In the third scene: Moses gave out this land while the Israelites were camped in the plains of Moab on the eastern side of the Jordan River, to the east of Jericho. Moses, however, did not give the tribe of Levi any land inheritance, since Yahweh promised to be their inheritance.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Yahweh
- Joshua
- The tribe of Gad
- King Sihon
- Half-tribe of Manasseh
- King Og
- Makir
- And the tribe of Levi

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

Remember that Joshua is describing the land that Moses gave to one and a half-tribes in this passage. Moses assigned that land while the Israelites were camped on the eastern side of the Jordan River, on the plains of Moab, before they entered the Promised Land.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story from the past about something you saw someone else do. Notice the language you use to talk about that person in the past. Notice if there is specific language you use because you witnessed this event, as opposed to if you had just heard about it. Pause this audio here.

Joshua describes the land that Moses gave to the clans of the tribe of Gad. Gad includes much of Gilead and half of the land of Ammon, as far as the city of Aroer. Remember that we are not sure if Aroer is east or west of Rabbah. Aroer is "in front of" Rabbah, but we do not know if this means that it is east or west of Rabbah.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you talk about cities being east or west of each other. Pause this audio here.

The boundaries of the tribe of Gad is a list of cities. Those cities are Jazer, Gilead, Aroer, Rabbah, Heshbon, Ramath Mizpah, Betonim, Mahanaim, Debir, Beth Haram, Beth Nimrah, Sukkoth, and Zaphon.

Stop here and practice listing the names of the cities. Discuss how you will pronounce them in your language. Pause this audio here.

After the tribe of Gad, Joshua describes the land Moses gave to the half-tribe of Manasseh, which is north of the tribe of Gad. Much of this land included the northern parts of Gilead as well of the former kingdom of Bashan which belonged to King Og. Moses gave Manasseh 60 villages of Jair in Bashan. Jair was a descendant of Manasseh, and so this town was named after him because he had conquered these 60 villages at one time.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your community name cities or villages? Pause this audio here.

Joshua gives a summary statement of how Moses divided the land for the two and a half tribes on the eastern side of the Jordan River. Joshua restates what he says at the beginning of the eastern tribes' boundaries, that the tribe of Levi received no land because Yahweh, the God of Israel, himself, was their inheritance.

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 Joshua 13:24–33 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has three scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Moses
- Yahweh
- Joshua
- The tribe of Gad
- King Sihon
- Half-tribe of Manasseh
- King Og
- Makir
- And the 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.

Joshua describes the land that Moses gave to the clans of the tribe of Gad.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the tribe of Gad, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I remember King Sihon. He was not very nice. I am glad we took some of his land," or
- "I am just thankful that Moses let us stay on this side of the Jordan River. It is so pretty with so many different kinds of landscapes."

Joshua describes the land that Moses gave to the clans of the half-tribe of Manasseh, who was Makir's son.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the half-tribe of Manasseh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I am a little sad that only half of our people stayed here," or
- "I am happy to fight with the rest of Israel if it means I can stay on this side of the Jordan," or
- "Praise Yahweh that we are done traveling through the desert!"

Moses distributed this land while the Israelites were camped in the plains of Moab on the eastern side of the Jordan River, to the east of Jericho. Moses, however, did not give the tribe of Levi any land inheritance, since Yahweh promised to be their inheritance.

*Filling the Gaps**Filling the Gaps*

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 13:24–33 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Moses gave an **inheritance** from Yahweh to the **large family groups**, or **clans**, of the tribe of Gad on the east side of the **Jordan River**. Moses gave the cities and their surrounding villages as homeland to Gad. The Jordan River is the river that runs north to south through Israel. Use the same words for clans or large family groups, inheritance, and Jordan River that you have used in previous passages. For more information on the Jordan River, refer to the Master Glossary.

Cities are larger than towns that have walls around them for protection. **Villages** are smaller than cities and often relied on the cities for protection. Use the same word for cities and villages that you have used in previous passages.

Then Moses gave an inheritance to the half-tribe of Manasseh, also on the east side of the Jordan River. Moses gave the land to the descendants of Makir who was Manasseh's son. Jair, a man from the tribe of Manasseh, had conquered 60 villages many years before. The name of these towns was Havvoth Jair, but here they are just called the villages of Jair. Remember that a city is usually larger than a village, and it often has walls around it to protect it from an enemy attack, but these villages of Jair probably do not have walls.

Moses distributed these lands while the Israelites were camped on the plains of Moab across the Jordan River, east of Jericho. But Moses did not give the tribe of **Levi** an inheritance. **Yahweh**, the **God** of **Israel** promised the **Levites** that he would be their inheritance. The Levites are one of the 12 tribes of Israel. Yahweh is the personal and proper name of God. God is the one true creator God. Here Israel is the descendants of Jacob. Use the same words or phrases you have used for Levi or Levites, Yahweh, God, and Israel in previous passages. For more information on Levites, Yahweh, God, and Israel, 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.

Joshua 13:24–33

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (11473695 KB)

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Joshua 14:1–15

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 14:1–15 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 14:1–15 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 Joshua 14:1–15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The Israelites have crossed the Jordan River to the west side into the land of Canaan, and they have conquered the land. Now they are dividing the land between the nine and a half remaining tribes. Remember that Moses had already divided the land to the east of the Jordan River between the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half of the tribe of Manasseh.

Stop here and look together at a map of the division of the land between the tribes of Israel. Note the cities of Gilgal, Kadesh Barnea, and also the city of Hebron. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question together as a group: Discuss how people first divided your community land among the major clans or families. Pause this audio here.

Joshua and Eleazar, the priest, who was the son of Aaron, along with heads of families in each of the tribes, are now going to divide the land between the nine and a half tribes that remain. Yahweh commanded Joshua to divide the land by throwing lots to see who gets which land. This means the leaders probably threw stones that were marked in some way to represent each of the tribes. They then put the stones into some form of jar, or even into a robe, and either tossed one out of the jar or drew one out of the robe. The Israelites considered this one of the ways that Yahweh revealed his will on a matter. This was a normal way to make decisions at the time.

Stop here and look together as a group at a picture of the stones that people used for throwing lots. Stop here and watch the video of people throwing lots, if available. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture seek to discover direction from God or their gods for big decisions? Pause this audio here.

You will remember that the Levites are one of the tribes of Israel. Yahweh did not give the Levites an inheritance in the land because Yahweh himself is their inheritance. The Levites did receive, however, some towns and pastureland for their flocks. Joseph's tribe split into two half tribes, Manasseh and Ephraim, who are Joseph's sons. Therefore Joshua split the land into 12 areas for the tribes of Israel. This included the tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim, but did not include the tribe of Levi. The Israelites obeyed what Yahweh had commanded Moses about dividing the land of Canaan.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Discuss how people in your culture become priests or religious leaders. Do they come from specific tribes, families, or clans? Discuss any inheritance or gifts that priests or religious leaders receive. Pause this audio here.

Now Joshua gives an example of how he distributed the land. The Israelites were still camped at Gilgal on the west side of the Jordan River when Caleb and some of the tribe of Judah approached Joshua. Some people from the tribe of Judah probably came with Caleb because Caleb was probably from the tribe of Judah. This more than likely took place before Joshua, Eleazar, and the leaders divided the land on the west side of the Jordan. Caleb and Joshua were 2 of the 12 explorers that Moses had sent to spy out the land of Canaan towards the beginning of the Israelites' journey out of Egypt. Caleb and Joshua were the only two who believed that Yahweh would give them the land. They are the only 2 of the 12 explorers who Yahweh had allowed to enter into the Promised Land.

Caleb reminds Joshua of Yahweh's words to Moses about Caleb after they came back from exploring the land. Caleb had brought back a good report and followed Yahweh wholeheartedly, while the other explorers made the Israelites' hearts melt in fear. Because of this, Yahweh had told Moses that wherever Caleb had set his feet in the Promised Land, that part of the land would be Caleb's. Now Caleb is coming to receive what Yahweh promised to him.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a promise that someone has given to you or to a person you know. How did the person keep the promise? What did you or the person who received the promise feel before and after you received the promise? Pause this audio here.

Caleb makes a contrast between the disobedient Israelites who Yahweh killed in the wilderness, and himself who Yahweh has kept alive for 45 years. Yahweh kept Caleb alive because Caleb obeyed Yahweh and did everything that Yahweh asked him to do. Caleb says that he is still as strong as he was then, and Caleb is just as ready to go into battle. This is good, because Moses had promised the area of Hebron to Caleb. The Anakites were very tall and powerful people, and they lived in walled cities in the area of Hebron. In fact, the town of

Hebron used to be called Kiriath Arba because a great man of the Anakites was called Arba. But Caleb trusts that with Yahweh's help, he can defeat the Anakites. Joshua had defeated the Anakites already, but apparently they have come back into the land, and Caleb must defeat them again.

Joshua then asks Yahweh to bless Caleb, and he gives Caleb and Caleb's descendants the area of Hebron as Caleb's inheritance. So Caleb and his descendants possessed the land of Hebron. After Caleb defeated the Anakites in this area, the land had a rest from war, and Joshua was able to distribute all of the land to each tribe.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 14:1–15 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 four scenes.

In the first scene: This is an introduction to the next section of the book of Joshua where he gives the land to each tribe. Joshua, Eleazar, and the leaders of the nine and a half tribes all divide the land west of the Jordan River, by lots, just as Yahweh commanded.

In the second scene: Caleb and the tribe of Judah come to Joshua at Gilgal. Caleb reminds Joshua of Yahweh's words to Moses 45 years earlier. Yahweh promised to give Caleb every place where Caleb's foot touched in the land because Caleb had followed Yahweh wholeheartedly.

In the third scene: Caleb asks Joshua for the land that Yahweh promised to Caleb. Joshua knows that the Anakites are still in the land and live in cities with fortified walls. However, Caleb trusts that Yahweh will help him drive them out of the land.

In the fourth scene: Joshua blesses Caleb and gives him the land of Hebron. Caleb and his descendants have owned Hebron ever since. Hebron used to be called Kiriath Arba after a great man of the Anakites. Now the land rests from war.

The characters in this passage are:

- Joshua, son of Nun
- Eleazar, the priest and son of Aaron
- Leaders of the nine and a half tribes
- Yahweh
- Moses
- Two and a half tribes on the east of the Jordan
- Levites
- Caleb
- People of Judah
- The rest of the Israelites
- And the Anakites

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

Note that the majority of the action takes place in Gilgal on the west side of the Jordan River, east of Jericho.

Stop here and if needed, look again at the map of the Promised Land. Note where Gilgal is. Pause this audio here.

The author begins the passage with a summary of how Joshua gives each tribe its portion of the land of Canaan. This is an introduction to the next section of the book of Joshua. Joshua already gave land to two and a half tribes on the western side of the Jordan. Now Joshua will give land to the nine and a half remaining tribes. We hear again that the Levites did not receive an inheritance from Yahweh because they were set apart for Yahweh to serve him. Yahweh himself was their inheritance. However, 12 tribes still received an inheritance of land. Joshua stops to explain why. Joseph, one of Jacob's, or Israel's, sons, had two sons called Manasseh and Ephraim. These two sons became the heads of two tribes of Israel. This is because Joseph's tribe split between his two sons Manasseh and Ephraim to become two tribes. The remaining scenes begin the detailed accounts of how Joshua divided the land among the tribes by lots.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you start a story or a conversation in which you are going to give a lot of detailed information? Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss how you will describe the idea of making decisions by throwing lots, or throwing stones. Pause this audio here.

In scene two, Caleb, son of Jephunneh from the clan of the Kenizzites, asks for the inheritance that Yahweh promised to him 45 years before. We hear Caleb's father's name and family history so that we know that this is the Caleb we have heard about before. Caleb is recalling the story of when the Israelites were at Kadesh Barnea. Caleb reminds Joshua about the land inheritance that Yahweh promised Caleb for remaining wholeheartedly faithful to Yahweh. Caleb says that the other Israelites who went to explore the land with him made the hearts of the Israelites melt, or made the Israelites afraid. Caleb, however, followed Yahweh wholeheartedly, which means that he enthusiastically obeyed and trusted Yahweh. So Yahweh promised Caleb the land where Caleb's feet had walked, which means that he promised Caleb the area that Caleb explored in Canaan.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you share a story within a story? How do you make sure that it is easy to tell the difference between what is happening at the moment, and what was happening many years ago? Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss the following: Caleb followed Yahweh wholeheartedly. He obeyed and trusted Yahweh in everything. The other Israelites that went into Canaan with Caleb many years ago did not. How will you talk about the contrast that Caleb makes between the other explorers who made the Israelites' hearts melt, and himself who followed Yahweh? Pause this audio here.

In scene three Caleb asks for the inheritance Yahweh promised to him. Caleb says, "Give me my inheritance." Caleb asks Joshua politely. The land of Caleb's inheritance is where the Anakites, who are giants, live. Caleb is certain that he is strong enough to fight a war, and strong enough to go out and come in. This means that Caleb is strong enough to do any ordinary tasks and to take any journey. Caleb is more certain that Yahweh will keep his promise and help Caleb drive out the Anakites.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will talk about having strength to fight a war and to do daily necessary tasks. Pause this audio here.

In the fourth scene Joshua blesses Caleb and gives Caleb the area of Hebron. When someone blessed someone else, they did more than just wish someone good luck or fortune. They empowered someone with the strength and power to complete a task.

Stop here and, if appropriate, take time to bless one another and your community in Yahweh's name. Notice what words you use, and what your heart's desire is for the person you bless. Pause this audio here.

Caleb and his descendants possessed the land of Hebron and have owned it ever since. This is a way to say that it was a permanent event, and that it remained true at least until the time that this book was written. Before Caleb took the land, it was called Kiriath Arba after a great man of the Anakites. Now the land rests from war, which means that the people living there are at peace and are not fighting. This is a way to introduce the next section of Joshua. In the next section, we will see how Joshua divides the land because the land is at peace now.

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 Joshua 14:1–15 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:

- Joshua, son of Nun
- Eleazar, the priest and son of Aaron
- Leaders of the nine and a half tribes
- Yahweh
- Moses
- Two and a half tribes on the east of the Jordan
- Levites
- Caleb
- People of Judah
- The rest of the Israelites
- And the Anakites

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.

Joshua, Eleazar, and the leaders of the nine and a half tribes all divide the land west of the Jordan River by lots, just as Yahweh commanded. Moses had already given the land east of the Jordan River to two and a half tribes of Israel. The Levites did not get an inheritance of land.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Levites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I know I am supposed to feel blessed that Yahweh is my inheritance. But some land would be nice," or
- "Yahweh is all we need, and I am excited to serve him and know him."

Joseph's sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, became two of the tribes of Israel, and they gave some of the Levites some towns and pasture land for their flocks.

Caleb and the tribe of Judah come to Joshua at Gilgal.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I wonder what all of the people of Judah are doing here," or
- "I really hope this is not a revolt of some kind," or
- "That's my good friend Caleb. I hope I can help him."

Caleb reminds Joshua of Yahweh's words to Moses 45 years earlier. When Joshua and Caleb, along with 10 other explorers, went into the Promised Land, Caleb brought back a good report and remained faithful to Yahweh. The rest of the spies put fear into the hearts of the Israelites. Yahweh promised to give Caleb every place where his foot touched in the land, because Caleb had followed Yahweh wholeheartedly.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Caleb, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I cannot believe it has been so long, but I know Yahweh will keep his promise," or
- "Joshua and I were the only ones who trusted in Yahweh and have continued to do so. I am ready to receive my inheritance."

Caleb recognizes that Yahweh has kept him alive for 45 years while the Israelites wandered in the desert. Now Caleb is 85 years old and is still as strong and ready for battle as he was when he was 40.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I think Caleb might be over-exaggerating his strength and stamina," or
- "I am amazed that Caleb has remembered all of those details for so long," or
- "Yes, Caleb has been so faithful to Yahweh, and it is time for him to receive his inheritance."

Caleb asks Joshua for the land that Yahweh promised to him. Joshua knows that the Anakites were in the land in cities with fortified walls. However, Caleb trusts that Yahweh will help him drive them out of the land.

Joshua blesses Caleb and gives him the land of Hebron.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Caleb, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I am so thankful to Yahweh for his faithfulness!" or
- "I knew Yahweh would help us defeat the people in this land. He is so good to us!" or
- "What a beautiful land Yahweh has given us. I am full of joy over receiving this inheritance Yahweh has given me."

Caleb and his descendants have owned Hebron ever since. Hebron used to be called Kiriath Arba after a great man of the Anakites. Now the land rests from war.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 14:1-15 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Joshua, Eleazar the **priest**, and the leaders of the tribal **clans** of **Israel** divide the land of **Canaan** into the areas received by the **Israelites** as an **inheritance**. Canaan is the land that Yahweh promised to the descendants of Abraham and Jacob, or Israel. Israelites are the descendants of Jacob. Sometimes they are simply referred to as "Israel" when talking about the people of God. The people of Israel were divided into 12 tribes, and each tribe had large family groups or clans in them. Here, clans simply means large family groups. Use the same words for clans, priest, Israel, Canaan, Israelites, and inheritance that you have used in previous passages. For more information on priest, Israel, Canaan, and Israelites refer to the Master Glossary.

Joshua divided this land, west of the Jordan River, by lots and gave it to the nine and a half tribes, just as **Yahweh** commanded. Moses had already given the land east of the **Jordan River** to two and a half tribes of Israel. Yahweh is the personal and proper name of God. The Jordan River (also called the Jordan), runs through the land of Israel from the north to the south. Use the same words for Yahweh and Jordan River that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh and the Jordan River, refer to the Master Glossary.

The **Levites** did not get an inheritance of land, but they received **cities** in which to live and pastureland for their **livestock**. The cities were large enough to have walls around them. The livestock could have included cattle, goats, and sheep. Use the same word for Levites, livestock, and for cities that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Levites, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for the **pastureland** that the Levites' animals could use to live on and eat on. This would be land that is good for cattle, sheep, and goats to live in and eat the plants in. Pause this audio here.

Caleb and the tribe of Judah come to Joshua at Gilgal. Caleb reminds Joshua of Yahweh's words to Moses, the man of **God**, 45 years earlier. When Joshua and Caleb, along with 10 other explorers, went into the Promised Land, Caleb brought back a good report and remained faithful to Yahweh, his God. God is the one true creator God. Use the same general word for God that you have used in previous passages. For more information on God, refer to the Master Glossary.

The rest of the explorers made the Israelites' hearts melt, or made them afraid. Yahweh promised to give Caleb every place where he explored in the land because Caleb had followed Yahweh wholeheartedly. Use the same words or phrases for "making someone's heart melt," or making them afraid, as you have used in previous passages.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will talk about someone who follows Yahweh **wholeheartedly**. Think of a person who always obeys Yahweh and shows his or her love for Yahweh. How do you describe them? What words or phrases will you use for Caleb who follows Yahweh wholeheartedly? Pause this audio here.

Caleb recognizes that Yahweh has kept him alive for 45 years while the Israelites wandered in the desert, or **wilderness**. The desert, or wilderness, is a lonely barren place without water and very few animals. Use the same word for wilderness that you have in previous passages. For more information on wilderness, refer to the Master Glossary.

Now Caleb is 85 years old and is still as strong and ready for battle as he was when he was 40. Caleb asks Joshua for the land that Yahweh promised to him. Joshua knows that the Anakites were in the land with fortified walls. However, Caleb trusts that Yahweh will help him drive them out of the land.

Joshua **blessed** Caleb and gave him the land of Hebron. To bless someone is to pray that Yahweh will enable that person to do good things, or that God will do good things for them. Use the same word for bless that you have used in previous passages. For more information on bless, refer to the Master Glossary.

Caleb and his descendants have possessed Hebron as an inheritance ever since. Hebron used to be called Kiriath Arba after a great man of the Anakites. Now the land rests from war, which means that the people are calm and not fighting.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will talk about the land being **calm**, or **at peace**.

*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.

Joshua 14:1–15**Audio Content**

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Joshua 15:1–12

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 15:1–12 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 15:1–12 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 Joshua 15:1–12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Joshua has just blessed Caleb, from the tribe of Judah, and given him the inheritance Yahweh had promised him in Canaan. Now, the passage is defining the full borders of the land that Joshua gave to the tribe of Judah as their inheritance in the Promised Land.

Stop here and look at the two maps of Canaan. First look at the map that shows all of the land of each of the tribes of Israel. Then look at the map specifically for the tribe of Judah. Pause this audio here.

Judah was not the oldest son of Jacob, who is also called Israel. However, Judah's father Jacob gave Judah a special blessing while they were still in Egypt. Jacob blessed Judah with leadership. It is clear that Judah is the most important tribe, because Judah received the first lot when Joshua and the leaders of Israel were throwing lots for the tribal territories. Judah's inheritance is the largest land area of all of the tribes in Canaan. Judah's territory extended down to Edom and the Wilderness of Zin in the south.

This passage defines the boundaries of Judah's territories. We do not know some of the areas today. The Salt Sea, or the Dead Sea, is the eastern boundary. The southern tip of the Dead Sea is the beginning of the southern border. It slopes westward down towards Kadesh Barnea and then back up towards the brook of Egypt all the way to the Mediterranean Sea in the west. The northern boundary crossed from the northern part of the Dead Sea westward across several cities and towns, and passed south of Jerusalem, and over to the Mediterranean Sea in the west. The northern boundary shared a border with both of the tribes of Benjamin and Dan. These are the boundaries around the clans of the tribe of Judah.

Stop here and look at the map of the territory of Judah. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture define their property boundaries? How do they define tribal boundaries?

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 15:1–12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

This passage has five scenes.

In the first scene: Judah is the first to receive the distribution of land according to their tribal clans as far south as Edom and the wilderness of Zin.

In the second scene: The southern point of the Dead Sea, down the pass of the scorpion to Kadesh Barnea, is the southern boundary of Judah. Then the border curves back up towards the brook, or riverbed, of Egypt and to the Mediterranean Sea.

In the third scene: The eastern border is the Dead Sea going north to the mouth, or end, of the Jordan River.

In the fourth scene: The northern border goes from the northernmost part of the Dead Sea and up to the ridge overlooking the Jordan River Valley. From there it went north and west through the hill country, including just south of Jerusalem, and across several cities westward to the Mediterranean Sea.

In the fifth scene: The western boundary is the Mediterranean Sea. These are all the boundaries of the people of the tribe of Judah.

The characters in this passage are:

- The clans, or large family groups, of the tribe of Judah

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

This passage begins by introducing the first distribution that Joshua gave to the tribe of Judah. We hear a lot of details about the boundaries of Judah. Bodies of water mark the western and eastern borders, but the storyteller gives us many places to show us where the southern and northern borders of Judah are.

Stop here and follow along with the map of the boundaries of the tribe of Judah as you listen to the passage again. Think about the way you talk about your territory boundaries. As you draw the lines of the boundaries on this map, how will you talk about the boundary lines, especially as they go up a mountain, go along a slope, or descend a mountain? Pause this audio here.

The description starts with the southern border and goes from east to west. Next we hear about the eastern border, and then the northern border, going from east to west again. Finally we hear about the western border. We do not know many of the places along the southern and northern borders today. The southern border starts at the Dead Sea, which is a sea filled with salt, and travels southwest along the Scorpion Pass, which was probably a pathway through mountains or hills. We do not know where this area is today. However, the southern border continues through the wilderness of Zin and over to Kadesh Barnea as its southernmost point. Then it curves northwest up towards the wadi, or dry riverbed, of Egypt and up to the Mediterranean Sea.

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

The eastern boundary of Judah is the Dead Sea itself, all the way to the mouth of the Jordan River. The mouth of the Jordan River, on the eastern and northern border of Judah, means the place where the river flows into a larger body of water. It is an opening where the river and large lake connect. This is the place where the Jordan River connects with the Dead Sea, which is a large lake about 85 kilometers long and 10 kilometers wide.

The northern boundary is much more complicated as it turns between towns and valleys, or low areas of land between mountains. Often it runs through an area with water or a spring, where water naturally flows out of the ground. Of most importance to note is that the boundary goes just south on the slope, or side of the mountain. Later, someone probably added the statement that this slope is just south of the area that becomes the city of Jerusalem. Because Jerusalem became an important city for the Israelites, it was good for the audience to connect this area with Jerusalem, and to understand that Jerusalem was just outside the territory of Judah.

The northern border then climbs up, or goes up to the top of, the mountain that is next to the valley of Hinnom, and to the springs of water at the top of the mountain. The boundaries often go along the slope, or side of a valley or mountain.

The passage ends with the summary statement that these are the boundaries of the land of the families or clans of Judah.

Stop here and take turns describing the area of your tribe or clan to one another. Pay attention to the way you tell about the borders. Where do you start? Which direction do you go? Which areas of land or cities do you describe? 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 Joshua 15:1–12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has five scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- The clans, or large family groups, of the tribe of Judah

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 distribution of land for the tribe of Judah, according to its clans, extended down to the territory of Edom, to the wilderness of Zin in the far south.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person representing the clans of Judah, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Wow we get a lot of land to the south!" or
- "Proud! We are first and the most important!" or
- "I am overwhelmed with gratitude that we get the honor of being the first tribe to receive our inheritance."

Their southern boundary started from the southern end of the Dead Sea, crossed south of Scorpion Pass, continued on to Zin, and went over to the south of Kadesh Barnea. Then it ran past Hezron up to Addar and curved around to Karka. It then passed along to Azmon and joined the Wadi, or dry riverbed, of Egypt, ending at the Mediterranean Sea. This is their southern boundary.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the tribes of Judah, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "What about people to the south of us? Are they our enemy? Will we always be fighting?" or
- "At least we have water on both sides of us."

The eastern boundary is the Dead Sea as far as the mouth of the Jordan. The northern boundary started from the bay of the sea at the mouth of the Jordan, went up to Beth Hoglah, and continued north of Beth Arabah to the Stone of Bohan, who is the son of Reuben. The boundary then went up to Debir from the Valley of Achor and turned north to Gilgal, which faces the mountain Pass of Adummim south of the valley. The boundary continued along to the waters, or well, of En Shemesh and came out at En Rogel. Then it went up the Valley of Ben Hinnom along the southern slope of the Jebusite city, which is Jerusalem. From there it climbed to the top of the hill west of the Hinnom Valley at the northern end of the Valley of Rephaim. From the hilltop, the boundary headed toward the spring of the waters of Nephtoah, came out at the towns of Mount Ephron and went down toward Baalah, which is also called Kiriath Jearim. Then it curved westward from Baalah to Mount Seir, went along the northern slope of Mount Jearim, which is also called Kesalon, and continued down to Beth Shemesh and crossed to Timnah. It went to the northern slope of Ekron, turned toward Shikkeron, passed along to Mount Baalah and reached Jabneel. The boundary ended at the Mediterranean Sea. The western boundary is the coastline of the Mediterranean Sea.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the tribes of Judah, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "This seems like a lot of land for us. I am grateful that Yahweh has entrusted so much to us," or
- "Oh no! The northern borders are complicated!" or
- "How will we remember and mark off all of this northern territory especially?"

These are the boundaries around the people of Judah by their clans.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 15:1–12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

The distribution for the tribe of **Judah**, according to its **clans**, or **large family groups**, extended down to the territory of Edom, to the **wilderness**, or desert, of Zin in the far south. Judah was one of the sons of Jacob. The name Judah also refers to the land Joshua gave to Judah's descendants in this passage. Use the same word for Judah, wilderness, and clans that you have used in previous passages.

Judah's southern boundary started from the bay at the southern end of the **Dead Sea**, crossed south of Scorpion Pass, continued on to the wilderness of Zin, and went over to the south of Kadesh Barnea. The Dead Sea is a sea full of salt and so nothing is able to live in the sea. It is often also called the Great Salt Sea.

Then the boundary went past Hezron up to Addar and curved around to Karka. It then passed along to Azmon and joined the Wadi, a dry riverbed or dry valley, of Egypt, ending at the Mediterranean Sea. This is their southern boundary. Egypt was the land that the Israelites left on their journey to the Promised Land. The Mediterranean Sea is the large body of water to the west of Israel.

Stop here and look at the picture of a wadi, or dry river valley, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **wadi** or dry river valley. Remember that a wadi or dry riverbed is dry during the time of year that it is not raining. It is usually full of water during the time of year that it rains regularly. 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 eastern boundary is the Dead Sea as far as the mouth of the **Jordan River**. The Jordan River runs north and south through Israel. 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.

The northern boundary started from the bay of the sea at the mouth of the Jordan, went up to Beth Hoglah, and continued north of Beth Arabah to the Stone of Bohan, son of Reuben. The boundary then went up to Debir from the Valley of Achor and turned north to Gilgal, which faces the mountain Pass of Adummim south of the valley. It continued along to the waters, or the well of En Shemesh, and came out at En Rogel. Remember that a well is a source of water from a hole deep in the ground.

Then the boundary ran up the Valley of Ben Hinnom along the southern slope of the Jebusite city, that is, **Jerusalem**. Jerusalem became the capital of Israel and was the central site of worship for the Jews, and the temple of Yahweh was there. Use the same word for Jerusalem, valley, slopes, and mountain pass that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Jerusalem, refer to the Master Glossary.

From there the boundary climbed, or went up, to the top of the hill west of the Hinnom Valley at the northern end of the Valley of Rephaim. From the hilltop the boundary headed toward the spring of the waters of Nephtoah, came out at the towns of Mount Ephron, and went down toward Baalah, which is also called Kiriath Jearim. Then it curved westward from Baalah to Mount Seir, ran along the northern slope of Mount Jearim, which is also called Kesalon, continued down to Beth Shemesh, and crossed to Timnah. It went to the northern slope of Ekron, turned toward Shikkeron, passed along to Mount Baalah, and reached Jabneel. The boundary ended at the sea.

The western boundary is the coastline of the Mediterranean Sea.

Stop here and review how you will talk about directions such as north, south, east, and west. Use the same terms for these directions as you have used in previous passages. Pause this audio here.

These are the boundaries around the tribe of Judah by their clans, or family groups.

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.

Joshua 15:1–12**Audio Content**

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Joshua 15:13–19

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 15:13–19 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 15:13–19 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 Joshua 15:13–19 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Joshua brought the Israelites to the land of Canaan and has started to divide the land by lots, as Yahweh commanded. The first lot fell to the tribe of Judah. Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, asked for the land that Yahweh promised to him through Moses. Joshua gave Caleb the land as Yahweh had commanded Moses to do. This land was the area around Hebron, which was formerly known as Kiriath Arba, after the greatest man of the Anakites. Arba was the father of Anak who was the ancestor to the Anakites, or the Anakim people. Caleb then drove out or destroyed the three clans, or large family groups, of Anak. The clans of Anak were the clan of Sheshai, the clan of Ahiman, and the clan of Talmi. This story finishes the section in which Joshua gives land to the tribe of Judah. It shows that the people in the tribe of Judah drove out the people who lived in their area.

Stop here and look together at a map of Hebron and Debir and the wilderness of Negev. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Tell a story about one group of people who live in a land that once belonged to someone else. How do you talk about a group driving out another group? Pause this audio here.

Caleb then continues to drive out the people who lived in the area of Debir, which is approximately 20 kilometers south of Hebron. Joshua had at one time already conquered Debir, but it seems as though the people have moved back into the area at this time. Caleb then offers to give his daughter as a wife to the man in his army who conquers the area around Debir.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people use marriage as a reward in your culture? Discuss different ways that families find future husbands or wives for their children. Pause this audio here.

Othniel, who is Caleb's nephew, or the son of Caleb's brother Kenaz, conquered the land. Caleb gave Caleb's daughter, who would be Othniel's cousin, as a bride to Othniel. Most translations say that when Aksah, Caleb's daughter, came to Othniel as his wife, Aksah asked Othniel to ask her father Caleb to give them land. However, that contradicts the rest of the story, so some translations say that Othniel asked his new wife Aksah to ask her father to give them some land. In either case, Aksah goes to Caleb on a donkey and asks him for a blessing, or a gift.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell about the kinds of gifts you give to your children on their wedding day. Pause this audio here.

Caleb's gift of land to Othniel and his daughter Aksah is typical of customs in the ancient Near East. Very often kings or princes would offer gifts of land to military officers as a reward for services. This was also a way for the kings to get men to farm land that no one had used yet to produce crops.

Caleb offered land and marriage to the person who conquered the Anakim people because he knew it was important to completely destroy the Anakim. Land and marriage were very important to people, so the soldiers in Caleb's army would have tried hard to defeat the Anakim so that they could receive this reward. Since the land Caleb gave is quite dry, Aksah's request for water sources is normal and reasonable. Aksah wants to make sure that she and Othniel are able to live well in the land Caleb gave to them. It is also normal for Caleb to give his daughter wedding gifts that would help them be successful.

Stop here and discuss this question together as a group: Talk about what happens when someone has a lot of land in your culture. Why would someone want a lot of land? If you have a lot of land, what kinds of things would you want in the land to make it most useful to you?

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 15:13–19 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: Joshua gives Caleb the land of Hebron among the tribe of Judah's portion, as Yahweh commanded. Caleb drives out three clans, or large family groups, of the Anakites from the land.

In the second scene: Caleb marches against the people living in Debir. Caleb offers his daughter in marriage to whomever in his army attacks and captures this portion of land. Caleb's nephew, Othniel, captures the land. Caleb's daughter, Aksah, becomes Othniel's wife.

In the third scene: Aksah asks Caleb for a plot of land. When Aksah gets off her donkey, Caleb asks her what is wrong, or what she wants. Aksah asks for a gift of springs of water in addition to the land in the Negev wilderness. Caleb gives Aksah and Othniel the upper and lower springs.

The characters in this passage are:

- Joshua
- Yahweh
- Caleb
- Othniel
- Aksah
- The Anakite clans who live near Hebron: Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai
- And the people who live near Debir

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

Note that this story happens in three different areas. Two of these areas are sometimes referred to by different names. The Anakites called Hebron, Kiriath Arba, after the great Anakite ancestor. This name means "the house of four." The Anakites also called Debir, Kiriath Sepher, which means "house of scribes." The Negev is an area of dry wilderness south of Hebron and Debir.

Stop here and look at a photo of the wilderness. Pause this audio here.

In the first scene, many translations say that Yahweh commanded Joshua to give Caleb the land of Hebron. However, it is more likely that Yahweh commanded Moses, and then Moses told Joshua since Joshua took over Moses' position as leader. Caleb now drives out the three clans, or large family groups, of Anak who were living in the land around Hebron. This means that Caleb and his army force the Anakites to leave Hebron so that Caleb can take possession of the land.

In the second scene, Caleb marches against, or attacks, the people in Debir in order to defeat them. Caleb offers his daughter as a wife to whomever attacks and defeats the people who live in Debir. Kenaz is Caleb's younger brother. Othniel is Kenaz's son.

Stop here and discuss as a group how people in your culture identify people who are related to you. What would you call your brother's son? Pause this audio here.

In the third scene, some translations say that when Aksah comes to Othniel, Aksah asks Othniel a question. Another way of saying this would be that "on their wedding day" Aksah asks Othniel a question. Most translations say that Aksah persuades Othniel to ask Caleb for a field. However, in the next part of this scene, it is Aksah who asks Caleb for a wedding gift, or a "blessing." So again, it is possible to translate that Othniel persuades Aksah to ask Caleb, or that Othniel does ask for the field, and Aksah asks for the springs of water. We are not sure which springs of water Aksah asks for. Aksah gets off of her donkey as a sign of respect to her father. Caleb asks her, "What do you want" or "What would you like as a wedding present?" Caleb asks Aksah politely why she has come and what he can do for her.

Stop here and think about what happens when someone comes to you to ask you for something. How do you greet them? How will you translate how Caleb greets Aksah when she gets off her donkey? Pause this audio here.

Aksah asks for a blessing, or a gift, of springs of water because the land is very dry. Caleb gives her the upper and lower springs. These springs may have been very near the plot of land Caleb originally gave to 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 Joshua 15:13–19 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:

- Joshua
- Yahweh
- Caleb
- Othniel
- Aksah
- The Anakite clans who live near Hebron—Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai
- And the people who live near Debir

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.

Joshua gives Caleb the land of Hebron among the tribe of Judah's portion, as Yahweh commanded. Caleb drives out three clans of the Anakites from the land.

Caleb marches against the people living in Debir.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Caleb, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I am tired of fighting. I may try to encourage someone else to do it," or
- "How did these people get back here? I thought we had already driven them out," or
- "I know Yahweh is faithful and will give us this land."

Caleb offers his daughter in marriage to whomever in his army attacks and captures this segment of land. Caleb's nephew, Othniel, captures the land. Caleb's daughter, Aksah, becomes Othniel's wife.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Aksah, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I feel like I have no choice in this matter," or
- "I am glad that at least my husband is strong," or
- "I know that my father was right in doing this, but I am sad that I had no choice."

Ask the person playing Othniel, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I clearly deserve the most here," or
- "I hope that I am a suitable husband for Aksah," or
- "This must be very important for Caleb to give his daughter away."

Aksah asks Othniel to ask Caleb for a plot of land. When Aksah gets off her donkey, Caleb asks her what is wrong, or what she wants. Aksah asks for a gift of springs of water in addition to the land in the Negev wilderness. Caleb gives Aksah and Othniel the upper and lower springs.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 15:13–19 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Joshua gives Caleb the land of Hebron among the tribe of Judah's portion of land, as **Yahweh** commanded. Judah, in this case, means the descendants of Jacob's son Judah. Use the same words you have used for Judah and Yahweh before. For more information about Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

Caleb **drives out** three clans of the Anakites from the land around Hebron. Use the same words or phrases for "driving out people" that you have used in previous passages.

Caleb then marches against the people living in Debir. Caleb offers his daughter in marriage to whomever in his army attacks and captures this portion of land. Caleb's nephew, Othniel, captures the land. Caleb's daughter, Aksah, becomes Othniel's wife. Aksah persuades Othniel to ask Caleb for a plot of land. When Aksah gets off her **donkey**, Caleb asks her what is wrong, or what she wants. Aksah asks for a **blessing**, or a gift of springs of water in addition to the land in the Negev **wilderness**. Caleb gives Aksah and Othniel the upper and lower **springs**. A donkey is an animal that is strong enough to carry loads of goods or people. It is smaller than a horse and is a peaceful animal. A blessing is a way to give good things to someone, or to ask God to give them good things. A spring is where water naturally comes out of the ground. Use the same words for donkey, blessing, wilderness, and spring as you have used in previous passages. For more information on donkey, bless, and wilderness, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here and look at the photo of the donkey 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.

Joshua 15:13–19

Audio Content

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Joshua 15:20–32

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 15:20–32 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 15:20–32 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

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

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

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 15:20–32 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Joshua has begun to divide the land of Canaan according to lots. Yahweh commanded Joshua to divide the land in this way. The first lot fell to the tribe of Judah. This is the land that becomes known as Judah, and later as Judea. The previous passages have explained the portion of land that Yahweh gave to Caleb, as well as the boundaries of Judah's territory. The following passages list the cities in Judah by area. This passage lists the cities in the southern part of Judah's territory. The next passages will list the cities in the hills next to the coast, then the mountains, and then the wilderness. These cities are larger towns that often have walls around them for protection.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How does your culture distinguish between districts, or areas of land, where people live? Pause this audio here.

The listing of the names of each of these cities shows that this is a true story and that the tribes of Israel really did receive land from Yahweh.

This passage describes the cities that were farthest south in Judah's territory. They are on the border of Edom in the Negev wilderness. The central town is around Beersheba. Madmannah and Hermah are on the northern border of this area. In the west the cities extend as far as Shilhim. Today it is not possible to identify where most of the cities were located.

Stop here and look at a map of Judah and identify the southern region together as a group. Pause this audio here.

There are 29 cities in all, though the actual list is approximately 35 cities. We do not know why the numbers are different. The 29 cities refers to the larger cities and there would have been some villages outside of those cities. Villages are smaller than cities in that they may only have a few houses and places for animals. Villages do not usually have a wall around them, which means that the people in villages often relied on the cities for protection. The rulers or kings of large cities usually ruled over the villages around their city.

Stop here and discuss this question together as a group: Name the different villages, cities, towns, districts, and regions, as well as rivers and valleys that are found in the southern part of your community.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 15:20–32 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

This passage has one scene.

In the first scene: The passage is a list of the main cities in the southern district or region of Judah.

The characters in this passage are:

- The tribe of Judah

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

The beginning of this passage is most likely an introduction to this passage and is talking about the areas of land Yahweh gave to the clans or the large family groups of the tribe of Judah. The setting of this passage is the southern cities of the tribes of Judah in the area of the Negev desert, near the border of the land of Edom.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Identify cities in your community that have borrowed or translated names from other languages or people groups. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Discuss how you will remember the city names in this passage. How will you decide to translate each of these names? Pause this audio here.

Notice that the passage lists more than 29 cities, but in the conclusion the storyteller tells us that there are 29 cities with their surrounding villages in total.

Stop here and remember how you listed the cities in your community in step two. What order did you put your cities in? What words or phrases did you use as you listed these cities? Pay attention to how you finished listing the southern cities and areas in your own community. How will you conclude the list of cities in this passage? Pause this audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it. You could try to use rocks or sticks to lay out on the ground and try to list the names of each city.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 15:20–32 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:

- The tribe of Judah

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 is the inheritance for the tribe of Judah by its clans, or large family groups. The passage names 29 of the cities in the southern part of the land of Judah.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the people of the tribe of Judah, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "We have so much land, and so many good cities!" or
- "I cannot believe it is finally time to take the land that Yahweh promised to our ancestors,"
or
- "I am excited to have my own piece of land to work."

Talk about how you feel as you realize that the tribe of Judah received all of these cities.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 15:20–32 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

This passage is the **inheritance** of land Yahweh gave to the tribe of Judah according to its **clans**, or large family groups. Use the same word for inheritance and clans that you have used in previous passages.

The passage is the distribution of land that Yahweh gave to the tribe of **Judah** on the border with the land of Edom. The storyteller tells us that there are 29 southern **cities**. For each city, there are probably surrounding **villages** that Yahweh gave to the tribe of Judah also. However, the list includes more than 29 names. We do not know why there are more than 29 names of cities, but you should translate the number as it is. Cities are larger towns that have walls around them for protection. Villages are smaller than cities and often rely on the cities for protection. Use the same words for Judah, cities, and villages that you have used in previous passages.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will translate the names of the cities in this passage. Will you pronounce them in a way that sounds natural in your language?

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.

Joshua 15:20–32**Audio Content**

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Joshua 15:33–47

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 15:33–47 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 15:33–47 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 Joshua 15:33–47 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This passage continues the list of cities or towns that are part of the territory Joshua gave to Judah. This area is in the western foothills, or low hills, as well as the western coastal region. These are four of the districts of Judah. The previous passage listed cities in the first district.

The first of these four districts includes 15 cities and surrounding villages. The second includes 16 cities and surrounding villages. The third district includes 9 cities and surrounding villages.

The fourth district is in the coastal area of the Philistines and includes Ekron and surrounding villages. The passage also explains the western border of Judah. These boundaries go as far as the Wadi of Egypt all the way to the Mediterranean Sea. A wadi is a dry river bed in the warm months, and is filled with water in the rainy seasons.

Stop here and look as a group at the map of the western foothills and coastal regions of Judah. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look together at a picture of a wadi, or dry river bed.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 15:33–47 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 four scenes.

In the first scene: Joshua gives the tribe of Judah four more districts in the western foothills of Canaan. The first of these four districts contains 14 cities and their villages.

In the second scene: The second of these districts contains 16 cities and their villages.

In the third scene: The third of these districts contains nine cities and their villages.

In the fourth scene: The fourth of these districts contains the city of Ekron, west of Ekron, Ashdod, and Gaza, and all of their surrounding villages. These went as far as the dry river valley of Egypt and west to the Mediterranean Sea.

The characters in this passage are:

- The people of the tribe of Judah

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

Notice that three of the four districts are within the western foothills of Canaan.

The last district mentioned here is in the western coastal area of the Philistines. The main borders mentioned are the Wadi, or dry river valley, of Egypt, and the Mediterranean Sea. Notice that in this last district, Joshua names the cities and mentions that each has its towns and villages. Towns are smaller than cities, and villages are smaller than towns.

Stop here and, if needed, look again at the map of the western foothills and coastal area of the land of Judah. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and together as a group draw a map of one of the districts, villages, or areas where you live. Take turns describing the areas to one another. Notice what you call the biggest towns, the medium towns, and the smallest towns. 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 Joshua 15:33–47 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:

- The people of the tribe of Judah

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.

Joshua gives the tribe of Judah four districts in the western foothills of Canaan. The first of these four contains 14 cities and their villages. The second district contains 16 cities and their villages. The third district contains nine cities and their villages. The fourth district Joshua gave to the tribe of Judah in the western coastal region contains Ekron, areas west of Ekron, Ashdod, and Gaza, and all of their surrounding towns and villages. These went as far as the dry river valley of Egypt and west to the Mediterranean Sea.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the tribes of Judah, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "This is a lot of land to conquer. Yahweh gives us strength!" or
- "I am excited that we get some of the sea. It is beautiful," or
- "We must truly be blessed for Yahweh to give us all of this," or
- "Now I know how faithful Yahweh truly is."

*Filling the Gaps**Filling the Gaps*

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 15:33–47 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Joshua gives the tribe of Judah four districts in the western **foothills** of Canaan. The foothills are low hills at the bottom of a mountain range. Use the same word for foothills that you have used in previous passages.

The first of these four districts contains 14 **cities** and their **settlements**. The second district Joshua gave to the tribe of Judah in the western foothills contains 16 cities and their settlements. The third district Joshua gave to the tribe of Judah in the western foothills contains nine cities and their settlements. Cities are larger than villages or settlements and are usually surrounded by walls for protection. Settlements are the smallest groups

of people and rely on the cities for protection. Use the same word for cities and settlements that you have used in previous passages.

The fourth district Joshua gives to the tribe of Judah in the western coastal regions contains the city of Ekron and its villages and settlements. It also contains the areas west of Ekron, the city of Ashdod, and the city of Gaza, and all of their surrounding villages and settlements. Villages are groups of people larger than a settlement and smaller than a city. Use the same word for villages that you have used in previous passages.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will call the three different sizes of places: **cities**, **villages**, and **settlements**. Pause this audio here.

These went as far as the Wadi, or dry river valley, of Egypt, and west to the Mediterranean Sea. The **wadi** is a dry river valley in the hot and dry seasons, and full of water in the rainy season. Translate wadi, or dry river valley, in the same way 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.

Joshua 15:33-47

Audio Content

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Joshua 15:48–63

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 15:48–63 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 15:48–63 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 Joshua 15:48–63 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This passage continues the list of cities, towns, and villages in part of the territory Joshua gave to the tribe of Judah. The previous two passages listed five districts. This passage lists five districts in the hill country, and one district in the wilderness.

Stop here and look at a map of the land of Judah. Look for the hill country and wilderness on the map. You may want to continue looking at this map as you listen to Setting the Stage, and follow along on the map. Pause this audio here.

The cities in the hill country are located in an area of low hills which lie in a north-to-south, narrow area of hills in between the low land near the coast on the west and the wilderness on the east. These hills slope down to the east approximately 900 meters from the top of the hills to the wilderness below, over approximately 16 kilometers.

Stop here and look at a picture of the hill country. Pause this audio here.

The first of the five districts listed here contains 11 cities and their villages. Remember that cities are usually larger towns that have walls around them for protection. Villages are small settlements that rely on the cities for protection. In this district, Joshua gives another name for Debir, which is called Kiriath Sannah.

The second of the five districts in the hill country includes nine cities and their villages. One of these cities is Hebron, which Caleb captured.

The third of these five districts in the hill country includes 10 cities and their villages. This area is believed to be southeast of Hebron.

The fourth of these five districts includes six cities and their villages. This district is believed to be north of Hebron.

And the fifth district includes two cities and their villages. This district is near the northern border of Judah, next to the border of the tribe of Benjamin.

This passage lists one district in the wilderness, or area where very little grows and there is very little water. This district is on the eastern slopes, or eastern side of the hill country, and goes down the hill into the Jordan valley. This district lists six cities and their villages.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Name and list different towns or villages in your districts, or regions, where your language is spoken. Pause this audio here.

But Judah could not completely destroy the Jebusite people that lived in Jerusalem. So from then until the time this was written, the Jebusites and the people from the tribe of Judah lived together in Jerusalem, even though Jerusalem was finally a part of the tribe of Benjamin's territory.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture respond to new people who try to live in your land? Discuss how your people in your culture originally got the land where you live.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 15:48–63 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: Joshua gives the tribe of Judah five more districts in the hill country. The first of these districts has 11 cities and their villages.

In the second scene: The second of these districts in the hill country has nine cities and their villages.

In the third scene: The third of these districts in the hill country has 10 cities and their villages.

In the fourth scene: The fourth of these districts in the hill country has six cities and their villages.

In the fifth scene: The fifth of these districts in the hill country has two cities and their villages.

In the sixth scene: Joshua gives Judah one district in the wilderness, on the eastern side of the hill country. This district has six cities and their villages.

In the seventh scene: In conclusion, we hear that the tribe of Judah could not drive out the Jebusites from Jerusalem. Therefore people in the tribe of Judah lived with the Jebusites in Jerusalem at least until the time of the writing of this passage.

The characters in this passage are:

- The people of the tribe of Judah
- And the Jebusites

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

Notice that the hill country is hilly or mountainous land right next to the wilderness. Because of the hills in the hill country, the climate would have caused the wilderness to have less rain, and it would have been harder to

farm the land. It was very important for the tribe of Judah to live near springs of water, or natural rivers, or seas in this area. There are probably only six cities in the wilderness because there is not much water, it is very hot, and the ground is very dry. This makes it difficult for people to live in the wilderness.

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

Stop here and together as a group draw a map of your community on paper, or using sticks, rocks, and leaves. Note the types of land that are around you. Name the hills and valleys, mountains, or streams and rivers. Take turns describing the map and the land to one another. Notice how you describe different types of land or water. Pause this audio here.

In scene seven, notice that the people of the tribe of Judah do not follow Yahweh's commandment to drive out the people who live in the 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 Joshua 15:48–63 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:

- The people of the tribe of Judah
- And the Jebusites

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.

Joshua gives the tribe of Judah five more districts in the hill country. The first of these districts has 11 cities and their villages. The second of these districts has nine cities and their villages. The third of these districts has 10 cities and their villages. The fourth of these districts has six cities and their villages. The fifth of these districts has two cities and their villages.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person representing the tribe of Judah, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Praise Yahweh for fulfilling his promise to us," or
- "I cannot believe how long it has taken, but we are finally here," or
- "This country is beautiful! I am so excited to be where Yahweh wants us."

Joshua gives Judah one district in the wilderness on the eastern side of the hill country. This district has six cities and their villages.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person representing the tribe of Judah, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Hold on, who is going to live in this area?" or
- "Well, this land does not look nearly as nice as some of the other land," or
- "I guess Yahweh knows what he is doing, so we will live here too."

The people in the tribe of Judah could not drive out the Jebusites from Jerusalem. Therefore Judah lived with the Jebusites in Jerusalem at least until the time of the writing of this passage.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Jebusites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Why do they get to come in and take our land? No way, I am not leaving!" or
- "I guess they do not want it that badly since they are letting us stay here," or
- "I am sure it will be fine and we can live in peace with them."

Stop here and practice listing the names of the towns in the passage. Use objects to learn the names of the towns.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 15:48–63 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Joshua gives the tribe of Judah five districts in the **hill country** of Canaan. The hill country is an area of low **hills** or mountains that run north and south in the middle of Judah. Use the same word for hills or hill country that you have used in previous passages.

The first of these five districts contains 11 **cities** and their **villages**. The second district Joshua gives to the tribe of Judah in the hill country contains nine cities and their villages. The third district Joshua gives to the tribe of Judah in the hill country contains ten cities and their villages. The fourth of these five districts contains six cities and their villages. The fifth district contains two cities and their villages. Cities are larger than towns and are usually surrounded by walls for protection. Villages are the smallest settlements of people and rely on the cities for protection. Use the same word for cities and villages that you have used in previous passages.

Joshua gives one district to the tribe of Judah in the **wilderness**. This wilderness is on the eastern **slope** of the hill country. A wilderness is a dry place where very little grows and very few animals live. A slope is the slanted side of the hills or mountains. Use the same word for wilderness and slope that you have used in previous passages. For more information on wilderness, refer to the Master Glossary.

Judah could not drive out the Jebusites from Jerusalem. Therefore the sons of Judah, or the people of the tribe of Judah, lived with the Jebusites in Jerusalem at least until the time of the writing of this passage.

*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.

Joshua 15:48–63**Audio Content**

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Joshua 16:1–10

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 16:1–10 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 16:1–10 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 Joshua 16:1–10 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This passage continues to describe the distribution of land to the tribes of Israel. Remember that the first distribution of land went to the tribe of Judah. The second distribution of land went to the tribe of Joseph. The Israelite leaders threw stones with markers, called lots, to decide which tribe to distribute land to next. Now Joshua is giving land to the tribe of Joseph. Remember that the tribe of Joseph is split into two tribes according to Joseph's two sons—Manasseh, who is the oldest, and Ephraim. This passage describes the southern boundary of the full tribe of Joseph, and the full boundary of the half-tribe of Ephraim.

Stop here and talk as a group about your different tribes or different parts of your people group. How did the smaller groups within your tribe or people group come into being? How do you talk about the different smaller groups within the larger group? Pause this audio here.

The southern boundary of the tribe of Joseph borders most of the northern boundary of the tribe of Benjamin.

Stop here and look at a map of the land Yahweh gave to the 12 tribes of Israel. Note where Ephraim and Manasseh are located. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at the map of the boundaries of Ephraim with the cities named. You may want to listen to the next information while looking at this map and following along. Pause this audio here.

We hear the southern border for the tribe of Joseph starting from east to west. The boundary begins at the Jordan River near Jericho, but east of the springs of water near Jericho. Then from the Jordan River, the boundary goes west through the wilderness and up into the hill country, or mountainous area, of Bethel. Some versions mention Bethel and Luz as separate cities, but most people believe that Luz is another name for Bethel. From Bethel, the boundary continues west to the border of the Archites, who were also Canaanites, in Ataroth. From there most passages say that the border descended, or went downwards. Remember that Bethel is in the hill country, and so the border goes down the mountains into the low land area of lower Beth Horon and Gezer before it ends at the Mediterranean Sea. Gezer is about 24 kilometers from the sea.

Joshua gives Ephraim and Manasseh, the sons of Joseph, this land as their inheritance. Now the passage describes the boundary for the clans, or large family groups, of Ephraim. Even though Manasseh was Joseph's

oldest son, Joseph's father Jacob blessed Joseph's son Ephraim to be greater than Manasseh. So here, Joshua gives Ephraim the first land distribution for Joseph's tribe.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about some ways that you set apart the oldest child in each family in your culture. Is there a responsibility that the oldest child has that the younger children do not, or that the younger children have that the older children do not have? What would cause you to give responsibilities to a different child? Pause this audio here.

The description of the southern boundary of Ephraim starts in the east at a city named Ataroth Addar and goes to the west all the way to the Mediterranean Sea. While the passage does not say this, it is likely that the southern border of Ephraim follows the southern border mentioned earlier for the whole tribe of Joseph. The passage does include the city of Upper Beth Horon as part of the boundary. The city of Upper Beth Horon was up in the hill country as a way to protect itself from enemies in the coastal lowlands or plains.

Then the passage jumps to the eastern boundary of Ephraim, which starts in the north at Mikmethath and goes east of Janoah. The border then turns south down to touch Jericho, meaning it came to the outlying part of Jericho. Then the eastern boundary ends at the Jordan River.

The passage goes back to the northern boundary of Ephraim, which is the southern border of Manasseh. The northern boundary starts in the east at Tappuah, which is a city just west of Mikmethath. Tappuah is a city that Joshua gave to Ephraim, but the land around it belongs to Manasseh. From Tappuah, the border travels west along the Kanah Brook, or wadi, to the sea. This wadi, or dry river bottom, probably has water in it during the times of year that it rains a lot, but is dry the rest of the year. When there is water, the water flows west out of the hill country and into the lowland area to the sea.

Stop here and look at a picture of a wadi, or dry river bottom. Pause this audio here.

Joseph gives this land to the families, or clans, of Ephraim as an inheritance, or possession. Ephraim's territory also includes cities in Manasseh's inheritance, or possession. Joshua gives Ephraim all of these cities with all of their villages. Remember that a city is a larger town with a wall around it for protection. A village is a small settlement that relies on the city for protection.

The Ephraimites succeed in taking over the territory Joshua distributed to them, except for the city of Gezer. The people of Ephraim were unable to drive out, or send away, the Canaanites from Gezer. The tribe of Ephraim allowed the Canaanites to stay as forced labor, or slaves. Gezer was in the lowlands closer to the sea. These cities were typically larger than the cities in the hill country. This may have been a reason that the Ephraimites were unable to drive them out of Gezer. The Ephraimites directly disobeyed Yahweh's command to drive out all of the people when they did not drive out the people who lived in Gezer. When Joshua wrote this passage, the Canaanites in Gezer were still living as slaves with the Ephraimites.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Name the other communities that have land, or have settled, among your people. Talk about how these people settled among you. What is the attitude of your community towards these people groups, and how do you treat them?

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 16:1–10 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 lot fell to Joseph's tribe. Joshua describes the southern border of the entire land for the tribe of Joseph. This border went from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea.

In the second scene: Joshua divides Joseph's land into two parts, and Joshua gives the first distribution to the half-tribe of Ephraim. Joshua describes the boundaries of Ephraim's land.

In the third scene: Ephraim could not drive out all of the Canaanites in the city of Gezer. The tribe of Ephraim allowed the Canaanites to stay in Gezer as slaves. At the time Joshua wrote this passage, the Canaanites were still living with the tribe of Ephraim.

The characters in this passage are:

- The full tribe of Joseph, which includes the people of the tribe of Ephraim and the people of the tribe of Manasseh
- And the Canaanites

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

In the first scene, remember that Ephraim is Joseph's son. Joseph's tribe was split in two between his sons Ephraim and Manasseh. Manasseh was the oldest son of Joseph, but Jacob, their grandfather, had given Ephraim a special blessing. The passage originally puts Manasseh and Ephraim in the correct birth order, but then describes the inheritance that Joshua gave to Ephraim first. In this first scene, Joshua describes the southern border of the entire land that he gave to Joseph's two tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim. The statement that Manasseh and Ephraim received their inheritance, or possession, is a summary of scene one.

In the second scene, Joshua gives the tribe of Ephraim the borders of their land. Joshua describes the boundaries from east to west on the southern border, from north to south on the eastern border, and from east to west on the northern border. The western border is the Mediterranean Sea. Joshua gave all of these cities and their villages, including some cities in Manasseh's inheritance, to Ephraim. Notice that there are several different types of landscapes in Ephraim's land. The borders to the east, as far as the Jordan River, are on the eastern slopes of the hill country near the dry wilderness. The majority of Ephraim's land is in the hill country, but then the western part of the land is the lower areas near the Mediterranean Sea.

Stop here and think about the order that Joshua describes the boundaries of the land. Joshua tells the boundaries in the south from east to west, then the boundaries on the east from north to south, and then the boundaries on the north from east to west again. When you are describing the boundaries of your land, how do you order the information? Pause this audio here.

In the third scene, remember that Yahweh's command was to drive out all of the people who lived in the land. Ephraim did not do this in Gezer. Instead, the people of Ephraim allowed the Canaanites to live in Gezer as forced labor. The Canaanites were like slaves to the people of Ephraim—they had to work hard to serve the Ephraimites, and they had no choice.

Stop here and discuss how you describe people who work like slaves, doing hard work without having a choice. Pause this audio here.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it. Use rocks, leaves, or sticks to make a map of Ephraim's boundaries and cities. Practice saying the cities and the names of any landmarks mentioned in the passage.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 16:1–10 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:

- The full tribe of Joseph, which includes the people of the tribe of Ephraim and the people of the tribe of Manasseh
- And the Canaanites

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 lot fell to Joseph's tribe. Joshua describes the southern border of the tribe of Joseph from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea. Joshua divides Joseph's land into two parts and gives the first distribution to Ephraim.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the people of the tribe of Manasseh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I am disappointed. I thought Manasseh was the oldest. Why does Ephraim go first?" or
- "This does not seem fair, unless his land is smaller than ours," or
- "We have to trust that Yahweh knows what he is doing, even if it does not seem right."

Joshua describes the boundaries of Ephraim's land. The boundaries go from east to west on the southern border, from north to south on the eastern border, and from east to west on the northern border. The western border is the Mediterranean Sea. Joshua gives all of these cities with their villages, including some in Manasseh's inheritance, to Ephraim.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the people of Manasseh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Ephraim goes first *and* gets some of our inheritance? That is not right," or
- "I am just thankful that we get land and that Yahweh kept his promise," or
- "I hope our land is as nice as Ephraim's land."

Ephraim could not drive out all of the Canaanites in Gezer. The tribe of Ephraim allowed the Canaanites to stay in Gezer as slaves. At the time Joshua wrote this passage, the Canaanites were still living with the tribe of Ephraim.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the tribe of Ephraim, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like

- "I do not know what else to do. There are too many of them. I guess having them as slaves is better than nothing," or
- "Why were we not able to drive them out? Is Yahweh okay with us keeping them as slaves?" or
- "Where was Yahweh? Yahweh is supposed to help us get rid of the Canaanites."

Stop here and practice describing the borders of the land in the passage. Use objects to learn the names of the towns.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 16:1–10 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

The next **distribution** of land was for Joseph's tribe. Joshua describes the southern border of the tribe of Joseph from the **Jordan River** into the **wilderness**, and up from Jericho to the **hill country** all the way to the Mediterranean Sea. The Jordan River is a river that runs from north to south in Israel. The wilderness is a barren and dry area of land where very little grows. Use the same words you have used for distribution, Jordan River, wilderness, and hill country as in previous passages. For more information on the Jordan River and wilderness, refer to the Master Glossary.

The people of the tribe of Joseph, who are the tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim, received this land as their **inheritance**, or **possession**. An inheritance is the money or property you receive from someone, usually when they die. Use the same word for inheritance that you have used in previous passages.

Ephraim's land is divided, and Joshua describes the boundaries according to the **clans**, or large family groups, of Ephraim. Use the same word you have used for clans in previous passages.

The boundaries go from east to west on the southern border, from north to south on the eastern border, and from east to west on the northern border. Joshua gives all of these **cities** and **villages**, including some in Manasseh's inheritance, to Ephraim. Cities are larger than towns and have walls around them for protection. Villages are small settlements of people who go to the city for protection. Use the same words for cities and villages that you have used in previous passages.

Part of the northern border of Ephraim included the Kannah Brook, or **wadi**. Remember that wadi is a river bottom that is dry in the part of the year when it is not raining, and full of water in the part of the year that it is raining. Use the same word or phrase for wadi, or dry river bottom, as you have in previous passages.

Ephraim could not **drive out** all of the Canaanites in Gezer. Use the same phrase for drive out as you have used in previous passages.

At the time Joshua wrote this passage, the Canaanites were still living with the tribe of Ephraim. Canaanites are a general term for the people who live in **Canaan**. For more information about 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.

Joshua 16:1–10

Audio Content

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Joshua 17:1–13

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 17:1–13 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 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 Joshua 17:1–13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Joshua, Eleazar the priest, and the leaders of the tribes of Israel are still dividing land between the tribes of Israel. They are giving the second distribution of land to the tribe of Joseph, which was split between the tribes Manasseh and Ephraim. Joshua already gave the tribe of Ephraim their land inheritance. Now Joshua is giving the half-tribe of Manasseh their inheritance on the western side of the Jordan River. The introduction reminds the audience that the other half of the tribe of Manasseh has already received land on the eastern side of the Jordan River.

Stop here and look together at a map of Israel divided into the 12 tribes. Note particularly all of Manasseh's land distribution on both sides of the Jordan River. Pause this audio here.

The passage explains the descendants of Manasseh and their inheritance, or possession. Manasseh's only son, Makir, was a strong and brave warrior. Joshua gave some of Makir's descendants the regions of Gilead and Bashan on the east side of the Jordan River. Makir most likely also had a son named Gilead. This is a different Gilead than the region of Gilead. To the descendants of Gilead, Makir's son, Joshua gave land on the west side of the Jordan River, according to their clans, or large family groups. The passage mentions six of the clans, or large family groups, that descended from Manasseh. These six were specifically the male descendants of Manasseh, because the next section mentions the female descendants.

Hepher, who was Manasseh's great grandson, had a son named Zelophehad, who only had daughters. Zelophehad's family risked losing their inheritance because there were no sons.

The five daughters of Zelophehad went to Eleazar, Joshua, and the leaders of the tribal families. The daughters reminded the leaders that Yahweh had told Moses to give them land since they had no brothers. Typically the Israelites would give land to sons, but if there were no sons, Yahweh said the land would next go to daughters. Legally, the daughters of Zelophehad deserved their father's inheritance, or possession, since they had no brothers. Joshua obeys Yahweh's command and gives land to the five daughters of Zelophehad along with the rest of the five clans. Joshua gives 10 portions of land west of the Jordan River to these descendants of Manasseh—one portion for each of Zelophehad's daughters and one for each of the remaining five clans of Manasseh.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Discuss inheritance in your culture. Who does an inheritance go to when someone dies? What is the role of male and female children when it comes to inheritance? In what context are women allowed to inherit property? Pause this audio here.

Stop here and look at the map of Manasseh's territory. You may want to look at the map as you listen to the next information, and follow along on the map. Pause this audio here.

The rest of the passage describes the borders for Manasseh on the western side of the Jordan River. The southern border starts from the east and moves west. It mentions the city of Asher, which is not the same as the territory of the tribe of Asher. The southern border goes all the way along the brook, or wadi, of Kanah to the Mediterranean Sea. The south side of Kanah Brook belonged to Ephraim, and the north side of Kanah Brook belonged to Manasseh. The southern boundaries overlap slightly with the tribe of Ephraim. In fact, some of

Ephraim's cities are among the cities of Manasseh. The northern boundaries of the land of the tribe of Manasseh overlap with those of the tribes of Issachar and Asher.

Manasseh also had cities in Issachar's land and Asher's land. The passage names several cities along with their people and their settlements, or villages. The Canaanite threat remains even after the Israelites are in the land. In fact, the Canaanites have no intention of leaving their homeland. The Canaanites have lived in the region for a long time and profited greatly from the resources of the land. The people of the tribe of Manasseh were unable to drive out the native Canaanites from those places, so they made the Canaanites work hard for them. This was in direct contrast to the command Yahweh gave them to drive out all other nations in the land.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a time a group in your culture was disobedient to God, or to their gods. What happened? How did they feel? What were the consequences?

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 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 five scenes.

In the first scene: Joshua gives the distribution of land to the tribe of Manasseh, who was Joseph's firstborn child. Joshua gives some of the descendants of Manasseh's son, Makir, who was the father of Gilead, the region of Gilead and the region of Bashan on the eastern side of the Jordan River.

In the second scene: So Joshua gives the rest of the male descendants of Manasseh the land on the west side of the Jordan River according to their clans, or large family groups. There are six clans and their sons, or male descendants, of Manasseh.

In the third scene: One of the clans of Manasseh has five daughters and no sons. So the five daughters ask Joshua to keep the promise that Yahweh made to Moses to give them land as an inheritance, or possession. So Joshua gives the daughters land along with the other five clans. Therefore there are 10 portions of land Joshua gives to the tribe of Manasseh on the west side of the Jordan River, plus the land of Gilead and Bashan on the east side of the Jordan River.

In the fourth scene: The passage describes the borders of Manasseh from the city of Asher on the southern border to the Mediterranean Sea, and the border with the tribes of Asher and Issachar in the north and the east. Several of the towns in Manasseh's territory belong to Ephraim. And Joshua gives some of the cities in Asher and Issachar to the tribe of Manasseh.

In the fifth scene: Manasseh cannot take full possession of the cities in Asher and Issachar because the Canaanites will not leave. When Manasseh becomes strong, they take the Canaanites as slaves, but do not drive the Canaanites out of the land.

The characters in this passage are:

- The people of the tribe of Manasseh
- Makir
- Gilead
- Abiezer, Helek, Asriel, Shechem, Hepher, and Shemida
- Zelophehad
- Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milkah, and Tirzah
- Joshua son of Nun
- Eleazar the priest
- Tribal leaders of the tribes of Israel
- Yahweh
- Moses
- And the Canaanites

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

In the first three scenes, we hear about many different people and their relationships to one another. Be sure to note that Gilead is both a person and a place. Gilead is the name of part of the land that half of the tribe of Manasseh received on the east side of the Jordan River. Gilead is also the ancestor to all of the clans of Manasseh that are receiving the distribution of land on the western side of the Jordan River.

Stop here and remember the following relationships: Joseph is the father of Ephraim and Manasseh. Manasseh has one son, Makir. Makir may have several sons, but one of his sons is Gilead. The descendants of the other sons of Makir receive the land of Gilead and Bashan east of the Jordan River. The descendants of Gilead receive ten portions of land west of the Jordan River. There are six clans, or family groups of the descendants of Gilead. One of these clans receives five portions of the land, one portion for each daughter. Each of the other clans receives one portion of land. This makes 10 portions of land on the west side of the Jordan River that go to the tribe of Manasseh. Now draw or use objects to visualize the relationships of the people to one another starting with Joseph. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you talk about male and female descendants and generations in your culture? How would you talk about your parents' parents? How would you talk about your children's children's children? Pause this audio here.

In the third scene you will remember that Zelophehad, the son of Hepher, has five daughters. The storyteller reminds us of this previous story and now tells us what happened to the daughters.

In the fourth scene, we hear the description of the boundary of Manasseh, starting with the southern border in the east and going to the west. The boundary starts in the city called Asher. This is not the same as the territory of the tribe of Asher. The boundary runs all the way along the Kanah Brook to the Mediterranean Sea. Notice here, like with Ephraim, that there is a wide variety of landscapes—from the Jordan River and some of the wilderness, to the hill country, to the lowlands near the sea.

When the rest of this passage mentions Asher, it is now talking about the territory of the tribe of Asher. The northwestern border of Manasseh is the border with the territory of the tribe of Asher, and on the northeastern side is the territory of the tribe of Issachar. Joshua gives the tribe of Manasseh cities within the territories of Asher and Issachar. Joshua gives Manasseh seven cities with their people and their settlements, or villages. However, the people of the tribe of Manasseh do not drive out the Canaanites from these cities because the Canaanites refuse to leave. Once the Israelites grow stronger, they force the Canaanites to work for 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 Joshua 17:1–13 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 people of the tribe of Manasseh
- Makir
- Gilead
- Abiezer, Helek, Asriel, Shechem, Hepher, and Shemida
- Zelophehad
- Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milkah, and Tirzah
- Joshua son of Nun
- Eleazar the priest
- Tribal leaders of Israel
- Yahweh
- Moses
- And the Canaanites

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.

Joshua gives the distribution of land to the tribe of Manasseh, who was Joseph's firstborn child. Moses already gave some of the descendants of Manasseh's son, Makir, who was the father of Gilead, and was a mighty warrior, the areas of Gilead and Bashan on the eastern side of the Jordan River. So Joshua gives the rest of the male descendants of Manasseh the land on the west side of the Jordan River according to their clans, or large family groups. There are six clans and their sons, or male descendants, of Manasseh.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the six clans, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I am thankful that we get good land for us and all of our descendants," or
- "I hope there is enough room for all of us to share this land," or
- "Thank Yahweh that he has brought us to where he promised!"

One of the clans of Manasseh has five daughters and no sons. So the five daughters ask Joshua to keep the promise that Yahweh made to Moses to give them land as an inheritance, or possession. So Joshua gives the daughters land along with the other five clans, or large family groups.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the five daughters, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I am thankful that Yahweh has provided for us and considered us worthy of receiving land," or
- "I am glad that Joshua is faithful to Yahweh to keep his commands."

Therefore there are 10 portions of land given to the tribe of Manasseh, plus the land of Gilead and Bashan. The borders of Manasseh go from the land of the tribes of Asher and Issachar to the Mediterranean Sea, to Mikmethath in the south and the Jordan River in the east. Several of the towns in Manasseh's territory belong to Ephraim. And Joshua gives some of the cities in Asher and Issachar to Manasseh.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the people of the tribe of Manasseh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I know we are getting some cities that are not in our borders, but it still feels very crowded over here," or
- "We have such a wide variety of landscapes," or
- "I pray that Yahweh will be with us as we try to drive out the people who already live here."

Manasseh is not able to take full possession of the cities in Asher and Issachar because the Canaanites will not leave. When Manasseh becomes strong, they take the Canaanites as slaves, but they do not drive the Canaanites out of the land.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Canaanites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "This does not seem fair to us. We were here first," or
- "Why do we have to be their slaves? Why can we not all just live here together?"

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 17:1–13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Joshua gives the **distribution** of land to the tribe of Manasseh, who was Joseph's firstborn child. Joshua gives the regions of Gilead and Bashan on the eastern side of the **Jordan River** to some of the descendants of Manasseh. The Jordan River runs north and south through Israel. Use the same words for distribution and for the Jordan River that you have used in previous passages. For more information on the Jordan River, refer to the Master Glossary.

So Joshua gives the rest of the male **descendants** of Manasseh the land on the west side of the Jordan River according to their **clans**, or **large family groups**. There are six clans and their sons, or male descendants, of Manasseh. Descendants are the people who come after someone in a family line. Use the same word for descendants and clans that you have used in previous passages. For more information on descendants, refer to the Master Glossary.

One of the clans of Manasseh has only five daughters. So the five daughters ask Joshua, Eleazar the **priest**, and the tribal leaders to keep the promise that **Yahweh** made to Moses to give them land as an **inheritance**. Use the same words for priest, Yahweh, and inheritance that you have used in previous passages. For more information on priest and Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

So Joshua gives the daughters land along with the other five clans. Therefore Joshua gives 10 portions of land to the tribe of Manasseh on the west side of the Jordan River.

Several of the **cities** in Manasseh's territory belong to Ephraim. And Joshua gives some of the cities in Asher and Issachar, along with their people and **villages**, to Manasseh. Cities are larger than villages with walls around them for protection. Villages are small settlements of people that rely on the cities for protection. Use the same words for cities and villages that you have used in previous passages.

Manasseh is not able to take full possession of the cities in Asher and Issachar, because the Canaanites will not leave. When the **Israelites** become strong, they make the Canaanites work for them, but they do not drive the Canaanites out of the land. Talk about how the Israelites forced the Canaanites to work hard for them in the same way as you did in previous passages. Use the same word for 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.

Joshua 17:1–13

Audio Content

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Joshua 17:14–18

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 17:14–18 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 17:14–18 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 Joshua 17:14–18 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Joshua gave the people of the tribe of Joseph their distribution of land. The tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim make up the tribe of Joseph. Moses gave half of the tribe of Manasseh land on the eastern side of the Jordan River along with two other tribes. Joshua gave Ephraim and the half-tribe of Manasseh land on the western side

of the Jordan River. Now the people of Joseph, as a unified tribe, are complaining to Joshua that they do not have enough land for all of their people, because Yahweh has blessed them with many people.

Stop here and tell a story of a time someone complained to you. How did you respond? Talk about the difference between how you responded and how you wanted to respond. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Are there sub-tribes or clans in your community who grew to be a large population and did not have enough land or resources? How did your community resolve that challenge? Pause this audio here.

It is possible that the people from the tribe of Joseph expect Joshua to give them what they want because Joshua is from the tribe of Ephraim. However, Joshua gives the tribe of Joseph a fair reply. Joshua encourages the tribe of Joseph to work for, and fight for, the land that the Rephaim and the Perizzites live in.

We are not certain if the forested land, or land filled with trees, that Joshua encourages the tribe of Joseph to clear was east or west of the Jordan River. The Rephaim were giants like the Anakites, and mostly lived east of the Jordan River, but some lived on the west side, closer to Jerusalem. The Perizzites, however, typically lived west of the Jordan River.

Stop here and look together at the map of the tribe of Joseph, noting where the Rephaim and the Perizzites lived. Pause this audio here.

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

The tribe of Joseph, still unsatisfied with their land inheritance, or possession, complain to Joshua that the Canaanites are too strong and have iron chariots. The Canaanites used these chariots specifically for war. Any army that had iron chariots would be strong and able to defeat their enemies easily. But the Israelites fight mostly on foot, without horses and chariots. The Israelites probably feel like the Canaanites, with their chariots, are too strong for them to fight.

Stop here and look at a picture of an iron chariot. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell about a time when you told someone who was complaining to find their own solution to their problem. What was the result? How did they respond? Pause this audio here.

These Canaanites with chariots lived in Beth Shan, which is at the eastern end of the Jezreel Valley. This land guards the important trade route's entrance into the Jordan Valley. It is on the far eastern side of Manasseh's territory west of the Jordan River.

Stop here and look together at a map of Beth Shan and the Jezreel Valley area in relation to Manasseh and Ephraim's territories. Pause this audio here.

It is possible that Joshua encourages the tribe of Joseph, which is the tribe of Ephraim and the half-tribe of Manasseh, to take the hill country, which is Mount Gilboa. This mountain range was heavily forested and was just south of the Jezreel Valley. Joshua agrees that the tribe of Joseph is large, and Joshua adds that they are powerful. Joshua believes that they will not only clear the land of the trees to make it suitable for living, but will drive out the Canaanites who have iron chariots.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a time when you were struggling to work or fight for something you needed, but then someone encouraged you. How did you feel? Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 17:14–18 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 three scenes.

In the first scene: The tribe of Joseph complains to Joshua about needing more land because there are many people in their tribe. Yahweh has blessed the tribe of Joseph and made them grow. Joshua responds and tells them that since there are many people, they can go up and clear out the forested area where the Perizzites and the Rephaim live.

In the second scene: The tribe of Joseph responds by still saying that the hill country is not enough land. The tribe of Joseph is also afraid of the Canaanites with their iron chariots who live in the valley, in the city of Beth Shan and its villages, and the valley of Jezreel.

In the third scene: Joshua agrees that there are many people and that they are powerful. Joshua agrees to give the tribe of Joseph the hill country, and Joshua believes that they will clear it and take the land to its farthest borders. Joshua also believes that the tribe of Joseph can defeat the Canaanites even though the Canaanites have iron chariots and are strong.

The characters in this passage are:

- The full tribe of Joseph, which includes the people of the tribe of Ephraim and the people of the tribe of Manasseh
- Joshua
- Yahweh
- Perezites
- Rephaim
- And Canaanites

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

We do not know when Joshua and the people from the tribe of Joseph had this conversation. The tribe of Joseph did not approach Joshua, Eleazar, and the tribe leaders, but just Joshua. So we do not know if they approached Joshua right after Joshua gave them their land distribution, or after Joshua had distributed all of the land to all of the tribes of Israel.

Also notice that the tribe of Joseph is united as one people in this passage. We know that they have become two tribes—Ephraim and Manasseh. But here they come together as the tribe of Joseph. Joshua encourages the tribe of Joseph that they can defeat the Canaanites and clear the land, or make it ready to live in. This land had a forest, or many trees on it. In order to live on the land, the people would need to take down some of the trees to make space for houses and cities. Joshua refers to the people in the tribe as both the house, or tribe, of Joseph, and as Ephraim and Manasseh.

We also do not know the exact land that Joshua encourages them to clear. The Perizzites and the Rephaim lived mostly on opposite sides of the Jordan River. However, some people believe Joshua is encouraging the tribe of Joseph to clear the land of Mount Gilboa, near Beth Shan and the Valley of Jezreel.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture encourage others to be brave and encourage them that they can do things? What tones of voice do people use when they are encouraging others? What kinds of language do 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 Joshua 17:14–18 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has three scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- The full tribe of Joseph, which includes the people of the tribe of Ephraim and the people of the tribe of Manasseh
- Joshua
- Yahweh
- Perezites
- Rephaim
- And Canaanites

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 tribe of Joseph complains to Joshua about needing more land because there are many people in their tribe. Yahweh has blessed the tribe of Joseph to have many people. Joshua tells the tribe of Joseph that since they have many people, they can go up and clear out the forested area where the Perizzites and the Rephaim live.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the tribe of Joseph, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I do not want to clear that land. It is too much work. I am tired from walking in the wilderness for so long," or
- "I thought maybe Yahweh would just give us the land and get rid of the people himself. I do not want to fight people anymore," or
- "Does Joshua not think we should have more land since we are his tribe?"

The tribe of Joseph responds by still saying that the hill country is not enough land. They are also afraid of the Canaanites who live in the valley, in Beth Shan and its towns, and the valley of Jezreel, with their iron chariots.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Yahweh, I cannot believe you have put up with us for so long. Do they not trust you to help them?" or
- "Yahweh, help me to encourage them that they can do this with your strength," or
- "I cannot show favoritism here, so I have to give them a fair answer. I also have to help them understand that they still need to conquer the people in the land Yahweh has given them."

Joshua agrees that they are many people and that they are powerful. Joshua agrees to give the tribe of Joseph the hill country, and Joshua believes that they will clear it and take the land to its farthest borders. Joshua also believes that the tribe of Joseph can defeat the Canaanites even though the Canaanites have iron chariots and are strong.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the tribe of Joseph, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Well, if Joshua has faith in us and in Yahweh, I should have faith as well," or
- "I think we can make this work and have enough land for all of our people," or
- "I am scared of the Canaanites and their chariots. I do not really want to do this."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 17:14–18 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

The tribe of Joseph complains to Joshua about needing more land as an **inheritance**, or **possession**, because there are many people in their tribe since **Yahweh** has **blessed** them. An inheritance, or possession, is property, land, or possessions that people gain when someone dies. Yahweh is the personal name of God. Yahweh has blessed the people because he has done something good for them. Use the same words for inheritance or possession, Yahweh, and bless that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh and bless, refer to the Master Glossary.

Joshua responds and tells them that since there are many people, and the **hill country** is not enough, they can go up and clear out the forest area where the Perizzites and the Rephaim live. Remember that the hill country is a mountainous area that goes from north to south through the land Joshua gave Ephraim. A **forest** is land that has many trees. Use the same word for hill country that you have used in previous passages.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **forest**. 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 tribe of Joseph says that the hill country is not enough land. They are also afraid of the Canaanites who live in the valley, in Beth Shan and its **villages**, and the valley of Jezreel, with their iron chariots. A village is a small settlement of people who go to cities for protection. Use the same word you have used for villages in previous passages.

Joshua agrees that they are many people and that they are powerful. Joshua agrees to give the tribe of Joseph the hill country, and Joshua believes that they can clear it and take the land to its farthest borders. Joshua also believes the tribe of Joseph can defeat the **Canaanites** even though the Canaanites have **iron chariots** and are strong. Iron is a strong, hard metal that people often use to build weapons. Use the same words for chariots, iron, and for Canaanites 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.

Joshua 17:14–18**Audio Content**

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Joshua 18:1–10

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 18:1–10 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 18:1–10 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 Joshua 18:1–10 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Several previous passages described Joshua distributing land to five Israelite tribes. They were the tribe of Judah, the tribe of Reuben, the tribe of Gad, and the two half-tribes of Manasseh and of Ephraim.

In the last passage, the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh told Joshua that they were unhappy because Joshua gave them only one lot of land, even though there were many people in both tribes. Joshua told them to conquer the forest land which belonged to the Canaanites. The tribes were afraid of the people living there, but Joshua told the tribes that they were many people and strong, and they would not just have one area of land. They would conquer the hill country and defeat the Canaanites.

After the people of Israel conquer the land, the whole congregation, or community, of Israel gathers in the city of Shiloh. Shiloh was on a mountain in the hill country, on the land that now belonged to the tribe of Ephraim. It was in between Shechem to the north and Bethel to the south. It was west of the Jordan River, about 32 kilometers north of Jerusalem. The name Shiloh means rest in the original language. You will remember from the book of Deuteronomy that Yahweh himself had commanded Moses to set up the tabernacle in the place Yahweh would choose, where Yahweh would live among the Israelites in the Promised Land. Joshua, and possibly the high priest Eleazar, must have commanded all the Israelites to come to Shiloh. Then the people of Israel set up the tent of meeting, or tabernacle, there. You will remember that the tent of meeting is the tent where Yahweh meets with his people. Yahweh had given detailed instructions to Moses on how to make and set up this tent and the things inside it. The Levites took the tent down, carried it, and set it up in each new place when they moved through the wilderness.

There are still seven Israelite tribes to whom Joshua has not yet distributed a share of land as their inheritance. These are the following tribes: the tribe of Benjamin, the tribe of Simeon, the tribe of Zebulun, the tribe of Issachar, the tribe of Asher, the tribe of Naphtali, and the tribe of Dan. Joshua rebukes the Israelites from these tribes because they still have not conquered the land that Yahweh, the God of their ancestors, has given them. The seven tribes showed no urgency about asking Joshua to divide the land for them by lot. They also showed no urgency to take possession of the land, which was their inheritance from Yahweh. These tribes were showing that they were not grateful to Yahweh, and that they did not trust Yahweh to conquer their enemies for them.

Stop here and as a group look at a map of the land of Canaan as it was before the seven tribes of Israel received their portion of the land. Pause this audio here.

Joshua orders the people of Israel to provide three persons from each of the seven tribes. Joshua says the people should go back and forth in the land and survey it. They must write a report about the territory according to the inheritance that each tribe will eventually get. The report will include lists of towns in the different parts of the land, with information about their size and characteristics. It will probably also contain information about the quality and condition of the soil, what lands are fertile, and what they produce. It will probably also say where the country has mountains and where it is level, which lands are well-watered and which are dry, and any other things that will help compare the different parts of the land. Joshua says that after surveying the land, the people must divide it into seven portions. The tribe of Judah already has its territory in the south. The "house of Joseph," or Joseph's descendants who are the tribes of Ephraim and the half-tribe of Manasseh, already have their territory in the north. These tribes are to remain in their land.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you survey land in your area? Talk about what things you consider important in an area when you look for a new place to live. Pause this audio here.

After the people divide the land into seven parts, they will come back to Joshua and give him their reports. Then Joshua will throw lots for the seven tribes before Yahweh so that Yahweh can show which part of the land Yahweh wants each tribe to have. The phrase "to throw lots" probably refers to putting marked objects, or lots, into a bag or container. The objects were usually pebbles. People marked these objects either with different colours, different symbols, or with different names. Then a person shook the bag until one of the objects fell out. The person expected Yahweh to cause the right marked object to fall out. We know from previous stories that Joshua would throw lots at the entrance to the tent of meeting, and Eleazar the high priest and the heads of the tribes would be present with Joshua.

Stop here and as a group look at a photo of lots. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture determine the will of the gods they follow? Pause this audio here.

Then Joshua reminds the people of Israel again that the tribe of Levi is to receive no portion in the land because being priests of Yahweh is their inheritance. And the tribes of Gad, Reuben, and half the tribe of Manasseh had already received their inheritance on the other side of the Jordan River. Moses, Yahweh's servant, had given it to them. By saying this, Joshua reminds the Israelites that there are only seven tribes that have still to receive their portions of land.

Joshua now speaks to the 21 people from the 7 tribes and says to them, "Walk all around the land and write a report about it. Then come back to me. I will throw lots for you here in Shiloh to let Yahweh decide how to divide the land among you." So, the 21 men from the 7 tribes go on their journey. The men leave and go all over the land, and they write a report about it. The report shows how they divide up the land into seven parts, and it lists the towns in each part. Then the men return to Joshua at the camp near the city of Shiloh.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Joshua asks the people to write a report about the land. How do you record and store important information in your culture? Pause this audio here.

So, there in the city of Shiloh, Joshua throws lots for them in the presence of Yahweh by the tent of meeting. Joshua divides out the land to the remaining seven tribes of Israel. Each tribe receives its own piece of land.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 18:1–10 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 eight scenes.

In the first scene: All the people of Israel gather at the city of Shiloh and set up the tent of meeting.

In the second scene: Joshua rebukes the Israelites because there are seven tribes who are not trying hard to possess the land that Yahweh has given them as their inheritance.

In the third scene: Joshua orders the people of Israel to provide three persons from each of the seven tribes so Joshua can send them to survey the land they want to receive. Joshua tells the Israelites what Joshua will require the selected people to do. These people will write a report about the territory according to proposed divisions that each tribe will receive. They will divide the land into seven territories.

In the fourth scene: Joshua tells the Israelites that after the people have divided the land into seven parts, they will come back to Joshua and give him their reports. Then Joshua will throw lots for the seven tribes before Yahweh to decide which part of the land Yahweh wants each tribe to have.

In the fifth scene: Joshua reminds the people of Israel that the tribe of Levi is to receive no portion in the land because their inheritance is being priests of Yahweh. And the tribes of Gad, Reuben, and the half-tribe of Manasseh have already received their inheritance on the other side of the Jordan River.

In the sixth scene: Joshua now speaks to the selected 21 people from the 7 tribes and instructs them what to do.

In the seventh scene: The 21 men from the 7 tribes set off on their journey. They go all over the land and write a report about the land. Then the men return to Joshua, to the camp near the city of Shiloh.

In the eighth scene: Joshua throws lots for the seven tribes of Israel in the presence of Yahweh. Joshua divides out the land to the seven tribes and each tribe receives its own piece of land.

The characters in this passage are:

- All the Israelites
- Seven tribes of Israel to whom Joshua has not yet assigned a share of land as their inheritance, or possession. These are the tribe of Benjamin, the tribe of Simeon, the tribe of Zebulun, the tribe of Issachar, the tribe of Asher, the tribe of Naphtali, and the tribe of Dan.
- Joshua
- And 21 men from the 7 tribes who went to survey the land. There were three men from each tribe.

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

Then the whole congregation, or community, of Israel gathers in the city of Shiloh. Shiloh is where the tribe of Ephraim has settled.

There are still seven tribes of Israelite people to whom Joshua has not assigned a share of land as their inheritance, or possession. So Joshua speaks to the people and asks them a question: "How long will you wait before you begin to take possession of the land that Yahweh, the God of your ancestors, has given you?" To "take possession of the land" is special language that means the Israelites will drive out the Canaanites who were in the land. Joshua refers to Yahweh by Yahweh's title, "God of your ancestors." By doing this, Joshua emphasizes that it is Yahweh, the one true God, who made a promise to the Israelite ancestors. Yahweh is also the one who has given the Israelites this land. Joshua does not expect an answer to his question. Joshua says this question as a rebuke to the seven tribes.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you rebuke someone in your language? Tell a story about a time when religious leaders rebuked people for not following their god. How did they sound? What kinds of things did they say? Pause this audio here.

Joshua orders the people of Israel to provide three persons from each of the seven tribes. Joshua tells the tribes what Joshua will do. Joshua will send the people out to go back and forth in the land that they want to receive, and to survey that land. The people must write a report about the territory according to the inheritance, or proposed divisions that each tribe will eventually get.

Joshua describes what will happen. Joshua says that after the people have divided the land into seven parts, they must come back to Joshua and give Joshua their reports. The tribe of Judah already has its territory in the south, and "the house of Joseph," or Joseph's descendants, who are the tribes of Ephraim and the half-tribe of Manasseh, already have their territory in the north. These tribes are to remain in their land. Then Joshua will throw lots for the seven tribes before Yahweh, or in Yahweh's presence, to decide which part of the land Yahweh wants each tribe to have. Although the story says that only Joshua throws the lots, we know from previous stories that the high priest Eleazar and the other tribal leaders would have been there too.

Stop here and as a group look at a map of the land of Canaan as it was before the seven tribes of Israel received their portion of the land. Pause this audio here.

Then Joshua reminds the Israelites that the tribe of Levi is to receive no portion in the land because being priests of Yahweh is their inheritance. And the tribes of Gad, Reuben, and the half-tribe of Manasseh have already received their inheritance on the east side of the Jordan River.

Joshua now speaks to the 21 people from the 7 tribes and instructs them. Joshua says, "Walk all around the land and write a report about it. Then come back to me. I will throw lots for you here in Shiloh to let Yahweh decide how to divide the land among you."

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: This passage repeats several times what is going to happen. Joshua first tells the Israelites what he wants the 21 men from the 7 tribes to do. Next, Joshua gives instructions to the men the Israelites selected. Discuss how you will make it clear that Joshua is first talking about his plan to the Israelites, and that later Joshua is instructing the selected people. Pause this audio here.

So, the 21 men from the 7 tribes go on their journey. The men go all over the land, and they write a report about it. They most likely write the report in a scroll. People used scrolls instead of books. Books did not exist at that time. The report shows how they divide up the land into seven parts and list the towns in each part. Then the men return to Joshua, to the camp in the city of Shiloh.

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

Stop here and as a group act out the scene. Select one person to be Joshua, and a few people to be the representatives of the seven tribes of Israel. The man playing Joshua will tell the others to survey a small piece of land nearby. He will tell them what important things to look for to be able to divide the land into several parts. So, they can look for trees, green areas, houses, wells, or anything else that the person playing Joshua decides adds value to the land. The people going out must decide how they are going to record the information and then bring their reports back to the person playing Joshua. Pause this audio here.

So, there in the city of Shiloh, Joshua throws lots for them in the presence of Yahweh by the tent of meeting. Joshua divides out the land to the remaining seven tribes of Israel. Each tribe receives its own piece of land.

Stop here and as a group look at a photo of lots, 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 Joshua 18:1–10 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has eight scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- All the Israelites
- Seven tribes of Israel to whom Joshua has not yet assigned a share of land as their inheritance. These are the tribe of Benjamin, the tribe of Simeon, the tribe of Zebulun, the tribe of Issachar, the tribe of Asher, the tribe of Naphtali, and the tribe of Dan.
- Joshua
- And 21 men from the 7 tribes to go and survey the land. There are three men 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.

After the people of Israel conquer the land, the whole congregation of Israel gathers in the city of Shiloh.

There are still seven tribes of Israelite people to whom Joshua has not assigned a share of land as their inheritance. So Joshua rebukes the people of Israel and says that they should not have waited so long to take possession of the land that Yahweh the God of their ancestors had given them.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "What are the seven tribes waiting for? Yahweh has given them the land to possess!" or
- "Are the tribes scared? Do they not believe Yahweh?" or
- "I think I need to help them."

Joshua orders the people of Israel to provide three persons from each of the seven tribes. Joshua tells the tribes that he will send the people out to go back and forth in the land that they want to receive, and to survey it. They will write a report about the territory according to the inheritance, or proposed divisions, that each tribe will eventually get.

Joshua says that after the people have divided the land into seven parts, they will come back to Joshua and give Joshua their reports. The tribe of Judah already has its territory in the south, and "the house of Joseph," or Joseph's descendants, who are the tribes of Ephraim and the half-tribe of Manasseh, already have their territory in the north. These tribes are to remain in their land. Then Joshua will throw lots for the seven tribes before Yahweh to determine which part of the land Yahweh wants each tribe to have.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "We praise Yahweh that Joshua is helping the remaining seven tribes possess their land!" or
- "Now all the 12 tribes of Israel will possess the land that Yahweh has given to us as our inheritance and possession," or
- "All Israel will be obedient to Yahweh when the last seven tribes are in their land."

Then Joshua reminds the people of Israel that the tribe of Levi is to receive no portion in the land because being priests of Yahweh is their inheritance. And the tribes of Gad, Reuben, and the half-tribe of Manasseh have already received their inheritance on the other side of the Jordan River.

Joshua now instructs the 21 people selected from the 7 tribes: "Walk all around the land and write a report about it. Then come back to me. I will throw lots for you here in Shiloh to let Yahweh decide how to divide the land among you."

So, the men go on their journey. The men go all over the land, and they write a report about it. The report shows how they divide up the land into seven parts and list the towns in each part. Then the men return to Joshua, to the camp in the city of Shiloh.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the 21 men from the 7 tribes, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "We are so excited to survey our future land. We are so grateful that Joshua told us what to do," or
- "We must pray that Yahweh will protect us from any dangers," or
- "When we have described and divided the land, Yahweh will decide where each tribe is going to live. Joshua will cast lots to find out Yahweh's will."

So, there in the city of Shiloh, Joshua throws lots for them in the presence of Yahweh by the tent of meeting. Joshua divides out the land to the remaining seven tribes of Israel. Each tribe receives its own piece of land.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 18:1–10 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Then the whole **congregation**, or **community**, of the **sons of Israel** gathers at Shiloh and sets up the tent of meeting, or tabernacle, there. Use the same word for congregation or community as you used before. Sons of Israel, or the Israelites, are the descendants of Jacob. Use the same word or phrase for sons of Israel as you used in previous passages. Look up Israelites in the Master Glossary for more information.

Shiloh was a city on a mountain in the hill country of Ephraim. It was centrally located between Shechem to the north and Bethel to the south. It was west of the Jordan River about 20 miles north of Jerusalem. The name Shiloh means "rest" in the original language.

The tent of meeting is a phrase that sometimes describes the tabernacle, or the House of God. It refers to a large tent that the Israelites moved from place to place. Inside was the ark of the covenant. The tent of meeting was where the Israelites worshipped Yahweh. This was a place where priests made sacrifices on behalf of the people before they built the temple.

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

Joshua rebukes the Israelites and asks them how long they are going to put off going in to take possession of the land, which **Yahweh**, the **God** of their fathers has given them. Yahweh is the personal name for God, and it is used throughout this passage. Use the same name for Yahweh that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary. God is the general name for God, the creator of the universe. Use the same word or phrase you used in previous passages. Look up God in the Master Glossary for more information.

Joshua tells the 21 men to write descriptions of the land they survey. These men probably write the descriptions on **scrolls**. Use the same word or phrase for scrolls or books as you have used in previous passages.

Then Joshua reminds the people of Israel that the **Levites** are to receive no portion in the land because being **priests** of Yahweh is their inheritance. Use the same word or phrase for Levites and priests as you used in previous passages. For more information on Levites and priests, refer to the Master Glossary.

Joshua **throws lots** for the Israelites in Shiloh before Yahweh. The phrase "to throw lots" probably refers to putting marked objects, or lots, into a bag or container. These objects were usually pebbles. People marked these objects either with different colours, different symbols, or different names. Then a person shook the bag until one of the objects fell out. Use the same word or phrase for "throw lots" as you have used in previous passages.

Stop here and as a group look at a photo of lots, 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.

Joshua 18:1–10

Audio Content

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Joshua 18:11–28

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 18:11–28 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 18:11–28 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 Joshua 18:11–28 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, Joshua rebuked the Israelites because seven tribes showed no urgency to possess the land that Yahweh had given them as their inheritance. Joshua ordered the tribes to select three people from each tribe to survey the land and divide it into seven parts. Then Joshua threw lots to determine which portion of land Yahweh selected for each tribe.

This passage is the first one of seven passages that describes the territories with their boundaries that Joshua distributed to the remaining seven tribes. The land descriptions are very detailed and show exactly which territories Yahweh gives to each tribe as their inheritance and possession. The clear boundaries are proof that Yahweh fulfills his promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to give the people of Israel the land of Canaan to possess.

The first lot which Joshua threw fell to the clans, or large family groups, of the tribe of Benjamin. Benjamin was Jacob's second son by Rachel. Benjamin's territory was north of the territory of Judah and south of the land of the descendants of Joseph, Ephraim, and the western half of the tribe of Manasseh.

Stop here and as a group look at two maps showing the tribe of Benjamin's territory. Pay attention to landmarks like cities, hills, valleys, and water sources like rivers and springs. Note who the tribe of Benjamin's neighbours are. Continue to look at these maps as you listen to the rest of the information, so you can follow along. Pause this audio here.

The description of the boundary of the land of Benjamin begins on the north side where the boundary goes briefly along the southern border of West Manasseh and then along the southern border of Ephraim. The boundary description begins on the east side at the Jordan River. The northern border ends at the wilderness of Beth Aven.

Now the passage describes Benjamin's western border. At Beth Horon, the border turns south along the western edge of the hill facing Beth Horon. The western boundary ends at the city of Kiriath Baal, also known as Kiriath Jearim, which belongs to the tribe of Judah. Across the western border is land that will become the inheritance and possession of another tribe of Israel.

Now the passage describes Benjamin's southern border, which goes along the northern border of Judah's territory. Benjamin's southern border begins at the outskirts of Kiriath Jearim. The southern border ends at the northern inlet on the Salt Sea, or Dead Sea, where the Jordan River empties into it.

The border on the east side of Benjamin's land is the Jordan River. This is the land that the clan of Benjamin receives as their inheritance. These boundaries mark out the land that the tribe of Benjamin receives according to their family groups.

There are 12 cities in this land, along with the settlements around them in the eastern part of the territory, which belongs to the tribe of Benjamin.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: When you talk about a country, how do you describe what is inside the land? How do you talk about cities, natural resources, terrain, areas with good soil, and water sources? Pause this audio here.

There are another 14 cities, along with the settlements around them in the western part of the territory, which also belong to the tribe of Benjamin. Joshua distributes this land to the tribe of Benjamin.

Stop here and, as a group, do the following exercise: Select a local area or region and take turns describing it together. Describe the borders and the characteristics of the area, like towns, water sources, agricultural areas, and so on.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 18:11–28 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 six scenes.

In the first scene: The passage describes the northern border of the tribe of Benjamin.

In the second scene: The passage describes the western border of the tribe of Benjamin.

In the third scene: The passage describes the southern border of the tribe of Benjamin.

In the fourth scene: The passage describes the eastern border of the tribe of Benjamin.

In the fifth scene: The passage lists cities in the eastern part of the territory of Benjamin.

In the sixth scene: The passage lists cities in the western part of the territory of Benjamin.

The characters in this passage are:

- Joshua, the priest Eleazar, and the tribal leaders. Even though the passage does not mention them, we know they are the people throwing the lots.
- And the tribe of Benjamin, who will live in the area Yahweh is giving to them as an inheritance and possession.

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

The first lot Joshua throws falls to the clans of the tribe of Benjamin. We do not know exactly how Joshua throws the lots or how the tribe chooses land based on how the lots fall. Benjamin's territory is north of the territory of Judah, and south of the land of the descendants of Joseph, Ephraim, and the western half of the tribe of Manasseh.

Stop here and as a group look at two maps showing the tribe of Benjamin's territory. Pay attention to landmarks like cities, hills, valleys, and water sources like rivers and springs. Note who the tribe of Benjamin's neighbours are. Continue to look at these maps as you listen to the rest of the information, so you can follow along. Pause this audio here.

The description of the boundary of the land of Benjamin begins on the north side where the boundary goes briefly along the southern border of West Manasseh and then along the southern border of Ephraim. The boundary description begins on the east side at the Jordan River. The boundary then passes the northern slope of the city of Jericho. Jericho lies in a relatively flat area, but it has steep mountains to the north and northwest. A slope refers to the steep rise of a mountain. From that point it goes westward and it continues through the hill country. The northern border ends at the wilderness of Beth Aven.

From there the border continues in a southerly direction to the south slope of the city of Luz, also known as Bethel. The boundary continues down to the village of Ataroth Addar, which is on the mountain that lies to the south of the village of Lower Beth Horon. Beth Horon itself belongs to Ephraim.

Now the passage describes Benjamin's western border. At Beth Horon the border turns south along the western edge of the hill facing Beth Horon. The western boundary ends at the city of Kiriath Baal, also known as Kiriath Jearim, which belongs to the tribe of Judah. Across the western border is land that will become the inheritance of another tribe of Israel.

Now the passage describes Benjamin's southern border, which goes along the northern border of Judah's territory. Benjamin's southern border begins at the outskirts of Kiriath Jearim. From there the boundary goes to the city of Ephron and then to the spring waters of Nephtoah. The border then continues down to the foot of the mountain on the north side of Rephaim Valley, where Hinnom Valley begins. From there it goes south through Hinnom Valley to the shoulder of the Jebusites, which is a mountain ridge south of the city of Jebus. Jebus later became Jerusalem. Then the border goes to Enrogel Spring. Turning northward the border then continues as far as the village of En Shemesh and the city Geliloth, which was probably another name for Gilgal. The exact meaning of Geliloth is unclear. Geliloth is opposite the Pass, or ascent, of Adummim. The Pass of Adummim is a road that goes up Adummim Mountain. The boundary continues downhill to the Stone of Bohan, the son of Ruben. From there the border passes along the north side of the slope overlooking the Arabah, or Jordan valley. It then goes into the Arabah Valley itself, which is an arid desert. Arabah means desert, or wasteland. The border continues past the north slope of the town of Beth Hoglah. The southern border then ends at the northern inlet on the Salt Sea, or Dead Sea, where the Jordan River empties into it.

The border on the east side of Benjamin's land is the Jordan River. This is the land that the clan of Benjamin receives as their inheritance. These boundaries mark out the land that the tribe of Benjamin receives according to their family groups.

There are 12 cities in that land, along with the settlements around them in the eastern part of the territory, which belongs to the tribe of Benjamin. These cities are: Jericho, Beth Hoglah, Emek Keziz, Beth Arabah, Zemaraim, Bethel, Avvim, Parah, Ophrah, Kephrah Ammoni, Ophni, and Geba.

There are another 14 cities, along with the settlements around them, in the western part of the territory, which also belongs to the tribe of Benjamin. These cities are: Gibeon, Ramah, Beeroth, Mizpah, Kephirah, Mozah, Rekem, Irpeel, Taralah, Zelah, Haeleph, Jebus also called Jerusalem, Gibeah, and Kiriath. Joshua designated this land to the tribe of Benjamin.

Now, as a group re-create Benjamin's territory on the ground. First gather some materials like larger stones to represent Benjamin's neighbours—the tribes of Judah, Ephraim, West Manasseh, and one additional stone to represent their future neighbour across the west border. Then gather other items that you will use to mark cities and settlements on the border and cities within the land, hills, valleys, and bodies of water like springs, the Jordan River, and the Salt Sea, or Dead Sea. Next listen to the audio again and pause frequently to put down each landmark as you hear about it. Once you have put all the objects down, draw a line between all the landmarks on the border.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 18:11–28 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:

- Joshua, the priest Eleazar, and the tribal leaders. Even though the passage does not mention them, we know they are the people throwing the lots.
- And the tribe of Benjamin, who will live in the area Yahweh is giving to them as inheritance and possession.

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 first lot Joshua throws falls to the clans of the tribe of Benjamin. Benjamin's territory is north of the territory of Judah and south of the land of the descendants of Joseph, Ephraim, and West Manasseh.

Joshua describes the northern, western, southern, and eastern borders of the land that belongs to the tribe Benjamin.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Yahweh has established the exact borders of the tribe of Benjamin," or
- "Yahweh told us all the cities and villages, slopes and valleys, and all the springs that are on the border. So the Benjamites know what their land is. It is also important for other tribes to know, so they do not argue over the land," or
- "Yahweh is faithful. Yahweh gave the Benjamites their inheritance and possession."

Joshua describes the cities in the eastern and western parts of the land that belongs to the tribe of Benjamin.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Benjamites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Yahweh has given us land that is the right size for the number of people in our tribe. We are the smallest tribe of Israel," or
- "This land has many cities in it, but it also has hills and valleys, and springs of water. It is beautiful!" or
- "We are neighbours with Judah, Ephraim, and West Manasseh. Which tribe will Yahweh give us as a neighbour on the western border?"

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 18:11–28 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

The first **lot** that Joshua throws falls to the **clans**, or large family groups, of the tribe of Benjamin. Use the same word or phrase for lot and clans, or large family groups, as you did in previous passages.

The northern border ends at the **wilderness** of Beth Aven. Use the same word or phrase for wilderness as you used in previous passages. For more information on wilderness, refer to the Master Glossary.

Across the western border is land that will become the **inheritance and possession** of another tribe of Israel. Use the same word or phrase for "inheritance and possession" as you used in previous passages.

As Benjamin's southern border goes along Judah's northern border, you have already translated and described many of the place names in Joshua 15:1–12. Translate or describe these place names as you did in Joshua 15:1–12.

Use the same words and phrases as you used in previous passages for the types of landscape in the land, including **hill country**, **springs of water**, **slopes**, or **sides of mountains**.

There are 12 **cities** in this land, along with the **settlements** around them in the eastern part of the territory, which belongs to the tribe of Benjamin. A city is a large place with many buildings, roads, and shops where many people live and work. There is often a wall around a city for protection. A settlement is the smallest type of a group of houses. A settlement has fewer buildings and roads where fewer people live. There are usually a number of villages and settlements surrounding one city, and they rely on the city for protection. Use the same words or phrases for city and settlement 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.

Joshua 18:11–28

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (12980151 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Joshua 19:1–9

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 19:1–9 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 19:1–9 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 Joshua 19:1–9 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The previous passage was the first one of seven that describes the territories with their boundaries that Yahweh allocated to the remaining seven tribes of Israel. The first lot Joshua threw fell to the tribe of Benjamin, and the passage described the boundaries of Benjamin's territory and the cities in it.

Now Joshua throws the lot again. This second lot shows that the tribe of Simeon is the next to receive land. There is some land for each clan, or large family group, in the tribe of Simeon. Their land is within the boundaries of the land that the tribe of Judah received as their inheritance.

Stop here and as a group look at two maps showing the tribe of Simeon's territory. Pay attention to landmarks like cities, hills, valleys, and water sources like rivers and springs. Note who the tribe of Simeon's neighbours are. Continue to look at this map as you listen to the rest of the information, so you can follow along. Pause this audio here.

The passage does not describe the borders of the land of the tribe of Simeon, but it does list the cities Yahweh gives them as their inheritance and possession within the territory of the tribe of Judah. Yahweh gives the tribe of Simeon the following cities as its permanent possession: Beersheba, which is also called Sheba, Moladah, Hazar Shual, Balah, Ezem, Eltolad, Bethul, Hormah, Ziklag, Beth Markaboth, Hazar Susah, Beth Lebaoth, and Sharuhén. In all, Yahweh gives Simeon 13 cities and the settlements that surround them. All these cities and settlements are in the dry area of the wilderness of Negev.

Stop here and discuss as a group: This passage defines the land of the tribe of Simeon by listing all the cities that Yahweh gives to Simeon. In what other ways can you clearly describe a large area like a country without talking about its borders? Pause this audio here.

The territory of the tribe of Simeon also includes the cities of Ain, Rimmon, Ether, and Ashan. These four cities also include the settlements that surrounded them. The cities of Ain and Rimmon are in the wilderness of Negev, while the cities of Ether and Ashan are in the north, in the Shephelah district which has good soil. Simeon's land also includes all the other cities and settlements as far south as Baalath Beer, which is also called Ramah in the Negev, or Ramah of the South. This is the land Yahweh gives the large family groups of the clan of Simeon as their inheritance and possession.

Stop here as a group and look at the map of the land of Simeon. Find the cities and discuss their location. How many are near a river or a stream? Are the cities close together or spread apart? Are they on hills or flat land? In your area, how did people decide where to build cities? What characteristics of the land made them decide to build in those places? Pause this audio here.

The land that the tribe of Simeon receives as their inheritance, or permanent possession, is inside the land of the tribe of Judah. Judah had received too much land for the number of people in its tribe, therefore Yahweh gives the tribe of Simeon their share of land inside the land that belongs to the tribe of Judah.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 19:1-9 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: Joshua throws the lot for the second time. The tribe of Simeon is the next to receive land. Their land is within the boundaries of the land that the tribe of Judah received as their inheritance.

In the second scene: The passage lists the first 13 cities with their settlements that are in the land of the tribe of Simeon.

In the third scene: The passage lists four more cities with their settlements that are in the land of the tribe of Simeon.

In the fourth scene: The passage says again that the land Yahweh gives the clan of Simeon as their permanent possession is inside the land of the clan of Judah. The passage explains that this is because Judah had originally received too much land for the number of people in its tribe.

The characters in this passage are:

- Joshua, the priest Eleazar, and the tribal leaders. Even though the passage does not mention them, we know they are the people throwing the lots.
- And the tribe of Simeon, who will live in the area Yahweh is giving to them as inheritance.

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

Joshua throws the lot again. This second lot shows that the tribe of Simeon is the next to receive land. There is some land for each clan, or large family group, in the Simeon tribe. Their land is within the boundaries of the land that the tribe of Judah receives as their inheritance and possession.

Stop here and as a group look at two maps showing the tribe of Simeon's territory. Pay attention to landmarks like cities, hills, valleys, and water sources like rivers and springs. Note who the tribe of Simeon's neighbours are. Continue to look at this map as you listen to the rest of the information, so you can follow along. Pause this audio here.

The passage does not describe the borders of the land of the tribe of Simeon, but it does list cities that Yahweh gives them as inheritance within the territory of the tribe of Judah. The tribe of Simeon receives the following cities as its permanent possession: Beersheba, which is also called Sheba, Moladah, Hazar Shual, Balah, Ezem, Eltolad, Bethul, Hormah, Ziklag, Beth Markaboth, Hazar Susah, Beth Lebaath, and Sharuhem. In all, Yahweh gives Simeon 13 cities and the settlements that surround them. All these cities and settlements were in the dry area of the wilderness of Negev.

The territory of the tribe of Simeon also included the cities of Ain, Rimmon, Ether, and Ashan. These four cities also include the settlements that surrounded them. The cities of Ain and Rimmon are in the wilderness of Negev, while the cities of Ether and Ashan are in the north, in the Shephelah district which has good soil. Simeon's land also includes all the other cities and settlements as far south as Baalath Beer, which is also called Ramah in the Negev, or Ramah of the South. This is the land Yahweh gives the family groups of the clan of Simeon as their inheritance and possession.

Stop here and as a group discuss how you will talk about cities that people know by two names. Pause this audio here.

The land that the tribe of Simeon receives as their inheritance, or permanent possession, is inside the land of the clan of Judah. Judah had received too much land for the number of people in its tribe. Therefore the clan of Simeon receives their share of land inside the land that belongs to the clan of Judah.

Now, as a group, re-create Simeon's territory on the ground. First find about 17 larger pebbles to represent the cities and about 40 pebbles to represent the settlements. Arrange the pebbles representing cities and settlements on the ground while looking at the map of the land of Simeon. Find some sticks to represent rivers and streams, and put them on the ground. Next find some branches with leaves or other objects of the same kind that you can use to put around the land of the tribe of Simeon to represent the surrounding land of Judah.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 19:1-9 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:

- Joshua, the priest Eleazar, and the tribal leaders. Even though the passage does not mention them, we know they are the people throwing the lots.
- And the tribe of Simeon, who will live in the area Yahweh is giving to them as inheritance.

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.

Joshua throws the lot again. This second lot shows that the tribe of Simeon is the next to receive land. There is some land for each family in the Simeon tribe. Their land is within the boundaries of the land that the tribe of Judah receives as their inheritance.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing people from the tribe of Simeon, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Yahweh has given us part of the land of the tribe of Judah as our inheritance. They should not be unhappy, because it was Yahweh who gave the land to us," or
- "The tribe of Judah will be our only neighbour," or
- "We must have good relations with them."

The tribe of Simeon receives the following cities as its permanent possession: Beersheba, which is also called Sheba, Moladah, Hazar Shual, Balah, Ezem, Eltolad, Bethul, Hormah, Ziklag, Beth Markaboth, Hazar Susah, Beth Lebaoth, and the city of Sharuhem. In all there are 13 cities and the settlements that surround them. All these cities and settlements are in the dry area of the Negev.

The territory of the tribe of Simeon also includes the cities of Ain, Rimmon, Ether, and Ashan. In all, Yahweh gives Simeon 13 cities and the settlements that surround them. The cities of Ain and Rimmon are in the Negev, while the cities of Ether and Ashan are in the north, in the Shephelah district which has good soil. Simeon's land

also includes all the other cities and settlements as far south as Baalath Beer, which is also called Ramah in the Negev, or Ramah of the South. This is the land that the family groups of the clan of Simeon receive as their inheritance.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing people from the tribe of Simeon, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Yahweh has given us 17 cities with their surrounding settlements as our inheritance," or
- "Yahweh provides all we need," or
- "Some of our people will live in cities, and some will live in settlements. We will buy food from the family clans living in settlements, because they plant many crops."

The land that the clans of the tribe of Simeon receives as their permanent possession is inside the land of the clan of Judah. Judah had received too much land for the number of people in its tribe. Therefore the clan of Simeon receives their share of land inside the land that belongs to the clan of Judah.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Yahweh is just. He gave the tribes of Judah and Simeon land of the right size for the number of people they have," or
- "Yahweh told the tribe of Simeon what towns and villages he is giving them as inheritance. I wonder how they will decide what the border is?"

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 19:1–9 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Joshua throws the **lot** again. This second lot shows that the tribe of Simeon is the next to receive land. There is some land for each **clan**, or large family group, in the tribe of Simeon. Use the same word or phrase for lot and clan, or large family group, as you did in previous passages.

Simeon's land is within the boundaries of the land that the tribe of Judah had received as their **inheritance**. Use the same word or phrase for inheritance as you did in previous passages.

In all there are 13 **cities** and the **settlements** that surround them. Use the same word or phrase for city and settlement as you used in previous passages.

As the land that Yahweh gave to the tribe of Simeon is part of the land that Yahweh gave to the tribe of Judah, you have already translated and described many of the place names from this passage in Joshua 15:20–32 and Joshua 15:33–47. Translate or describe these place names as you did in Joshua 15:20–32 and Joshua 15:33–47. You may use the word **wilderness** when you describe the Negev wilderness. If needed, refer to wilderness 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.

Joshua 19:1–9

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (11514014 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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- [FIA Step 3](#)
- [FIA Step 4](#)
- [FIA Step 5](#)
- [FIA Step 6](#)

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

Joshua 19:10–16

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 19:10–16 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 19:10–16 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

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

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 19:10–16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The previous passage was the second one of seven describing the territories with their boundaries that Yahweh allocated to the remaining seven tribes of Israel. The second lot that Joshua threw fell to the tribe of Simeon and the passage described Simeon's territory.

Now Joshua throws the lot again. This third lot shows that the tribe of Zebulun is the next to receive land. Zebulun is Jacob's sixth and youngest son by Leah. There is some land for each clan, or large family group, in the tribe of Zebulun. Joshua distributes land to them that will be their inheritance, or permanent possession. The land reaches as far as the city of Sarid in the southeast.

Stop here and as a group look at two maps showing the tribe of Zebulun's territory. Pay attention to landmarks like cities, hills, valleys, and water sources like rivers and springs. Note who the tribe of Zebulun's neighbours are. Continue to look at this map as you listen to the rest of the information, so you can follow along. Pause this audio here.

The description of the southern border begins at the city of Sarid in the east. From Sarid the border goes west to the city of Maralah, then it continues to the city of Dabbesheth. The border then reaches the brook, or wadi, near the city of Jokneam. A brook, or wadi, is a river bed that flows with water in certain seasons. Across that part of the border is the land of the western half of the tribe of Manasseh.

From the other side of the city of Sarid, the border turns east toward the sunrise and reaches the boundary of the city of Kisloth Tabor. Then the border continues to the city of Daberath and up to the city of Japhia. Across the southeastern border is land that will become the inheritance and possession of another tribe of Israel.

The eastern border begins there and continues to the city of Gath Hopher. It goes on to the cities of Eth Kazin and Rimmon and turns towards the city of Neah.

On the north the border turns toward the city of Hannathon. The border ends at Iphtah El Valley on the west. Across the eastern and northern border is land that will become the inheritance of yet another tribe of Israel.

The passage does not describe the western border of the land of the tribe of Zebulun. Across the western border is land that will become the inheritance of yet another tribe of Israel.

The tribe of Zebulun receives 12 cities with their surrounding settlements. Some of the cities are Kattath, Nahalal, Shimron, Idalah, and Bethlehem. Please note that in the Bible there is another city called Bethlehem that is in the land of the tribe of Judah where Jesus is later born. We do not know why this passage only lists 5 cities of the 12 mentioned. It is possible that other cities not listed here are included in this number. For example, the city of Nazareth is a part of the land of the tribe of Zebulun, but the passage does not mention it.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: This passage lists only 5 cities from the 12 mentioned. In your community, what are some reasons why some information is sometimes missing from important documents like a land survey? Pause this audio here.

This is the land that Yahweh gives the tribe of Zebulun as their inheritance, or permanent possession. Each clan, or large family group, receives some land. They receive these cities with the settlements nearby them.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 19:10–16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

This passage has seven scenes.

In the first scene: Joshua throws the lot for the third time. The tribe of Zebulun is the next to receive land as their inheritance. Joshua distributes to them the land that reaches as far as the city of Sarid in the southeast.

In the second scene: The passage describes the part of the southern border of the land of the tribe of Zebulun going west from the city of Sarid.

In the third scene: The passage describes part of the southern border of the land of the tribe of Zebulun going east from the city of Sarid.

In the fourth scene: The passage describes the eastern border of the land of the tribe of Zebulun.

In the fifth scene: The passage describes the northern border of the land of the tribe of Zebulun.

In the sixth scene: The passage lists 5 of the 12 cities that are part of the land of the tribe of Zebulun with their surrounding settlements.

In the seventh scene: The passage confirms that this is the land that the tribe of Zebulun receives as their inheritance, or permanent possession.

The characters in this passage are:

- Joshua, the priest Eleazar, and the tribal leaders. Even though the passage does not mention them, we know they are the people throwing the lots.
- And the tribe of Zebulun, who will live in the area Yahweh is giving to them as inheritance.

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

Joshua throws the lot again. This third lot shows that the tribe of Zebulun is the next to receive land. There is some land for each clan, or large family group, in the tribe of Zebulun. Joshua distributes to them land that will be their inheritance, or permanent possession. The land reaches as far as the city of Sarid in the southeast.

Stop here and as a group look at two maps showing the tribe of Zebulun's territory. Pay attention to landmarks like cities, hills, valleys, and water sources like rivers and springs. Note who the tribe of Zebulun's neighbours are. Continue to look at this map as you listen to the rest of the information, so you can follow along. Pause this audio here.

The description of the southern border begins at the city of Sarid in the east. From Sarid the border goes west to the city of Maralah, then it continues to the city of Dabbesheth. The border then reaches the brook near the city of Jokneam. Across that part of the border is the land of the tribe of West Manasseh.

From the other side of the city of Sarid, the border turns east toward the sunrise and reaches the boundary of the city of Kisloth Tabor.

Stop here and discuss the following: Notice that when the author talks about a boundary going towards the east, he sometimes also says that it goes "towards the sunrise," or towards the direction that the sun rises each morning. Why do you think the author says that? How do you talk about certain directions when you describe borders of territories or when you describe where something is? Pause this audio here.

Then the boundary line continues to the city of Daberath, and up to the city of Japhia. Across the southeastern border is land that will become the inheritance of another tribe of Israel.

The eastern border begins there and continues to the city of Gath Hepher. It goes on to the cities of Eth Kazin and Rimmon, and turns towards the city of Neah.

On the north the border turns toward the city of Hannathon. The border ends at Iphtah El Valley on the west. Across the eastern and northern border is land that will become the inheritance of yet another tribe of Israel.

The passage does not describe the western border of the land of the tribe of Zebulun. Across the western border is land that will become the inheritance of yet another tribe of Israel.

The tribe of Zebulun receives 12 cities with their surrounding settlements. Some of the cities are Kattath, Nahalal, Shimron, Idalah, and Bethlehem.

This is the land that the tribe of Zebulun receives as their inheritance, or permanent possession. Each clan, or large family group, receives some land. They receive these cities with the settlements that are nearby.

Now, as a group, recreate Zebulun's territory on the ground. First gather some materials like larger stones to represent Zebulun's existing neighbours—the tribe of West Manasseh and three additional stones to represent their future neighbours across the southeastern, eastern, northern, and western borders. Then gather other items that you will use to mark cities on the border, and cities and settlements within the land. Also find objects to represent hills, valleys, and bodies of water like springs and rivers. Next listen to the audio again and pause frequently to put down each landmark as you hear about it. Once you have put all the objects down, draw a line between all the landmarks on the border.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 19:10–16 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:

- Joshua, the priest Eleazar, and the tribal leaders. Even though the passage does not mention them, we know they are the people throwing the lots.
- And the tribe of Zebulun, who will live in the area Yahweh is giving to them as inheritance.

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.

Joshua throws the lot again. This third lot shows that the tribe of Zebulun is the next to receive land. There is some land for each clan, or large family group, in the tribe of Zebulun. Joshua distributes to them land that will be their inheritance, or permanent possession. The land reaches as far as the city of Sarid in the southeast.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Yahweh decided that the tribe of Zebulun should receive their land now," or
- "Yahweh already knows which tribe will get their land from him next," or
- "I have to cast lots to know where Yahweh wants each tribe to live."

From Sarid the border goes west to the city of Maralah, then it continues to the city of Dabbesheth. The border then reaches the brook near the city of Jokneam.

From the other side of the city of Sarid, the border turns east toward the sunrise and reaches the boundary of the city of Kisloth Tabor. Then the boundary line continues to the city of Daberath and up to the city of Japhia.

The eastern border begins there and continues to the city of Gath Hepher. It goes on to the cities of Eth Kazin and Rimmon, and turns towards the city of Neah.

On the north the border turns toward the city of Hannathon. The border ends at Iphtah El Valley on the west.

Yahweh gives the tribe of Zebulun 12 cities with their surrounding settlements. Some of the cities are Kattath, Nahalal, Shimron, Idalah, and Bethlehem.

This is the land that the tribe of Zebulun receives as their inheritance, or permanent possession. Each clan, or large family group, receives some land. They receive these cities with the settlements that are nearby.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person who is playing the people in the tribe of Zebulun, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "We are grateful to Yahweh that he has now given us land to be our inheritance," or
- "Our land has 12 cities with surrounding settlements. We wonder which tribes will be our neighbours," or
- "We will take good care of our land because Yahweh has given it to us to possess forever."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 19:10–16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Joshua throws the **lot** again. This third lot shows that the tribe of Zebulun is the next to receive land. Use the same word or phrase for lot as you did in previous passages.

There is some land for each **clan**, or large family group, in the tribe of Zebulun. Use the same word or phrase for clan, or large family group, as you did in previous passages.

Joshua distributes to the tribe of Zebulun land that will be their **inheritance**, or permanent possession. Use the same word or phrase for inheritance as you did in previous passages.

The border then reaches the **brook** near the city of Jokneam. The word in the original language translated as brook here can also be translated **ravine**, **wadi**, or **dry riverbed**. A dry riverbed usually has water flowing in it when it rains. Translate brook, wadi, dry riverbed, or ravine in the same way as you have previously.

Stop here and look at a photo of a wadi or dry riverbed if needed. Pause this audio here.

The tribe of Zebulun receives the **cities** of Kattath, Nahalal, Shimron, Idalah, and Bethlehem. There are 12 cities together with their **settlements**. Use the same words or phrases for city and settlement 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.

Joshua 19:10–16**Audio Content**

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- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Joshua 19:17–23

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 19:17–23 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 19:17–23 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 Joshua 19:17–23 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The previous passage was the third one of seven describing the territories with their boundaries that Yahweh distributed to the remaining seven tribes of Israel. The third lot that Joshua threw fell to the tribe of Zebulun, and the passage described the cities that were part of Zebulun's territory.

Now Joshua throws the lot again. This fourth lot shows that the tribe of Issachar is the next to receive land. Issachar was Jacob's fifth son by Leah. There is some land for each clan, or large family group, in the tribe of Issachar.

Stop here and as a group look at two maps showing the tribe of Issachar's territory. Pay attention to landmarks like cities, hills, valleys, and water sources like rivers and springs. Note who the tribe of Issachar's neighbours are. Continue to look at this map as you listen to the rest of the information, so you can follow along. Pause this audio here.

The description of the land of the tribe of Issachar consists mainly of cities. The territory of the tribe of Issachar includes the cities of Jezreel, Kessuloth, Shunem, Hapharaim, Shion, Anaharath, Rabbith, Kishion, Ebez, Remeth, En Gannim, En Haddah, and Beth Pazzaz. The list does not appear to follow a particular order of locations. We do not know where many of the cities were. The city of Jezreel lay in the east part of Jezreel Valley, which is a large fertile plain. Jezreel means "God sows." It is easy to grow crops to eat in this fertile plain. The land of the tribe of Issachar covers a large part of this valley.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: The cities the passage lists here do not appear to follow a particular order of locations. When you describe an area in your land, what order do you follow when you list cities or other landmarks? Pause this audio here.

The passage now describes the northwestern boundary of the tribe of Issachar, which it shares with the tribe of Zebulun. On the west side, the border begins close to the city of Tabor, which was on the other side of the border and was a part of the land of the tribe of Zebulun. Then the border goes near the cities of Shahazumah and Beth Shemesh. The border goes on to the east as far as the Jordan River. Issachar's land includes 16 cities and the villages that are near them.

The tribe of Issachar shares its western and southern borders with the tribe of West Manasseh. The eastern border of the tribe of Issachar is the Jordan River. Across the southeastern border is land that will become the inheritance of another tribe of Israel.

The tribe of Issachar receives this land as their inheritance, or permanent possession. Each clan, or large family group, receives some land. They receive these cities with the settlements around them.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 19:17–23 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

This passage has four scenes.

In the first scene: Joshua throws the lot for the fourth time. The tribe of Issachar is the next to receive land as their inheritance.

In the second scene: The passage lists most of the cities that are part of the land of the tribe of Issachar.

In the third scene: The passage describes the northwestern border of the land of the tribe of Issachar.

In the fourth scene: The passage confirms that this is the land that the tribe of Issachar receives as their inheritance, or permanent possession.

The characters in this passage are:

- Joshua, the priest Eleazar, and the tribal leaders. Even though the passage does not mention them, we know they are the people throwing the lots.
- And the tribe of Issachar, who will live in the area Yahweh is giving to them as inheritance.

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

Joshua throws the lot again. This fourth lot shows that the tribe of Issachar is the next to receive land. There is some land for each clan, or large family group, in the tribe of Issachar.

Stop here and as a group look at two maps showing the tribe of Issachar's territory. Pay attention to landmarks like cities, hills, valleys, and water sources like rivers and springs. Note who the tribe of Issachar's neighbours are. Continue to look at this map as you listen to the rest of the information, so you can follow along. Pause this audio here.

The territory of the tribe of Issachar includes the cities of Jezreel, Kessuloth, Shunem, Hapharaim, Shion, Anaharath, Rabbith, Kishion, Ebez, Remeth, En Gannim, En Haddah, and Beth Pazzez.

Stop here and as a group talk about the meaning of town names in your land. Pause this audio here.

On the west side, the northwestern border begins close to the city of Tabor, which is on the other side of the border and is a part of the land of the tribe of Zebulun. Then the border goes near the cities of Shahazumah and Beth Shemesh. The border goes on to the east as far as the Jordan River. Issachar's land includes 16 cities and the villages near them.

The tribe of Issachar receives this land as their permanent possession. Each clan, or large family group, receives some land. They receive these cities with the settlements around them.

Now, as a group, recreate Issachar's territory on the ground. First gather some materials like larger stones to represent Issachar's existing neighbours—the tribe of Zebulun, West Manasseh, and one additional stone to represent their future neighbour across the northern border. Then gather other items that you will use to mark cities on the border, and cities and settlements within the land. Also find objects to represent hills, valleys, and bodies of water like springs and rivers. Next listen to the audio again and pause frequently to put down each

landmark as you hear about it. Once you have put all the objects down, draw a line between all the landmarks on the northwestern border, which is the only border the passage is describing.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 19:17–23 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has four scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Joshua, the priest Eleazar, and the tribal leaders. Even though the passage does not mention them, we know they are the people throwing the lots.
- And the tribe of Issachar, who will live in the area Yahweh is giving to them as inheritance.

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.

Joshua throws the lot again. This fourth lot shows that the tribe of Issachar is the next to receive land. There is some land for each clan, or large family group, in the tribe of Issachar.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Yahweh has now given the tribe of Issachar their land to possess forever," or
- "Yahweh's plan is perfect, and he decides what piece of land to give to each tribe," or
- "I wonder if the people in the tribe of Issachar are happy with the land they got."

The territory of the tribe of Issachar includes the cities of Jezreel, Kessuloth, Shunem, Hapharaim, Shion, Anaharath, Rabbith, Kishion, Ebez, Remeth, En Gannim, En Haddah, and Beth Pazzez.

On the west side, the northwestern border begins close to the city of Tabor, which is on the other side of the border and is a part of the land of the tribe of Zebulun. Then the border goes near the cities of Shahazumah and Beth Shemesh. The border goes on to the east as far as the Jordan River. Issachar's land includes 16 cities and the settlements near them.

The tribe of Issachar receives this land as their permanent possession. Each clan, or large family group, receives some land. They receive these cities with the settlements around them.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person who is playing the people in the tribe of Issachar, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "We love our land! The Jezreel Valley has good soil, so we will have good crops," or
- "Yahweh gave us a land with 16 cities that we did not have to build," or
- "Yahweh loves us, and he gave us good land to possess forever. We will worship Yahweh and give him thanks."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 19:17–23 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Joshua throws the **lot** again. This fourth lot shows that the tribe of Issachar is the next to receive land. There is some land for each **clan**, or large family group, in the tribe of Issachar. Use the same word or phrase for lot and clan, or large family group, as you did in previous passages.

Issachar's land includes 16 **cities** and the **settlements** that are near them. Use the same word or phrase for city and settlement as you used in previous passages.

The tribe of Issachar receives this land as their **inheritance**, or permanent possession. Use the same word or phrase for inheritance as you did 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.

Joshua 19:17–23

Audio Content

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Joshua 19:24–31

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 19:24–31 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 19:24–31 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 Joshua 19:24–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The previous passage was the fourth one of seven that describes the territories with their boundaries that Yahweh distributed to the remaining seven tribes of Israel. The fourth lot that Joshua threw fell to the tribe of Issachar, and the passage described the cities in the tribe of Issachar's territory and a small part of the boundary.

Now Joshua throws the lot again. This fifth lot shows that the tribe of Asher is the next to receive land. Asher was the second and youngest son of Leah's maid-servant Zilpah. There is some land for each clan, or large family group, in the tribe of Asher.

Stop here and as a group look at two maps showing the tribe of Asher's territory. Pay attention to landmarks like cities, hills, valleys, and water sources like rivers and springs. Note who the tribe of Asher's neighbours are. Continue to look at this map as you listen to the rest of the information, so you can follow along. Pause this audio here.

The tribe of Asher receives land in the northwest area of Israel. The southern border of the land of the tribe of Asher starts at the city of Helkath and leads westward through the cities of Hali, Beten, Akshaph, Allammelek, Amad, and Mishal. Across that part of the border is the land of the tribe of West Manasseh.

The tribe of Asher's land extends to the Mount Carmel range of mountains in the southwest. The western border of the land ran along the Mediterranean Sea. However, the passage does not describe all of the western border. Here it mentions the southern point of the western border, which was the cities of Carmel and Shihor Libnath.

The eastern border goes north from the city of Helkath to the city of Beth Dagon. It touches the territory of the tribe of Zebulun and the Valley of Iphtah El, which forms part of the boundary between the tribe of Asher and the tribe of Zebulun's territories.

Stop here to discuss this question as a group: The land of the tribe of Asher had two natural borders, which are the Mediterranean Sea and the Valley of Iphtah El. What natural boundaries does your land, or regions in your land, have? Pause this audio here.

The border continues northward to the cities of Beth Emek and Neiel, and goes to Kabul in the north. The tribe of Asher also receives the cities of Abdon, Rehob, Hammon, and Kanah. The land extends in the north to the important city of Sidon. Across the upper part of the eastern border, to the north and east of the land of the tribe of Zebulun, is land that will become the inheritance of another tribe of Israel.

Now the passage is most likely describing the northern border of the land of the tribe of Asher. The border turns southward towards the city of Ramah and continues to Tyre, a strong city with high walls. After reaching the city of Hosah, the border goes west and ends at the Mediterranean Sea. To the north of the land of the tribe of Asher is the land of Canaan. The tribe of Asher's land includes the cities of Mahalab, Akzib, Ummah, Aphek, and Rehob. There are a total of 22 cities, along with the settlements around them.

The tribe of Asher receives this land as their inheritance, or permanent possession. Each clan, or large family group, receives some land, and they receive these cities with the settlements that are around them.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 19:24–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

This passage has six scenes.

In the first scene: Joshua throws the lot for the fifth time. The tribe of Asher is the next to receive land as their inheritance.

In the second scene: The passage describes the southern border of the land of the tribe of Asher.

In the third scene: The passage describes part of the western border of the land of the tribe of Asher.

In the fourth scene: The passage describes the eastern border of the land of the tribe of Asher.

In the fifth scene: The passage describes most likely the northern border, and it also lists some of the cities belonging to the land of the tribe of Asher.

In the sixth scene: The passage confirms that this is the land of the tribe of Asher, which they receive as their inheritance, or permanent possession.

The characters in this passage are:

- Joshua, the priest Eleazar, and the tribal leaders. Even though the passage does not mention them, we know they are the people throwing the lots.
- And the tribe of Asher, who will live in the area Yahweh is giving to them as inheritance.

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

Joshua throws the lot again. This fifth lot shows that the tribe of Asher is the next to receive land. Asher is the second son of Leah's maid-servant Bilhah. There is some land for each clan, or large family group, in the tribe of Asher.

Stop here and as a group look at two maps showing the tribe of Asher's territory. Pay attention to landmarks like cities, hills, valleys, and water sources like rivers and springs. Note who the tribe of Asher's neighbours are. Continue to look at this map as you listen to the rest of the information, so you can follow along. Pause this audio here.

The tribe of Asher receives land in the northwest area of Israel. The southern border of the land of the tribe of Asher starts at the city of Helkath and leads westward through the cities of Hali, Beten, Achshaph, Allammelech, Amad, and Mishal. Across that part of the border is the land of the tribe of West Manasseh.

The tribe of Asher's land extends to the Mount Carmel range of mountains in the southwest. The western border of the land runs along the Mediterranean Sea. However, the passage does not describe all of the western border. Here it mentions the southern point of the western border, which is the cities of Carmel and Shihor Libnath.

The eastern border goes north from the city of Helkath to the city of Beth Dagon. It touches the territory of the tribe of Zebulun and the Valley of Iphtah El, which forms part of the boundary between the tribe of Asher and the tribe of Zebulun's territories.

The border continues northward to the cities of Beth Emek and Neiel, and goes to Kabul in the north. The tribe of Asher also receives the cities of Abdon, Rehob, Hammon, and Kanah. The land extends in the north to the important city of Sidon. Across the upper part of the eastern border, to the north and east of the land of the tribe of Zebulun, is land that will become the inheritance of another tribe of Israel.

Now the passage is most likely describing the northern border of the land of the tribe of Asher. The border turns southward towards the city of Ramah and continues to Tyre, a strong city with high walls. After reaching the city of Hosah, the border goes west and ends at the Mediterranean Sea. To the north of the land of the tribe of Asher is the land of Canaan. The tribe of Asher's land includes the cities of Mahalab, Akzib, Ummah, Apehek, and Rehob. There are a total of 22 cities, along with the settlements around them.

The tribe of Asher receives this land as their inheritance, or permanent possession. Each clan, or large family group, receives some land. They receive these cities with the settlements around them.

Now, as a group, recreate Asher's territory on the ground. First gather some materials like larger stones to represent Asher's existing neighbours—the tribe of West Manasseh, the tribe of Zebulun, and two additional stones to represent their future neighbour across the upper part of the eastern border and Canaan to the north. Find something to represent the Mediterranean Sea which is the western border. Then gather other items which you will use to mark cities on the border and cities and settlements within the land. Also find objects to represent hills, valleys, and bodies of water like springs and rivers. Next listen to the audio again and pause frequently to put down each landmark as you hear about it. Once you have put all the objects down, draw a line between all the landmarks on the border.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 19:24–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has six scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Joshua, the priest Eleazar, and the tribal leaders. Even though the passage does not mention them, we know they are the people throwing the lots.
- And the tribe of Asher, who will live in the area Yahweh is giving to them as inheritance.

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.

Joshua throws the lot again. This fifth lot shows that the tribe of Asher is the next to receive land. Asher is the second son of Leah's maid-servant Bilhah. There is some land for each clan, or large family group, in the tribe of Asher.

The tribe of Asher receives land in the northwest area of Israel. The southern border of the land of the tribe of Asher starts at the city of Helkath and leads westward through the cities of Hali, Beten, Achshaph, Allammelek, Amad, and Mishal.

The tribe of Asher's land extends to the Mount Carmel range of mountains in the southwest. The western border of the land runs along the Mediterranean Sea. However, the passage does not describe all of the western border. Here it mentions the southern point of the western border which was the cities of Carmel and Shihor Libnath.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I have cast five lots so far and there are two more tribes who have not received land yet from Yahweh," or
- "The tribes that have already got their land now will have to drive out all the Canaanites from their territory. Yahweh told them he would go before them," or
- "I hope the tribes will live in peace with one another and not quarrel over the land."

The passage describes the eastern border of the land of the tribe of Asher.

The passage describes most likely the northern border and also lists some of the cities belonging to the land of the tribe of Asher.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person who is playing the people in the tribe of Asher, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Yahweh has given us such beautiful land! One of our borders is the sea! This means we will need to build ships!" or
- "We have 22 cities in our land and the villages which surround them! Yahweh has truly provided for us," or
- "There are two tribes that have not got their land yet. I wonder which of them will be our neighbour across the eastern border."

The tribe of Asher receives this land as their inheritance, or permanent possession. Each clan, or large family group, receives some land. They receive these cities with the settlements around them.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 19:24–31 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Joshua throws the **lot** again. This fifth lot shows that the tribe of Asher is the next to receive land. There is some land for each **clan**, or large family group, in the tribe of Asher. Use the same word or phrase for lot and clan, or large family group, as you did in previous passages.

There are a total of 22 **cities**, along with the **settlements** around them. Use the same word or phrase for city and settlement as you used in previous passages.

The tribe of Asher receives this land as their **inheritance**, or permanent possession. Each clan, or large family group, receives some land. Use the same word or phrase for inheritance as you did 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.

Joshua 19:24–31**Audio Content**

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- [FIA Step 6](#)

Joshua 19:32–39

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 19:32–39 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 19:32–39 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 Joshua 19:32–39 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The previous passage was the fifth one of seven that describes the territories with their boundaries that Yahweh distributed to the remaining seven tribes of Israel. The fifth lot that Joshua threw fell to the tribe of Asher, and the passage described the boundaries of the tribe of Asher's territory and the cities in it.

Now Joshua throws the lot again. This sixth lot shows that the tribe of Naphtali is the next to receive land. Naphtali was the second and youngest son of Rachel's maid-servant Bilhah. There is some land for each clan, or large family group, in the tribe of Naphtali.

Stop here and as a group look at two maps showing the tribe of Naphtali's territory. Pay attention to landmarks like cities, hills, valleys, and water sources like rivers and springs. Note who the tribe of Naphtali's neighbours are. Continue to look at this map as you listen to the rest of the information, so you can follow along. Pause this audio here.

The southern border of the land of the tribe of Naphtali begins at the city of Heleph near the large tree in Zaanannim city. The border passes the cities of Adami Nekeb and Jabneel, and it goes on eastward to the city of Lakkum. The Jordan River is the east end of the tribe of Naphtali's southern border. Across the southern border is the land of the tribe of Issachar.

The western boundary extends through the city of Aznoth Tabor, which is at the bottom of Mount Tabor. The border goes northward to the city of Hukkok and touches the tribe of Zebulun's land in the south. The border touches the tribe of Asher's land on the west and the Jordan River on the east. Across the northern part of the border is the land of Canaan.

Across the eastern border of the tribe of Naphtali's land is the land of the tribe of East Manasseh.

Within their land are several fortified cities, or cities with strong walls around them. These cities are Ziddim, Zer, Hammath, Rakkath, Kinnereth, Adamah, Ramah, Hazor, Kedesh, Edrei, En Hazor, Iron, Migdal El, Horem, Beth Anath, and Beth Shemesh. In all, there are 19 cities with the settlements that surround them.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What kind of city defences have people used in the cities in your country over the years? How did you decide if a city should have city defences? Pause this audio here.

The tribe of Naphtali receives this land as their inheritance, or permanent possession. Each clan, or large family group, receives some land. They receive these cities with the settlements that are around them.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 19:32–39 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 five scenes.

In the first scene: Joshua throws the lot for the sixth time. The tribe of Naphtali is the next to receive land as their inheritance.

In the second scene: The passage describes the southern border of the land of the tribe of Naphtali.

In the third scene: The passage describes part of the western border of the land of the tribe of Naphtali.

In the fourth scene: The passage lists some of the 19 fortified cities, or cities with strong walls, that belong to the land of the tribe of Naphtali.

In the fifth scene: The passage confirms that this is the land of the tribe of Naphtali, which they receive as their inheritance, or permanent possession.

The characters in this passage are:

- Joshua, the priest Eleazar, and the tribal leaders. Even though the passage does not mention them, we know they are the people throwing the lots.
- And the tribe of Naphtali, who will live in the area Yahweh is giving to them as inheritance.

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

Joshua throws the lot again. This sixth lot shows that the tribe of Naphtali is next to receive land. There is some land for each clan, or large family group, in the tribe of Naphtali.

Stop here and as a group look at two maps showing the tribe of Naphtali's territory. Pay attention to landmarks like cities, hills, valleys, and water sources like rivers and springs. Note who the tribe of Naphtali's neighbours are. Continue to look at this map as you listen to the rest of the information, so you can follow along. Pause this audio here.

The southern border of the land of the tribe of Naphtali begins at the city of Heleph near the large tree in Zaanannim city. The border passes the cities of Adami Nekeb and Jabneel, and it goes on eastward to the city of Lakkum. The Jordan River is the east end of the tribe of Naphtali's southern border. Across the southern border is the land of the tribe of Issachar.

The western boundary extends through the city of Aznoth Tabor, which is at the bottom of Mount Tabor. The border goes northward to the city of Hukkok and touches the tribe of Zebulun's land in the south. The border touches the tribe of Asher's land on the west and the Jordan River on the east. Across the northern part of the border is the land of Canaan.

Across the eastern border of the tribe of Naphtali's land is the land of the tribe of East Manasseh.

Within their land are several fortified cities, or cities with strong walls around them. These cities are Ziddim, Zer, Hammath, Rakkath, Kinnereth, Adamah, Ramah, Hazor, Kedesh, Edrei, En Hazor, Iron, Migdal El, Horem, Beth Anath, and Beth Shemesh. In all, there are 19 cities with the settlements that surround them.

The tribe of Naphtali receives this land as their inheritance, or permanent possession. Each clan, or large family group, receives some land. They receive these cities with the settlements around them.

Now, as a group, recreate Naphtali's territory on the ground. First gather some materials like larger stones to represent Naphtali's neighbours—the tribe of Issachar, the tribe of Zebulun, the tribe of Asher, the tribe of East Manasseh, and the land of Canaan. Then gather other items that you will use to mark cities on the border, and cities and settlements within the land. Also find objects to represent hills, valleys, and bodies of water like springs and rivers. Next listen to the audio again and pause often to put down each landmark as you hear about it. Once you have put all the objects down, draw a line between all the landmarks on the border.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 19:32–39 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:

- Joshua, the priest Eleazar, and the tribal leaders. Even though the passage does not mention them, we know they are the people throwing the lots.
- And the tribe of Naphtali, who will live in the area Yahweh is giving to them as inheritance.

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.

Joshua throws the lot again. This sixth lot shows that the tribe of Naphtali is the next to receive land. There is some land for each clan, or large family group, in the tribe of Naphtali.

The passage describes the southern border of the land of the tribe of Naphtali.

The passage describes the western border of the land of the tribe of Naphtali.

The passage lists some of the 19 fortified cities, or cities with strong walls, that are part of the land of the tribe of Naphtali.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the people from the tribe of Naphtali, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Our turn has come now—Yahweh has given us our own land," or
- "We will own the land forever," or
- "It is a good land—the River Jordan flows through it, and it has 19 cities with strong walls around them."

The tribe of Naphtali receives this land as their inheritance, or permanent possession. Each clan, or large family group, receives some land. They receive these cities with the settlements around them.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 19:32–39 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Joshua throws the **lot** again. This sixth lot shows that the tribe of Naphtali is the next to receive land. There is some land for each **clan**, or large family group, in the tribe of Naphtali. Use the same word or phrase for lot and clan, or large family group, as you did in previous passages.

In all there are a total of 19 **cities** with the **settlements** that surround them in the land of Naphtali. Use the same word or phrase for city and settlement as you used in previous passages.

The tribe of Naphtali receives this land as their **inheritance**, or permanent possession. Each clan, or large family group, receives some land. Use the same word or phrase for inheritance as you did 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.

Joshua 19:32–39

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (9590854 KB)

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Joshua 19:40–48

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 19:40–48 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 19:40–48 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 Joshua 19:40–48 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The previous passage was the sixth one of seven that describes the territories with their boundaries that Yahweh distributed to the remaining seven tribes of Israel. The sixth lot that Joshua threw fell to the tribe of Naphtali, and the passage described the boundaries of the tribe of Naphtali's territory and the cities in it.

Now Joshua throws the lot again. This seventh lot shows that the tribe of Dan is the next and last to receive land. Dan is the firstborn son of Rachel's maid-servant Bilhah. There is some land for each clan, or large family group, in the tribe of Dan.

Stop here and as a group look at two maps showing the tribe of Dan's territory. Pay attention to landmarks like cities, hills, valleys, and water sources like rivers and springs. Note who the tribe of Dan's neighbours are. Continue to look at this map as you listen to the rest of the information, so you can follow along. Pause this audio here.

The land of the tribe of Dan includes the cities of Zorah, Eshtaol, and Ir Shemesh. These are border cities with the land of the tribe of Judah. The city of Ir Shemesh is also called Beth Shemesh. The tribe of Dan also has the cities of Shaalabbin, Aijalon, Ithlah, Elon, Timnah, and Ekron. The cities of Timnah and Ekron are on the border with the land of the tribe of Judah. Dan also has the cities of Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Baalath, Jehud, Bene Berak, and Gath Rimmon. Most of the last five cities are near the city of Joppa, which is on the Mediterranean coast. The land of the tribe of Dan also includes the cities of Me Jarkon and Rakkon and the territory that was near the city of Joppa. The land of the tribe of Dan borders the land of the tribe of Judah to the south, the land of the tribe of Benjamin to the east, and the land of the tribes of Ephraim and West Manasseh to the north. The western border of the tribe of Dan's land is the Mediterranean Sea.

The passage now explains that sometime after the tribe of Dan receives the land, they fail or have trouble taking possession of all of it, and their enemies capture it. Because of that, the people of the tribe of Dan go up to the city of Leshem and fight against it. Leshem is an ancient city that is at the source of the Jordan River, northeast of the land of the tribe of Dan. The people of the tribe of Dan conquer the city of Leshem and kill the people with swords. The passage in Judges 18 describes what happens. In the Judges passage, Leshem is called Laish. Then the tribe of Dan moves into the city of Leshem and lives in it. They give the city a new name, Dan, after the man from whom their tribe descended.

Stop here and as a group find the city of Leshem, also called Dan, on the map of Israel. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Consider the history of your people group. Talk about different ways people have come to own or have rights to cities, villages, and land. Talk about examples when people received a city, and examples when people conquered a city. Pause this audio here.

The tribe of Dan receives this land as their inheritance, or permanent possession. Each clan, or large family group, receives some land. They receive these cities with the settlements around them.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 19:40–48 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: Joshua casts the lot for the seventh time. The tribe of Dan is the next and last to receive land as their inheritance.

In the second scene: The passage lists the cities that are part of the land of the tribe of Dan.

In the third scene: The passage explains that the tribe of Dan fails to take possession of all the land they receive. Because of that, they go up to the city of Leshem and fight against it and conquer it. They give the city a new name, Dan, after the man from whom their tribe descended.

In the fourth scene: The passage confirms that this is the land of the tribe of Dan, which they receive as their inheritance, or permanent possession.

The characters in this passage are:

- Joshua, the priest Eleazar, and the tribal leaders. Even though the passage does not mention them, we know they are the people throwing the lots.
- And the tribe of Dan, who will live in the area Yahweh is giving to them as inheritance.

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

Joshua throws the lot again. This seventh lot shows that the tribe of Dan is the next and last to receive land. There is some land for each clan, or large family group, in the tribe of Dan.

Stop here and as a group look at two maps showing the tribe of Dan's territory. Pay attention to landmarks like cities, hills, valleys, and water sources like rivers and springs. Note who the tribe of Dan's neighbours are. Continue to look at this map as you listen to the rest of the information, so you can follow along. Pause this audio here.

The land of the tribe of Dan includes the cities of Zorah, Eshtaol, and Ir Shemesh. These are border cities with the land of the tribe of Judah. The city of Ir Shemesh is also called Beth Shemesh. The tribe of Dan also has the cities of Shaalabbin, Aijalon, Ithlah, Elon, Timnah, and Ekron. The cities of Timnah and Ekron are on the border with the land of the tribe of Judah. Dan also has the cities of Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Baalath, Jehud, Bene Berak, and Gath Rimmon. Most of the last five cities are near the city of Joppa, which is on the Mediterranean coast. The land of the tribe of Dan also included the cities of Me Jarkon and Rakkon and the territory that is near the city of Joppa. The land of the tribe of Dan borders the land of the tribe of Judah to the south, the land of the tribe of Benjamin to the east, and the land of the tribes of Ephraim and West Manasseh to the north. The western border of the tribe of Dan's land is the Mediterranean Sea.

The passage now explains that sometime after the tribe of Dan receives the land, they fail or have trouble taking possession of all of it, and their enemies capture it. Because of that, the people of the tribe of Dan go up to the city of Leshem and fight against it. Leshem is an ancient city that was at the source of the Jordan River, northeast of the land of the tribe of Dan. The people of the tribe of Dan conquer the city of Leshem and kill the people with swords. Then the tribe of Dan moves into the city of Leshem and lives in it. They give the city a new name, Dan, after the man from whom their tribe descended.

Stop here and as a group find the city of Leshem, or Dan, on the map of Israel. Pause this audio here.

The tribe of Dan receives this land as their inheritance, or permanent possession. Each clan, or large family group, receives some land. They receive these cities with the settlements around them.

Now, as a group, recreate Dan's territory on the ground. First gather some materials like larger stones to represent Dan's neighbours—the tribe of Judah, the tribe of Benjamin, the tribe of Ephraim, and the tribe of West Manasseh. Find an object to represent the Mediterranean Sea. Then gather other items that you will use to mark cities on the border, and cities and settlements within the land. Also find objects to represent hills, valleys, and bodies of water like springs and rivers. Next listen to the audio again and pause frequently to put down each landmark as you hear about it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 19:40–48 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:

- Joshua, the priest Eleazar, and the tribal leaders. Even though the passage does not mention them, we know they are the people throwing the lots.
- And the tribe of Dan, who will live in the area Yahweh is giving to them as inheritance.

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.

Joshua throws the lot again. This seventh lot shows that the tribe of Dan is the next and last to receive land. There is some land for each clan, or large family group, in the tribe of Dan.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Yahweh kept his word and gave all the tribes of Israel land as their inheritance," or
- "Yahweh is just. Each tribe received land that had the right number of cities and villages for the number of people in the tribe," or
- "Now the tribes have to conquer the land and drive out all the Canaanites from their territories."

The passage lists the cities that are part of the land of the tribe of Dan.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing people from the tribe of Dan, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "We praise Yahweh—we received land where we will live forever," or
- "It is good land. It has many cities with villages around them. It has the Mediterranean Sea as our western border," or
- "We now have to drive out the people living there."

The passage now explains that sometime after the tribe of Dan receives the land, they fail or have trouble taking possession of all of it, and their enemies capture it. Because of that, the people of the tribe of Dan go up to the city of Leshem and fight against it. The people of the tribe of Dan conquer the city of Leshem and kill the people with swords. Then the tribe of Dan moves into the city of Leshem and lives in it. They give the city a new name, Dan, after the man from whom their tribe descended.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing people from the tribe of Dan, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "We cannot drive out the Canaanites! They are too powerful for us!" or
- "We found the city of Leshem in the north. Leshem is peaceful and secure. We will conquer it!" or
- "We will give the city a new name. We will call it Dan, like our ancestor."

The tribe of Dan receives this land as their inheritance, or permanent possession. Each clan, or large family group, receives some land. They receive these cities with the settlements that are around them.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 19:40–48 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Joshua throws the **lot** again. This seventh lot shows that the tribe of Dan is the next and last to receive land. There is some land for each **clan**, or large family group, in the tribe of Dan.

Use the same word or phrase for lot and clan, or large family group, as you did in previous passages.

The tribe of Dan receives this land as their **inheritance**, or permanent possession. Each clan, or large family group, receives some land. They receive these **cities** with the **settlements** that are around them. Use the same word or phrase for inheritance, cities, and settlements as you did in previous passages.

The people of the tribe of Dan conquer the city of Leshem and **put the city to the sword**, or **strike the city with a sword**. To put a city to the sword, or strike it with a sword, means to kill the people in that city with swords. Use the same word or phrase for "put to the sword" as you used 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.

Joshua 19:40–48

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (11398862 KB)

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Joshua 19:49–51

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 19:49–51 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 19:49–51 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 Joshua 19:49–51 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The previous passage was the last one of seven that described the territories with their boundaries that Yahweh distributed to the remaining seven tribes of Israel. The last lot that Joshua threw fell to the tribe of Dan, and the passage listed the cities, which together with their settlements, were in Dan's territory.

This story takes place in Shiloh where the tent of meeting, or tabernacle, is. After the people of Israel finish dividing the land among all the clans, they give some land to Joshua son of Nun as his inheritance. Yahweh had said that Joshua could have whatever town he wanted. Yahweh probably said this at the time when Yahweh had promised land in Canaan to Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, in Joshua 15. So, the Israelites give Joshua the town that he chooses, which is Timnath Serah. In another part of the Bible it is called Timnath Heres. The town is in the mountain country that belongs to the tribe of Ephraim, as Joshua is from Ephraim. Timnath Serah is 27 kilometers northwest of Jerusalem. Joshua rebuilds the town, which was abandoned when he received it, and he settles there.

Stop here and as a group look at a map of Ephraim and Joshua's town of Timnath Serah. Pause this audio here.

These are the pieces of land that Eleazar the priest and Joshua the son of Nun distributed as an inheritance together with the leaders of the clans, or families, of the Israelite tribes. You will remember that Yahweh told Moses to appoint one leader from each of the clans of Israel to help distribute the land along with Joshua and Eleazar the priest. Eleazar, Joshua, and the clan leaders used lots to divide the land. They threw the lots in front of the tent of meeting in Shiloh, because the tent of meeting is where the presence of Yahweh is. In that way, they completed dividing up the land.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Who decides how to divide land in your people group, and how do they decide? If the boundaries between regions in your land do not change any more, who determined them and how did they do that before? Pause this audio here.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 19:49–51 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 two scenes.

In the first scene: After the Israelites finish dividing the land, they give Joshua son of Nun some land as his inheritance. According to what Yahweh had said before, the Israelites give Joshua a town he chooses, which is Timnath Serath in the hill country of Ephraim.

In the second scene: The passage finishes all the passages that described how Yahweh distributed land to the 12 tribes of Israel.

The characters in this passage are:

- Israelites
- Joshua son of Nun
- Yahweh
- Eleazar the priest
- And leaders of the clans, or families, of the Israelite tribes

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

This story takes place in Shiloh, where the tent of meeting is. After the people of Israel finished dividing the land among all the tribes, they give some land to Joshua son of Nun as his inheritance. Yahweh had said that Joshua could have whatever city he wanted. Yahweh had apparently done this earlier, but we do not have a record of it. You could reorder this section so that it says something like, "Yahweh had commanded before that Joshua should receive whatever city he wanted. So after the Israelites had finished dividing the land, they gave Joshua a city he chose as his inheritance."

So, the people of Israel give Joshua the town that he chooses, which is Timnath Serah, also called Timnath Heres, in the mountain country that belongs to the clan of Ephraim. Joshua is from the tribe of Ephraim, so that may be why he chooses this city. Timnath Serah is 27 kilometers northwest of Jerusalem. Joshua rebuilds the town, because it was abandoned when he received it, and he settles there.

Stop here and as a group look at a map of Ephraim and Joshua's town of Timnath Serah. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: The town Joshua chose had two different names, which was also the case for some other towns the Israelites inherited. Are there towns or areas in your country that have more than one name? If so, where did the different names for each town come from? Pause this audio here.

Now the passage summarises and concludes all the passages talking about the distribution of land to the tribes of Israel. It is nearly identical to the introduction of this section of Joshua, in Joshua 14:1–2, which begins these passages that talk about land distribution. These are the pieces of land that Eleazar the priest and Joshua the son of Nun distributed as an inheritance together with the leaders of the clans, or families, of the Israelite tribes. They throw the lots in front of the tent of meeting in Shiloh, because the tent of meeting is where the presence of Yahweh is. In that way they complete dividing up the land.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: This finishes the full story of when Yahweh allocated land to the 12 tribes of Israel. The beginning of this story, several passages earlier, and the end of this story in this passage, are nearly the same. How in your culture do you mark the beginning and end of an important part of the story? Keep in mind that this story is a list or description of land that Yahweh gives to his people. In your culture, how might you begin and end an official record of the land that authorities give to 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 Joshua 19:49–51 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:

- Israelites
- Joshua son of Nun
- Yahweh
- Eleazar the high priest
- And leaders of the clans, or families, of the Israelite tribes

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

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

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

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

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

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

After the people of Israel have finished dividing the land among all the clans, they give some land to Joshua son of Nun as his inheritance. Yahweh had said that Joshua could have whatever town he wanted. So, the people of Israel give Joshua the town that he chooses, which is Timnath Serah, or Timnath Heres. This town is in the mountain country that belongs to the clan of Ephraim, because Joshua is from the tribe of Ephraim. Timnath Serah is 27 kilometers northwest of Jerusalem. Joshua rebuilds the town, which is abandoned when he receives it, and he settles there.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Praise Yahweh for his faithfulness! He has assigned all the land to the 12 tribes of Israel," or
- "Yahweh has kept his word to me! The Israelites gave me a town that I chose as my inheritance."

These are the pieces of land that Eleazar the priest and Joshua the son of Nun distribute as an inheritance together with the leaders of the families of the Israelite tribes. They use lots to divide the land in the presence of Yahweh at Shiloh at the entrance of the tent of meeting. In this way, they complete dividing up the land.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Eleazar the high priest, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Relieved! Yahweh has completed his plan of dividing the land. Each family of every tribe of Israel has received a portion of land as their inheritance," or
- "In awe! Yahweh was present as we cast lots in front of the tent of meeting."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 19:49–51 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

After the **sons of Israel**, or the **Israelites**, finish dividing the land among all the clans, they give some land to Joshua son of Nun as his **inheritance**. Use the same word or phrase for sons of Israel as you used in previous passages. For more information on Israelites, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for inheritance as you used in previous passages.

Yahweh had said that Joshua could have whatever town he wanted. Use the same name for Yahweh that you have used in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

These are the pieces of land that Eleazar the **priest**, and Joshua the son of Nun, distributed as an inheritance and possession together with the leaders of the families of the Israelite tribes. They used **lots** to divide the land in the presence of Yahweh at Shiloh at the entrance of the tent of meeting. This verse, Joshua 19:51, is like Joshua 14:1, which you translated before. You should compare how you translated similar words and phrases in that verse and translate them in a similar way here. Use the same word or phrase for priest and for lots as you used in previous passages. For more information on priest, refer to the Master Glossary.

Use the same word or phrase for **tent of meeting** as you used in previous passages. For more information on tent of meeting, which refers to the tabernacle, 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.

Joshua 19:49–51

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (10113169 KB)

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Joshua 20:1–9

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 20:1–9 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 20:1–9 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 Joshua 20:1–9 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous passage, after Joshua had finished dividing the land among all the tribes of Israel, the Israelites gave a city to Joshua as his inheritance. The Israelites followed Yahweh's instructions when they gave Joshua the city that he chose, which was Timnath Serah in Ephraim. Joshua rebuilt the city and settled there.

Now Yahweh speaks to the sons of Israel, or the Israelites, through Joshua. Yahweh commands Joshua to tell the Israelites that now is the time to choose the cities of refuge, or safe cities. Yahweh had already given the instructions about the cities of refuge to the Israelites through Moses. Yahweh instructs the Israelites through Joshua to choose these cities so that a manslayer, or someone who accidentally kills someone else and did not intend to do so, can run to one of these cities to be safe. Yahweh had told the Israelites how to set up these cities. Yahweh explains that these cities will protect the manslayer from the avenger of blood who would want to kill the manslayer.

The avenger of blood is a relative of the killed person. His job was to avenge, or pay back, for the killing. The avenger of blood would punish people who killed as a type of payment for the suffering or loss the killer caused the family. The avenger of blood would do this by killing the manslayer. This affirms the principle of punishment that Yahweh established in the book of Genesis when Yahweh said that if someone killed a person, someone else would kill the one who killed. Yahweh wants his nation to be pure and free from manslaughter, because the nation and the land becomes unclean, or unfit for service to Yahweh, when people who kill others are allowed to live. However, Yahweh wants to protect people who kill accidentally, or without intending to kill.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What different types of punishment does your people group have for someone who murders a person on purpose and for someone who kills a person accidentally? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh tells Joshua to tell the Israelites that the manslayer who kills someone unintentionally should run to one of the cities of refuge. The manslayer should stand at the city gate where the elders judge cases and explain to the city leaders what he did. The entrance of the city gate is an area near the city entrance. The city elders, or leaders, who were the local authorities, would gather at the city gate to decide about conflicts that people brought to them to settle. The leaders would probably make a temporary decision whether they thought the manslayer killed the person on purpose or accidentally. We are not sure what the leaders of the city used, apart from the manslayer's testimony, to decide if he was guilty or not. If they judged that he killed the person on purpose, the leaders would give him to the avenger of blood.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Where do you gather to make decisions about conflicts in your community? Who gathers together to make those decisions? Pause this audio here.

If the manslayer convinced the leaders that he was telling the truth and was innocent, or did not intend to kill the person, the elders were to allow the manslayer to come into the city. The elders would give the man a place to live in the city, and the man would live among them. And if the avenger of blood chased after the manslayer, the elders were not to give the man who ran to their city for safety to the man who came to kill him. They were to protect the manslayer, because he killed the other person without planning to do it, not because he hated that person.

Stop here and talk as a group about situations where people have taken revenge after someone committed a crime against their relative. Pause this audio here.

The manslayer had to stay in the city of refuge, or safe city, until the congregation or community of the city he was from gathered and judged his case. The "congregation" here refers to the adult men of the Israelite community. Numbers chapter 35 makes it clear that it was the congregation from the manslayer's city who would judge the manslayer and then send him back to the safe city if he was innocent. The congregation decided if the manslayer killed the dead person by accident and not because he hated that person. If so, they would return the manslayer to the city of refuge, or safe city. If the manslayer was innocent, he was to stay in the city of refuge until the high priest of that time died. 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 unintentionally killed that person, 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 was the only person to receive the anointing of sacred oil. This anointing set 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. After the death of the high priest, the manslayer was free to return to his own house in the city from which he fled.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Who carries out judgments and makes decisions about conflicts in your people group? If members of the community get involved, how do you decide who takes part in the judgment? Pause this audio here.

So the Israelites carry out what Yahweh orders them to do through Joshua. They set apart six cities of refuge, or safe cities. Three of these cities are on the west side and three on the east side of the Jordan River.

Stop here and as a group look at a map showing the cities of refuge or safe cities in Israel. Pause this audio here.

These are chosen cities, or safe cities, for all the Israelites and any foreigners who live among them, so that anyone who kills a person accidentally can run there. Then the relative of the person who died will not kill the manslayer while he stays there.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What happens if a foreigner living in your people group kills someone? How do the laws change for him as a foreigner, or do they not change for a foreigner?

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 20:1–9 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 five scenes.

In the first scene: Yahweh speaks to Joshua and commands him to tell the Israelites to choose cities of refuge, or safe cities.

In the second scene: Yahweh tells Joshua to tell the Israelites that the manslayer should run to one of these cities and he should stand at the entrance to the city gate where the elders judge cases. They are to protect the manslayer if he killed the other person by accident.

In the third scene: Joshua is to tell the Israelites that the manslayer must stay in the city of refuge, or safe city, until the congregation or community from his own city gathers and judges his case. He is to stay in the city of refuge until the high priest of that time dies. After that, the manslayer will be free to return to his own house in the city from which he fled.

In the fourth scene: The Israelites set apart six cities of refuge, or safe cities. Three of these cities are on the west side and three on the east side of the Jordan River.

In the fifth scene: The passage summarizes what Joshua said about the cities of refuge, or safe cities. They are to be safe places for all Israelites and all foreigners living among the Israelites, so that anyone who kills a person by accident may flee there.

The characters in this passage are:

- Yahweh
- Joshua
- The Israelites
- Moses
- Manslayer
- The avenger of blood
- City elders, or leaders
- The congregation, or community, of the city of refuge
- The congregation, or community, from the city where the killer is from
- And foreigners living in Israel

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

After Joshua finishes dividing the land between the 12 tribes, Yahweh commands Joshua to tell the Israelites that now is time to choose the cities of refuge, or safe cities. Yahweh had already given instructions about the cities of refuge to the Israelites through Moses. Yahweh is saying that it is now time to put into practice the instructions he gave the Israelites years ago.

Stop here and discuss as a group: When Yahweh spoke to Joshua, Yahweh made it clear that he was commanding Joshua to command the Israelites to choose the cities of refuge. Talk about different words you use in your language to give instructions or commands. Talk about how you will make it clear that Yahweh is commanding the Israelites to put into practice commands about setting up cities of refuge that Yahweh gave them many years ago. Pause this audio here.

Joshua must tell the Israelites that the cities of refuge, or safe cities, will be for any manslayer who kills someone by accident, or who does not intend to kill that person. Yahweh allows the manslayer to run away to that city so that the manslayer can be safe from the avenger of blood who wants to kill the manslayer.

The manslayer is to run to one of these cities of refuge, or safe cities. The manslayer is to stand at the entrance to the city gate where the elders judge cases. The manslayer is to tell the city leaders what he did.

If the manslayer convinces the leaders that he is telling the truth and is innocent of deliberate killing, the elders are to allow the manslayer to come into the city. The elders are to give the manslayer a place to live in the city, and the manslayer will live among them. If the avenger of blood chases after the manslayer, the elders are not to give the man who runs to their city for safety to the man who comes to kill him. They must protect the manslayer, because the manslayer killed the other person without planning to do it, and he did not hate the person he killed in the past.

The manslayer has to stay in the city of refuge, or safe city, until the community of the city he is from gathers and judges his case. If the killer is innocent, because he killed the man by accident or without hating him, the community will return the manslayer to the city of refuge, or safe city. The manslayer is to stay in the city of refuge until the high priest of that time dies. After that, the manslayer will be free to return to his own house in the city from which he fled.

After Joshua tells the Israelites these things, the Israelites set apart six cities of refuge, or safe cities. Three of these cities are on the west side and three on the east side of the Jordan River. The word for "set apart" in the original language means "set aside for special use."

Stop here and discuss as a group: What words do you use in your language to show that something, or some place, has been set apart, or set aside, for a special purpose? Pause this audio here.

On the west side, the Israelites choose the city of Kedesh in the region of Galilee, in the hill country of the tribe of Naphtali. They also choose the city of Shechem in the hill country of the tribe of Ephraim. And they choose

the city of Kiriath Arba, also called Hebron, in the hill country of the tribe of Judah. Across the Jordan River, to the east of the city of Jericho, the Israelites set apart the city of Bezer, which was in the wilderness, in a flat area that belonged to the tribe of Reuben. They also chose the city of Ramoth, in the region of Gilead, in the land belonging to the tribe of Gad. And they chose the city of Golan, in Bashan, in the land belonging to the tribe of Manasseh.

Stop here and as a group look at a map showing the cities of refuge, or safe cities, in Israel. Pause this audio here.

The end of the passage summarizes what Joshua said about the cities of refuge, or safe cities. They were to be safe places for all Israelites and all foreigners living among them, so that anyone who killed a person by accident could flee there. The killer would be safe in that city, and the avenger of blood would not be able to kill him until the community judged the killer's case and found him guilty.

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 Joshua 20:1–9 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
- Joshua
- The Israelites
- Moses
- Manslayer
- The avenger of blood
- City elders, or leaders
- The congregation, or community, of the city of refuge
- The congregation, or community, from the city where the manslayer is from
- And foreigners living in Israel

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

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

Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

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

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

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

After Joshua finishes dividing the land between the 12 tribes, Yahweh commands Joshua to speak to the Israelites and say, "Now is the time to choose the cities of refuge, or safe cities, that I earlier spoke to you about through Moses."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Now I want to make sure that the land stays clean and useful for Yahweh, so it is time for them to set aside cities of refuge," or
- "I care about people who kill a person accidentally without meaning to kill. They need a safe place, so that the avenger of blood does not kill them," or
- "I spoke to them already about these cities through Moses, so they will understand right away what I mean."

Yahweh tells Joshua to tell the Israelites that the cities of refuge, or safe cities, will be for any person who kills someone by accident and who does not intend to kill that person. The person is allowed to run away to one of these cities so that he can be safe from the avenger of blood who wants to kill them.

The manslayer is to run to one of these cities of refuge, or safe cities. He is to stand at the entrance to the city gate where the elders judge cases. He is to tell the city leaders what he did.

If the manslayer convinces the leaders that he is telling the truth and is innocent of deliberate killing, the elders should allow the manslayer to come into the city. The elders must give him a place to live there, and he will live among them. If the avenger of blood chases after the manslayer, the elders should not give the man who ran to their city for safety over to the man who came to kill him. They should protect the manslayer, because he killed the other person without planning to do it and he did not hate the person in the past.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Yahweh is so just! No one who kills someone accidentally will have to die," or
- "The manslayer will have to say what happened both to the elders of the city and to his congregation. They will know if the manslayer is telling the truth," or
- "The elders of the city will have to look after the manslayer if he is innocent of deliberate killing. I am happy that he will be safe in a city of refuge and will be able to go to his own city after the high priest has died."

The manslayer has to stay in the city of refuge, or safe city, until his community gathers and judges his case. If the manslayer is innocent, he is to stay in the city of refuge until the high priest of that time has died. After that, the manslayer is free to return to his own house in the city from which he fled.

After Joshua tells the Israelites these things, the Israelites set apart six cities of refuge, or safe cities. Three of these cities are on the west side and three on the east side of the river Jordan.

The cities of refuge, or safe cities, are to be safe places for all Israelites and all foreigners living among them, so that anyone who kills a person by accident can flee there. The manslayer will be safe in that city and the avenger of blood would not be able to kill him until the community judges the manslayer's case and finds him guilty.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "There are six cities of refuge throughout Israel. Everyone who kills someone accidentally will be able to be safe," or
- "Even the foreigners among us can run to a safe city!" or
- "The avenger of blood seeks revenge for his dead relative, but Yahweh looks at the heart of the manslayer. Yahweh does not want anyone who is innocent to die."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 20:1–9 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Yahweh commands Joshua to say to the sons of Israel, or Israelites, "Now is the time to choose the **cities of refuge**, or safe cities, that I earlier told Moses to tell you about." 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.

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

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

The cities shall be for you a refuge from the **avenger of blood**. The avenger of blood was a relative of the killed person whose job was to avenge the killing. The avenger of blood would punish a **manslayer** as a type of payment for the suffering or loss the manslayer caused the family. The avenger of blood would do this by killing the manslayer.

Stop here and discuss as a group what words or phrases you will use for **avenger of blood** and **manslayer**. If you have already translated these phrases in another book of the Bible, use the same phrase 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.

Joshua 20:1–9

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (16584159 KB)

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Joshua 21:1–8

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 21:1–8 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 21:1–8 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 Joshua 21:1–8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The Israelites are in the land Yahweh promised to give them. The Israelites cast lots, and the tribes of Israel receive specific land where each tribe will live. Yahweh also gives directions for choosing cities of refuge where someone who kills another person accidentally can go to be safe. Now, the Israelites give the last tribe of Israel, the Levites, 48 specific cities to live in. These cities are spread throughout the land of the other tribes of Israel. Yahweh commanded Moses to give the Levites these towns, and now the Israelites obey Yahweh's command by giving the Levites these towns to live in.

The leaders of the Levites come to the leaders of Israel, including Eleazar the priest, Joshua the son of Nun, and the leaders of the other tribes of Israel. The Levites were the descendants of Levi, one of the 12 sons of Israel. Levi had three sons: Kohath, Gershon, and Merari. One of Kohath's grandsons was Aaron, who became the first priest for the people of Israel. Male descendants of Aaron were responsible for serving Yahweh as priests for Israel. Levites did not receive land like the other tribes of Israel because the Levites were set apart as holy men and served Yahweh. But the Levites did have cities to live in that were inside the land assigned to the other tribes.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell the group about what family, clan, or tribe you are a part of, or who your ancestors were. Who are the other tribes or family groups in your community? Are any of the other families or tribes treated differently in your community? Pause this audio here.

The Levites come to Israel's leaders at Shiloh, which is the same place where the leaders met to distribute land to the other tribes of Israel. Shiloh is a town 12 miles south of Shechem, in the land of Ephraim on the west side of the Jordan River.

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

The Levites remind Israel's leaders about Yahweh's command to Moses to give land to the Levites, including cities to live in and pasturelands for their cattle. Cattle are large animals that Israelites raised for food, farming, and for sacrifices to Yahweh. A pasture is an open area of land where grass grows without any help from people. During the time of the Levites, it was important that people had enough land with grass on it for their animals to eat. In another part of the Old Testament, Yahweh says there should be about 1,000 square meters around each Levite city that is reserved for the pastureland for animals.

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

The leaders of Israel already know about Yahweh's command. The people of Israel do what Yahweh commanded and give the Levites these cities to live in and the land around the cities for their animals to eat the grass. This passage shows that Yahweh keeps his promise to give the Levites cities to live in. We know from other parts of Joshua and the Old Testament that the Levites lived in the cities throughout the land of Israel, and they taught and led the Israelites in how to follow Yahweh.

The Israelite leaders throw lots for the cities to give to the Levites, which is the same way the other tribes received their land. Casting, or throwing, lots was a common way to decide something important during this time among the Israelites. When people threw lots, they probably put objects like stones, dice, or marked sticks into a container and then picked one object out, or threw one object out, to make a decision. The Israelites believed Yahweh was the one who ultimately decided the result of the lots.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you make decisions in your community? If you throw lots, how do you do it? Pause this audio here.

The leaders give each of the three clans of Levites specific places to live. There are a total of 48 cities that Israel's leaders give to the Levite families, and Yahweh already set apart 6 of the cities as the cities of refuge for people who had killed someone unintentionally. This passage tells us which tribe's land all 48 Levite cities are in, including the 6 cities of refuge. All of the cities are within the land of the 12 tribes of Israel, which are Reuben, Simeon, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Joseph, and Benjamin. Remember the tribe of Joseph was divided into two half-tribes called Ephraim and Manasseh.

First, the leaders throw lots for the cities for the Kohathites, which includes descendants of Aaron the priest. The Levites, who are descendants of Aaron, receive 13 cities from the land of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin. The leaders give Aaron's descendants their cities first, because Aaron's descendants are priests for Yahweh. Giving the cities first to Aaron's descendants shows how important the priests are to the people of Israel. Their cities are also the closest to Jerusalem, which is where the priests will later serve Yahweh. The rest of the Kohathites receive 10 cities from the land of the tribes of Ephraim, Dan, and the half-tribe of Manasseh who live west of the Jordan River.

The other two tribes of Levi—Gershon and Merari—also receive their cities from the land of the other tribes of Israel. The descendants of Gershon receive 13 cities in Galilee from the land of the tribes of Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and the half-tribe of Manasseh that live on the east side of the Jordan River. The descendants of Merari receive 12 cities from the land of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Zebulun.

Stop here and look at a map of the tribal lands for the tribes of Israel. Pause this audio here.

The last part of this passage summarizes the land that the Levites receive. The leaders of the Israelites give the Levites these cities and pasturelands, just as Yahweh commanded Moses.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 21:1-8 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 four scenes.

In the first scene: The Levites come to the leaders of Israel to ask for the cities Yahweh promised for the Levites to live in. The leaders of Israel give the Levites the cities to live in that are in the land of the other tribes of Israel.

In the second scene: The descendants of Aaron in the tribe of Kohath receive their 13 cities to live in, and the other descendants of Kohath receive their 10 cities to live in.

In the third scene: The descendants of Gershon receive their 13 cities to live in, and the descendants of Merari receive their 12 cities to live in.

In the fourth scene: This is a summary that the Levites all receive their cities to live in.

The characters in this passage are:

- Leaders of the Levites
- Eleazar the priest
- Joshua son of Nun
- Tribal leaders of Israel
- Kohathite clans
- Gershonite clans
- And Merari clans

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

Remember that before this passage, Yahweh told the Israelites how to choose the cities of refuge for people who kill someone else accidentally. Remember that these six cities of refuge are also included in this current passage as some of the cities where the Levites will live.

In the first scene, remember that the leaders of the Levite clan, or family group, come to the leaders of Israel and tell them to give them the cities that Yahweh commanded Moses to give. This does not mean Israel's leaders

forgot to give the Levites their land. The other tribes all received their land, and now it is the Levites' turn to receive their cities from the land of the other tribes of Israel. Remember the leaders of the Israelites included Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun, and the other leaders of the tribes.

The location is also important—the Levites come to Israel's leaders at Shiloh, which is the same place where the other tribes received their land. Remember that Shiloh is on the west side of the Jordan River in the land of Ephraim. This is also where the tabernacle is located, and where Israelite leaders meet to make important decisions.

Stop here and look at a map of Shiloh again as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Remember that the Levite leaders say Yahweh commanded Moses to give them cities to live in, and the pastureland around the cities for their cattle to eat the grass.

Stop here and look at a picture of cattle and pastureland again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

Remember that the Levites did not receive their own land when Yahweh distributed land to the other tribes, because the Levites are set apart as holy men and serve Yahweh, and Yahweh himself is their inheritance. Israel's leaders do what the Levites say, and give cities to the Levites for them to live in.

In the second and third scenes, we learn where the 48 cities are located for the Levites to live in. The leaders of Israel cast, or throw, lots to discover Yahweh's will for where each of the Levite tribes will live. Remember that throwing lots is the same way Israel's leaders decided where the other tribes should live as well. Throwing lots was a common way to make decisions during that time, and people did it by choosing stones, dice, or marked sticks.

In the second scene, remember that the tribe of Kohath is the first Levite tribe to receive their cities. The oldest son of Levi was Gershon and not Kohath, but remember that Kohath's descendant was Aaron. Aaron became the first priest of Israel, which is probably why his descendants are mentioned first in the list of Levites who receive their cities. Remember that Aaron's descendants receive 13 cities in the land of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin, which is closest to Jerusalem. The rest of the descendants of Kohath receive 10 cities from the land of the clans of Ephraim, Dan, and the half-tribe of Manasseh who live west of the Jordan River.

In the third scene, remember that the other two clans of Levi—Gershon and Merari—receive their cities. Remember that Gershon's descendants receive 13 cities in Galilee from the land of the clans of the tribes of Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and the half-tribe of Manasseh who lived on the east side of the Jordan River. Remember that descendants of Merari receive 12 cities from the land of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Zebulun. There was some land for each clan, or large family group, among the descendants of Merari.

Stop here and discuss as a group: These passages throughout the book of Joshua often remind the audience that each Israelite tribe is divided into clans, or large family groups. In many of these passages we hear phrases like "the clans of a certain tribe," or "there was land for each clan among a certain tribe." In your culture, how do you divide large tribes into clans, or family groups, within the tribe? How do you talk about the clans within a larger tribe? Pause this audio here.

In the fourth scene, there is a final summary statement about the passage. The Israelites assigned the Levites their cities with the land around the cities for their animals to eat the grass. They assigned the land by casting lots, and they did all of this just as 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 Joshua 21:1–8 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:

- Leaders of the Levites
- Eleazar the priest
- Joshua son of Nun
- Tribal leaders of Israel
- Kohathite clans
- Gershonite clans
- And Merari clans

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 leaders of the Levites come to the leaders of Israel to ask for the cities and surrounding pasturelands that Yahweh told Moses to give to the Levites. The leaders of Israel include Eleazar the priest, Joshua the son of Nun, and the leaders of the other tribes of Israel. This happens in Shiloh.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing leaders of the Levites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "We want to receive the cities and pasturelands that Yahweh told Moses to give to us," or
- "We hope that the leaders of Israel will obey Yahweh's command to give us the cities and pasturelands that Yahweh promised we would have to live in," or
- "We are wondering which cities my tribe of Levites will receive."

The leaders of Israel do what Yahweh commanded Moses to do. They give the Levites cities to live in and pastureland for their cattle.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun, and the other tribal leaders of Israel, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "We are glad to obey Yahweh's command to give the cities and pastureland to the Levites," or
- "We are looking forward to the blessings the Levites will bring to all the tribes when they lead and teach us in Yahweh's ways all throughout our land," or
- "We are eager to do what Yahweh commanded us to do in finishing dividing up the land for all of Israel."

The Israelites cast lots to decide where the Levites should have their cities. The first lot is for the descendants of Aaron the priest. They are a part of the Kohathite clan. They receive 13 cities and their surrounding pasturelands from the land of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin. The remaining Kohathite clans receive 10 cities from the land of the tribes of Ephraim, Dan, and the half-tribe of Manasseh who live west of the Jordan River.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Kohathite clans, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "We feel relieved that we received our cities and pasturelands that Yahweh commanded Moses to give to us," or
- "We feel honored to serve as priests for Yahweh and for the people of Israel," or
- "We feel honored that they cast the lots for us first, since we are not from the firstborn son of Levi."

The Gershonites and the Merari also receive their cities. Gershon's descendants receive their 13 cities from the land of the tribes of Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and the half-tribe of Manasseh that live on the east side of the Jordan River. Descendants of Merari receive 12 cities from the land of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Zebulun.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Gershonite and Merari clans, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "We feel happy to receive our cities and surrounding pasturelands, just as Yahweh commanded Moses to give to us," or
- "We feel honored that the leaders of Israel gave us these cities and lands for our cattle," or
- "We are looking forward to moving to our assigned cities and pasturelands with our families and animals."

The Israelites finish distributing the cities and pasturelands for all the Levite clans. They do all this according to Yahweh's command to Moses.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun, and the other tribal leaders of Israel, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "We finished with the task of distributing cities and pasturelands to the Levites," or
- "We are finally able to rest in the land, since now all of the tribes have their own places to live," or
- "We are glad that we were able to finish the task and be obedient to what Yahweh commanded Moses to do."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 21:1-8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

The tribal leaders of the **Levites** come to talk with the leaders of Israel, which include Eleazar the **priest**. The Levites are one of the 12 tribes of Israel. Translate Levites and priests the same as you have in previous passages. For more information on Levites and priests, refer to the Master Glossary.

Joshua is the son of Nun, and he became the leader of Israel after Moses died. Joshua led the **Israelites** into **Canaan**. The tribal leaders refer to all the male leaders of different family groups of each of the 12 tribes of Israel. These are the same leaders who distributed land to all the other tribes of Israel. Use the same words for Israelites and Canaan as you have in previous passages. For more information about Israelites and Canaan, refer to the Master Glossary.

The Levite leaders tell the Israelite leaders that **Yahweh** commanded Moses to give them these **cities** and pasturelands for their cattle and other animals. Translate cities and Yahweh the same as you have in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

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

The Israelite leaders throw lots to determine the cities and pastureland for each of the Levite **clans**. The Kohathite clans receive their cities first because the descendants of Aaron the priest were in the clan of Kohath. Aaron was the first high priest of the Israelites. Translate clans the same as you have in previous passages.

The **descendants** of Gershon and the descendants of Merari also receive their cities and pastureland. Translate descendants the same as you have 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.

Joshua 21:1–8

Audio Content

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Joshua 21:9–19

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 21:9–19 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 21:9–19 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 Joshua 21:9–19 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The Israelites are in the land that Yahweh promised to give to them. The Levites come to the leaders of Israel and ask for their cities and surrounding pasturelands for their animals that Yahweh commanded Moses to give to the Levites. The leaders of Israel throw lots and give 48 cities to the Levites throughout the land of the Israelites. Each of the Levite tribes receives their cities and the surrounding pasturelands, including the Kohathites who are descendants of Aaron, and the other Kohathites, the Gershonites, and the Merarites. This passage and the following passages name the specific cities given to each of these Levite tribes. This passage gives the names of the 13 cities for the Kohathites who are descendants of Aaron.

Aaron was the first high priest of Israel, and he was the grandson of Kohath, who was one of the sons of Levi. When the Israelite leaders distributed land to the Levite clans, they threw the first lot for the Kohathite descendants of Aaron because they were priests for Yahweh. Remember that throwing lots was a common way to decide something important during the time of the Levites, and that Yahweh was ultimately the one who decided the result of the lots. The 13 cities that the descendants of Aaron received were all in the land of the tribes of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin. Remember that it was probably not only the Levites who would live in these cities. The Levites lived there to be an example to the people and to teach the people how to follow Yahweh.

The Kohathite descendants of Aaron received nine cities from the land of Judah and Simeon. The first city named is Hebron, which was also called Arba City at that time, named after Arba, who was the father of Anak. Anak and Arba were people who lived in the land before the Israelites came. Hebron was in the hill country of Judah. A hill is a naturally raised area of land, and it is smaller than a mountain. The hill country is an area of Judah where there are many hills.

Stop here and look at a picture of hill country as a group. Also, look at the map of the 13 cities that the Kohathite descendants of Aaron receive. Find the city of Hebron on the map. Pause this audio here.

The Levites received Hebron and its surrounding pasturelands for their animals. Pastureland is an open area of grass that grows without help from people. This pastureland was for the Levites' animals to eat the grass.

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

The leaders of Israel give the city and pastureland of Hebron to the Levites, but the surrounding fields and settlements of Hebron belong to Caleb, the son of Jephunneh. Cities had a wall around the outside to protect the people. Fields were good for growing crops of food, and settlements were small groups of people's homes that did not have a wall around them. Remember that Caleb is one of the explorers that Moses sent into the land, and Caleb is not afraid of the people or of taking the land as the Israelites' own. Moses promised to give Caleb some land, and Joshua kept this promise when he gave Caleb these fields and settlements around the city of Hebron. Now, the leaders of the Israelites give the Levites the city of Hebron.

Stop here and look at pictures of fields and a village as a group. Pause this audio here.

Also, stop here and discuss this question as a group: Describe the different sizes of settlements in your area. What do you call each kind of settlement, and what kinds of people live in each kind of area? Pause this audio here.

The city of Hebron is also one of the cities of refuge for someone who accidentally kills another person. Remember there are six cities of refuge spread throughout the land of Israel. Hebron is probably the first city in the list because it is an important city as a city of refuge.

The descendants of Aaron the priest also receive these other eight cities with their surrounding pasturelands: Libnah, Jattir, Eshtemoa, Holon, Debir, Ain, Juttah, and Beth Shemesh. Out of the nine cities the Israelites gave to the descendants of Aaron in the land of Judah and Simeon, eight of the nine cities are in the land of Judah, and the city of Ain belongs to both Judah and Simeon. All of these cities are closer to Jerusalem, where the temple will eventually be. Descendants of Aaron are priests, and it is helpful to be close to the place of worship.

Stop here and look at a map of the cities that the Kohathite descendants of Aaron receive. Find the cities Libnah, Jattir, Eshtemoa, Holon, Debir, Ain, Juttah, and Beth Shemesh as a group. Pause this audio here.

The Levites who are descendants of Aaron also receive four cities from the land of Benjamin, and the surrounding pastureland for their animals. These four cities are Gibeon, Geba, Anathoth, and Almon.

Stop here and look at a map of the cities that the Kohathite descendants of Aaron receive. Find the cities of Gibeon, Geba, Anathoth, and Almon as a group. Pause this audio here.

In total, the descendants of Aaron receive 13 cities and their surrounding pasturelands from the land of the tribes of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin. The descendants of Aaron are priests for the people of Israel.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 21:9–19 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 five scenes.

In the first scene: The Levites, who are descendants of Aaron, receive cities in the land of Judah and Simeon.

In the second scene: The descendants of Aaron receive Hebron and its surrounding pasturelands. Caleb already has the fields and settlements around Hebron, and Hebron is also a city of refuge.

In the third scene: The descendants of Aaron receive eight other cities in the land of the tribes of Judah and Simeon.

In the fourth scene: The descendants of Aaron receive four cities in the land of the tribe of Benjamin.

In the fifth scene: The descendants of Aaron receive 13 cities in total, and their surrounding pasturelands.

The characters in this passage are:

- Leaders of Israel
- Tribe of Judah
- Tribe of Simeon
- Levites, who are descendants of Aaron
- Caleb, the son of Jephunneh
- And the tribe of Benjamin

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

Remember that in the previous passage, the leaders of Israel gave the Levites 48 cities to live in, and their surrounding pasturelands for their animals. All three clans of Levites received their cities and pastureland from the land of the other tribes of Israel. Descendants of Aaron in the clan of Kohath, other Levites in the clan of Kohath, Levites in the clan of Gershon, and Levites in the clan of Merari all receive their land.

In the first scene, remember that the descendants of Aaron in the clan of Kohath receive their cities and surrounding pasturelands first. The leaders of Israel cast the lot for them first because they are the priests of Israel. Remember that the cities for the descendants of Aaron all come from the land of the tribes of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin. The first cities listed are from the land of the tribes of Judah and Simeon.

In the second scene, the descendants of Aaron receive the city of Hebron and its surrounding pasturelands. Remember that Hebron is in the hill country of the tribe of Judah.

Stop here as a group and again look at a picture of pastureland, a picture of hill country, and the map of the 13 cities that the Kohathite descendants of Aaron receive, if needed. Find the city of Hebron on the map. Pause this audio here.

Remember that Hebron was also called Arba City, or Kiriath Arba. In the original language, Kiriath means "city." Arba was the name of a person who lived in Arba City. This is background information, and it might be more natural in your language to include it in a different way. For example, "The people of Israel gave them Kiriath Arba town. Arba was the father of Anak. That town had another name, Hebron."

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What is the best way to translate this part of the passage? How will you show that Hebron had two names, and the origin of the name Arba City? Pause this audio here.

Remember that the fields and surrounding villages around Hebron did not go to the descendants of Aaron. Remember that Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, had already received the fields and surrounding settlements as his own possession. Caleb possessed the land, which means that the land belongs to Yahweh, but Caleb can use the land. Remember that a settlement is smaller than a city, and that a settlement does not have walls around it like cities did during that time.

Stop here and look at pictures of fields and a settlement again as a group if needed. Pause this audio here.

Remember that Hebron is also a city of refuge. A person who accidentally kills another person can have protection if they go to one of the six cities of refuge spread throughout Israel. In some languages, it may be more natural to say that Hebron is a city of refuge earlier in the scene when it is first introduced. An example of this could be: "The descendants of Aaron received Hebron, a city of refuge, and its surrounding pastureland."

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What is the most natural way to translate this part of the passage in your language? Would it be better to include that Hebron is a city of refuge earlier in the scene? Pause this audio here.

In the third scene, the descendants of Aaron receive eight other cities from the land of the tribes of Judah and Simeon. The descendants of Aaron also receive the pasturelands around each of these eight cities. Remember that these cities are: Libnah, Jattir, Eshtemoa, Holon, Debir, Ain, Juttah, and Beth Shemesh. Most of these cities are south of Hebron in the hill country of the tribe of Judah, except for Beth Shemesh, which is on the northern boundary of Judah's land. Eight of the cities are in the land of the tribe of Judah, and the tribes of Judah and Simeon share Ain.

Stop here as a group and look again at a map of the cities that the Kohathite descendants of Aaron receive, if needed. Find the cities of Libnah, Jattir, Eshtemoa, Holon, Debir, Ain, Juttah, and Beth Shemesh on the map. Pause this audio here.

In the fourth scene, the descendants of Aaron receive four cities from the land of the tribe of Benjamin. They also receive the surrounding pasturelands around their four cities. The cities are Gibeon, Geba, Anathoth, and Almon. Gibeon is northwest of Jerusalem, Geba and Anathoth are both northeast of Jerusalem, and Almon is northeast of Anathoth.

Stop here as a group and again look at a map of the cities that the Kohathite descendants of Aaron receive, if needed. Find the cities of Gibeon, Geba, Anathoth, and Almon on the map. Pause this audio here.

In the fifth scene, there is a summary statement of all the cities that the descendants of Aaron receive. In total, the descendants of Aaron the priest receive 13 cities and their surrounding pasturelands from the land of the tribes of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin.

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

As you visualize the passage and the action in it, make sure to use objects to represent the 13 cities that the descendants of Aaron receive. Think about how you can show that Hebron is a city of refuge and is different from the other 12 cities in this passage. Use the map to help find the location of all 13 cities.

*Embodying the Text**Embodying the Text*

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 21:9–19 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 leaders of Israel
- Tribe of Judah
- Tribe of Simeon
- Levites, who are descendants of Aaron
- Caleb, son of Jephunneh
- And the tribe of Benjamin

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 leaders of Israel cast the lot first for the descendants of Aaron, who are in the clan of Kohath in the Levite tribe. The descendants of Aaron receive cities from the land of the tribes of Judah and Simeon.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the descendants of Aaron, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "We feel honored to receive the first land assignments of the Levite tribe," or
- "We are looking forward to serving as priests for Yahweh in the land of the tribes of Judah and Simeon" or
- "We are wondering which city our family will be assigned to."

The descendants of Aaron receive the city of Hebron in the hill country of the tribe of Judah and its surrounding pasturelands. Hebron is also a city of refuge for someone who accidentally kills another person. Hebron is also called Arba City after Arba, who was the father of Anak. The fields and settlements around Hebron belong to Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, and not to the descendants of Aaron.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I am glad that the Israelite leaders remembered Moses' promise that I could keep these fields and settlements around Hebron," or
- "I am looking forward to being near the Levites who will live in Hebron," or
- "I am happy to welcome the Levites to my home near Hebron."

Also, ask the people playing the descendants of Aaron, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "We feel honored to be chosen to serve in Hebron, a city of refuge," or
- "We are wishing that we could have the fields and settlements around Hebron instead of Caleb the son of Jephunneh," or
- "We are glad that Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, will be nearby."

The Israelite leaders also assign eight other cities and their surrounding pasturelands to the Levites in the land of the tribes of Judah and Simeon. These eight cities are Libnah, Jattir, Eshtemoa, Holon, Debir, Ain, Juttah, and Beth Shemesh. The descendants of Aaron receive a total of nine cities in the land of the tribes of Judah and Simeon.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the tribe of Judah, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "We feel honored that our lands will have so many cities with descendants of Aaron living in them," or
- "We are not sure if there will be space for everyone in our land," or
- "We are feeling like these land assignments are unfair—the tribe of Simeon does not have to give up this many cities to the Levites!"

The descendants of Aaron also receive four cities and their surrounding pasturelands from the land of the tribe of Benjamin. These four cities are Gibeon, Geba, Anathoth, and Almon. The descendants of Aaron receive a total of 13 cities and their surrounding pasturelands from the land of the tribes of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin. The descendants of Aaron are priests.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the tribe of Benjamin, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "We are glad that we are able to share four of our cities with the descendants of Aaron," or
- "We are happy we did not need to share more than four cities with the descendants of Aaron" or
- "We are glad to welcome the priests of Yahweh to our land to help us learn to follow Yahweh."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 21:9–19 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

The leaders of Israel distribute certain cities to the Kohathite **clans** of the **Levites**, who are descendants of Aaron. The Levites serve Yahweh. Translate clans and Levites the same as you have in previous passages. For more information on Levites, refer to the Master Glossary.

The leaders of Israel cast lots for each of the cities they gave to the Levites. The **descendants** of Aaron receive the first lot, and the first cities. Translate descendants the same as you have in previous passages. For more information on descendants, refer to the Master Glossary.

A **city** is a large **settlement** of people. During the time of the Levites, a city had a wall around it to protect the people who lived inside the city, while a village or settlement did not have a wall around it. Use the same words for city and settlement as you have used in previous passages.

The first city that the descendants of Aaron received was **Hebron**. Hebron was a city in the hill country of Judah, and it used to be called Arba City, after Arba the father of Anak. Caleb the son of Jephunneh already owned the fields and surrounding settlements around Hebron, but the city of Hebron itself and the surrounding pasturelands went to the descendants of Aaron. Hebron was also a **city of refuge** for someone who killed another person accidentally. Translate Hebron and city of refuge the same as you have in previous passages. For more information on Hebron, refer to the Master Glossary.

Stop here as a group and look again at a map of the 13 cities that the Kohathite descendants of Aaron receive, if needed. Find the city of Hebron on the map. Pause this audio here.

The descendants of Aaron also receive the cities of Libnah, Jattir, Eshtemoa, Holon, Debir, Ain, Juttah, and Beth Shemesh and the pasturelands around each city. Translate these city names as you have in previous passages. Yahweh gives these cities to the tribe of Judah in a previous passage. These eight cities, plus the city of Hebron, are the nine cities that the descendants of Aaron receive in the tribal land of Judah and Simeon.

Stop here as a group and look again at a map of the 13 cities that the Kohathite descendants of Aaron receive, if needed. Find the cities of Libnah, Jattir, Eshtemoa, Holon, Debir, Ain, Juttah, and Beth Shemesh on the map. Pause this audio here.

The descendants of Aaron also receive four cities and their surrounding pasturelands from the tribal land of Benjamin. Benjamin was the youngest son of Israel, and one of the tribes of Israel. The four cities that the descendants of Aaron receive are Gibeon, Geba, Anathoth, and Almon.

Stop here as a group and look again at a map of the 13 cities that the Kohathite descendants of Aaron receive, if needed. Find the cities of Gibeon, Geba, Anathoth, and Almon on the map. Pause this audio here.

Translate the city names of **Gibeon** and **Geba** the same as you have in previous passages. Yahweh gives these cities to the tribe of Benjamin in a previous passage.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How will you translate the names of the cities **Anathoth** and **Almon**? Pause this audio here.

The descendants of Aaron the **priest** received a total of 13 cities and their surrounding pasturelands from the land of the tribes of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin. Translate priests the same as you have in previous passages. For more information on priests, 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.

Joshua 21:9–19

Audio Content

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Joshua 21:20–26

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 21:20–26 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 21:20–26 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 Joshua 21:20–26 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The Israelites are in the land that Yahweh promised to give to them. In a previous passage, the Levites came to the leaders of Israel and asked for their cities and surrounding pasturelands for their animals that Yahweh commanded Moses to give to the Levites. The leaders of Israel threw lots and gave 48 cities to the Levites throughout the land of the Israelites. Each of the Levite tribes receive their cities and the surrounding pastureland. This passage names the 10 cities for the Kohathites who were not descendants of Aaron.

In the Kohathite tribe, there were four sons of Kohath. Amran was the oldest son, and he was the father of Moses and Aaron. Aaron became the first high priest of Israel, and his descendants already received their cities from the land of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin in the previous passage. Now, the families of the other three sons of Kohath—Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel—receive their cities. These Kohathites were not priests, but they did serve Yahweh by carrying the ark and tabernacle furniture, and by doing other duties.

The Kohathite descendants of these other three sons of Kohath received a total of 10 cities from the land of the tribes of Ephraim, Dan, and the half-tribe of Manasseh on the western side of the Jordan River. Remember that Ephraim and Manasseh were both sons of Joseph, one of the 12 sons of Israel, and Ephraim and Manasseh were two half-tribes. Also, Manasseh had one part of its tribe on the western side of the Jordan River, and one half of its tribe on the eastern side of the Jordan River. One of the 10 cities is a city of refuge.

Remember that the Levites were probably not the only people living in these cities. The Levites lived there to be an example to the people and to teach the people how to follow Yahweh.

The Kohathites who were not priests received four cities from the land of Ephraim. The first city is Shechem. They also received the surrounding pasturelands for their animals. Pastureland is an open area of grass that grows without help from people. This pastureland was for the Levites' animals to eat the grass.

Stop here and look at a picture of pastureland as a group. Also, look at the map of the 10 cities for the Kohathites who were not priests. Find the city of Shechem on the map. Pause this audio here.

The city of Shechem is first on the list, probably because it was also one of the cities of refuge for someone who accidentally killed another person. Remember there were six cities of refuge spread throughout the land of Israel.

Shechem was in the hill country of Ephraim. A hill is a naturally raised area of land, and it is smaller than a mountain. Hill country is an area where there are many hills.

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

The Kohathites who were not priests also received these other three cities with their surrounding pasturelands from the land of the tribe of Ephraim: Gezer, Kibzaim, and Beth Horon.

Stop here and look as a group at a map of the cities for the Kohathites who were not priests. Find the cities of Gezer, Kibzaim, and Beth Horon on the map. Pause this audio here.

The Kohathites who were not priests received four cities from the land of the tribe of Dan, and the surrounding pasturelands for their animals. These four cities were Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Aijalon, and Gath Rimmon.

Stop here and look at a map of the cities for the Kohathites who were not priests. Find the cities of Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Aijalon, and Gath Rimmon on the map. Pause this audio here.

The Kohathites who were not priests received two cities from the land of the half-tribe of Manasseh, and the surrounding pasturelands for their animals. This is the part of the tribe of Manasseh that lived to the west of the Jordan River. These two cities were Taanach and Jibleam. Taanach was on the border of the land between Issachar and Manassah. Jibleam is called "Gath Rimmon" in this part of the passage, but most people believe "Jibleam" or "Ibleam" is a better translation because in another part of the Old Testament, this town is referred to as Jibleam or Ibleam.

Stop here and look at a map of the cities for the Kohathites who were not priests. Find the cities of Taanach and Jibleam on the map. Pause this audio here.

The other Kohathites received a total of 10 cities and their surrounding pasturelands from the land of the tribes of Ephraim, Dan, and the half-tribe of Manasseh who lived west of the Jordan River.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 21:20–26 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 four scenes.

In the first scene: The Kohathites who are not priests receive four cities from the land of the tribe of Ephraim.

In the second scene: The Kohathites who are not priests receive four cities from the land of the tribe of Dan.

In the third scene: The Kohathites who are not priests receive two cities from the land of the half-tribe of Manasseh, who live on the west side of the Jordan River.

In the fourth scene: The Kohathites who are not priests receive a total of 10 cities and their surrounding pasturelands.

The characters in this passage are:

- Leaders of Israel
- Kohathites who are not descendants of Aaron
- Tribe of Ephraim
- Tribe of Dan
- And the half-tribe of Manasseh, who live on the west side of the Jordan River

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

Remember that in the previous passage, the leaders of Israel gave the Kohathites who were descendants of Aaron their 13 cities to live in, and the surrounding pasturelands for their animals.

In the first scene, remember that now the Kohathites who are not descendants of Aaron receive their cities to live in. Remember that these Kohathites are also from the clan of Kohath. Amran is one of Kohath's four sons, and Aaron is the son of Amran. Aaron and his descendants are priests.

Now, the descendants of the other three sons of Kohath receive their cities. Remember that the cities for the Kohathites who are not priests all come from the land of the tribes of Ephraim, Dan, and the half-tribe of Manasseh who live on the west side of the Jordan River. The first cities listed are from the land of the tribe of Ephraim.

Remember that the Kohathites who are not priests receive the city of Shechem and its surrounding pasturelands.

Stop here and look at a picture of pastureland again as a group, if needed. Also, look at the map of the cities for the Kohathites who were not priests. Find the city of Shechem on the map. Pause this audio here.

Remember that Shechem was also a city of refuge. A person who accidentally killed another person could have protection if they went to one of the six cities of refuge spread throughout Israel. In some languages, it may be more natural to say that Shechem was a city of refuge later in this scene after mentioning its location in the hill country of Ephraim. An example of this could be: "The Kohathites who were not priests received Shechem and its surrounding pastureland in the hill country of Ephraim. Shechem was a city of refuge."

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What is the most natural way to translate this part of the passage in your language? Would it be better to include that Shechem is a city of refuge here, or later in the scene? Pause this audio here.

Remember that Shechem was in the hill country of Ephraim.

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

The Kohathites who are not priests also receive three other cities from the land of the tribe of Ephraim. They also receive the pasturelands around each of these cities. Remember the cities are Gezer, Kibzaim, and Beth Horon. Gezer was southeast of Joppa, and Beth Horon was northwest of Jerusalem. Kibzaim has not been mentioned previously.

Stop here and look at the map of the cities for the Kohathites who were not priests again as a group, if needed. Find the cities of Gezer, Kibzaim, and Beth Horon on the map. Pause this audio here.

In the passage, there is a list of these four cities from the land of the tribe of Ephraim, and then it says, "a total of four cities." After the list of the four cities in the second scene, the passage says again, "a total of four cities."

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do you list things in an interesting way? What is the best way to translate the list of four cities in the first scene and the list of four cities in the second scene so that it is clear there are four cities in each scene? Pause this audio here.

In the second scene, the Kohathites who are not priests receive four cities from the land of the tribe of Dan. They also receive the surrounding pastureland around their four cities. The four cities are: Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Aijalon, and Gath Rimmon. Eltekeh's location is uncertain. Gibbethon is located south of Joppa and west of Gezer. Aijalon is located northwest of Jerusalem. Gath Rimmon was probably northeast of Joppa.

Stop here and look again as a group at the map of the cities for the Kohathites who were not priests, if needed. Find the cities of Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Aijalon, and Gath Rimmon on the map. Pause this audio here.

In the third scene, the Kohathites who are not priests receive two cities from the land of the half-tribe of Manasseh, and the surrounding pasturelands for their animals. This is the part of the clan of Manasseh who lived to the west of the Jordan River. These two cities were Taanach and Jibleam. Taanach was on the border of the land between Issachar and Manassah. Remember that Jibleam is the most likely name of the other city, even though many translations call this city Gath Rimmon instead.

Stop here and look at the map of the cities for the Kohathites who were not priests again as a group, if needed. Find the cities of Taanach and Jibleam on the map. Pause this audio here.

Also, stop here and discuss this question as a group: How will you translate the name of the second city that the other Kohathites receive? Will you translate it as Gath Rimmon or Jibleam? Pause this audio here.

In the fourth scene, there is a summary statement of all the cities that the Kohathites who are not priests receive. In total, the other Kohathites receive 10 cities and their surrounding pasturelands from the land of the tribes of Ephraim, Dan, and the half-tribe of Manasseh who live west of the Jordan River.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How will you translate this summary statement about the 10 cities for the Kohathites who were not priests? Pause this audio here.

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

As you visualize the passage and the action in it, make sure to use objects to represent the 10 cities that the Kohathites who are not priests receive. Think about how you can show Shechem is a city of refuge and is different from the other nine cities in this passage. Use the map to help find the location of all 10 cities.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 21:20–26 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Pause this audio here.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has four scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Leaders of Israel
- Kohathites who are not descendants of Aaron
- Tribe of Ephraim
- Tribe of Dan
- And the half-tribe of Manasseh, who live on the west side of the Jordan River

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 leaders of Israel now throw the lots for the Kohathites who are not priests. These Kohathites are not descendants of Aaron. The first city the Kohathites who are not priests receive is Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim. Shechem is also a city of refuge for someone who accidentally kills another person.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Kohathites who are not priests, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "We feel honored to be chosen to serve in Shechem, a city of refuge," or
- "We are glad that we will be in the land of the tribe of Ephraim," or
- "We are wondering what life will be like in Shechem."

The Israelite leaders also assign three other cities and their surrounding pasturelands to the Kohathites who are not priests in the land of the tribe of Ephraim. These three cities are Gezer, Kibzaim, and Beth Horon.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the tribe of Ephraim, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "We feel honored that our lands will have these Kohathites living in them," or
- "We are glad to welcome the Kohathites into our land," or
- "We are wishing that we had the descendants of Aaron serving in our land instead of these Kohathites who are not descendants of Aaron."

The Kohathites who are not priests also receive four cities and their surrounding pasturelands from the land of the tribe of Dan. These four cities are Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Aijalon, and Gath Rimmon.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the tribe of Dan, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "We are glad that we are able to share four of our cities with the Kohathites," or
- "We are happy we did not need to share more than four cities with the Kohathites," or
- "We are glad to welcome the Kohathites to our land to help us learn to follow Yahweh."

The Kohathites who are not priests also receive two cities and their surrounding pasturelands from the land of the half-tribe of Manasseh. This is the part of the clan of Manasseh who lives to the west of the Jordan River. These two cities are Taanach and Jibleam. The Kohathites who are not priests receive a total of 10 cities and their pasturelands.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the half-tribe of Manasseh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "We are glad that we are able to share two of our cities with the Kohathites," or
- "We are happy we did not need to share more than two cities with the Kohathites—we are a smaller tribe than the other tribes," or
- "We are glad to welcome the Kohathites to our land to help us learn to follow Yahweh."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 21:20–26 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

The leaders of Israel assigned certain cities to the other Kohathite **clans** of the **Levites**. These Kohathites were not descendants of Aaron the priest, but they did serve Yahweh in the tabernacle. Translate clans and Levites the same as you have in previous passages. For more information on Levites, refer to the Master Glossary.

The leaders of Israel threw lots for each of the cities they gave to the Levites. The other Kohathites now receive their 10 cities in the land of Ephraim, Dan, and the half-tribe of Manasseh that is on the west side of the Jordan River.

A **city** is a large settlement of people. During the time of the Levites, a city had a wall around it to protect the people who lived inside the city, while a town did not have a wall around it. The Levites also receive the **pastureland** around the city. Translate cities and pastureland the same as you have in previous passages.

Shechem was a **city of refuge** in the land of the tribe of Ephraim. The Kohathites who were not priests received Shechem as one of their cities. Translate "city of refuge" the same as 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.

Joshua 21:20–26**Audio Content**

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Joshua 21:27–33

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 21:27–33 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 21:27–33 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 Joshua 21:27–33 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The Israelites are in the land that Yahweh promised to give to them. In a previous passage, the Levites came to the leaders of Israel and asked for their cities and surrounding pasturelands for their animals. The leaders of Israel threw lots and gave 48 cities to the Levites throughout the land of the Israelites. Each of the Levite clans received their cities and the surrounding pasturelands. This passage has the 13 cities for the Gershonites.

The Kohathites who are descendants of Aaron, and the Kohathites who are not priests, already received their cities and surrounding pasturelands. Now, the Gershonites receive their cities and surrounding pasturelands. Gershon was the oldest of the three sons of Levi, who was one of the sons of Israel. The Gershonites were Levites who were not priests, but they served Yahweh by carrying the tabernacle curtains when they moved, and by doing other duties in the tabernacle.

All 13 of the Gershonites' cities are in the northern part of Canaan, and 2 of the 13 cities are cities of refuge. The cities are from the land of the half-tribe of Manasseh on the east side of the Jordan River, the land of the tribe of Issachar, the land of the tribe of Asher, and the land of the tribe of Naphtali. Remember that Issachar, Asher, and Naphtali are all sons of Israel, and the names of 3 of the 12 tribes of Israel. Also, Manasseh was one of the sons of Joseph, who was one of the 12 sons of Israel. In a previous passage, the Kohathites who were not priests received two cities from the other half tribe of Manasseh who lived on the western side of the Jordan River.

Remember that the Gershonites were probably not the only people living in these cities. The Levites who were from the Gershonite clan lived in the cities to be an example to the people and to teach the people how to follow Yahweh.

The Gershonites receive two cities from the land of the half-tribe of Manasseh on the eastern side of the Jordan River. The first city is Golan in the region of Bashan. The Gershonites also receive the surrounding pastureland. Pastureland is an open area of grass that grows without help from people. This pastureland was for the Levites' animals to eat the grass.

Stop here and look at a picture of pastureland as a group. Also, look at the map of the cities the Gershonites received. Find Golan on the map. Pause this audio here.

The city of Golan is an important city because it is also one of the cities of refuge for someone who accidentally kills another person. Remember there are six cities of refuge spread throughout the land of Israel. The Gershonites probably receive this city first because it is an important city.

The other city the Gershonites receive from the half-tribe of Manasseh is Beeshtarah and its surrounding pasturelands. Beeshtarah is also called Ashtaroth in another part of the Old Testament, after one of the Canaanite goddesses. It is also possible the name Beeshtarah means "house of Astarte." This city was probably on a hill and was on the edge of Israelite territory.

Stop here and look as a group at the map of the cities the Gershonites received. Find Beeshtarah on the map. Pause this audio here.

The Gershonites receive four cities from the land of the tribe of Issachar, and the surrounding pasturelands for their animals. These four cities are Kishion, Daberath, Jarmuth, and En Gannim.

Stop here and look at the map of the cities the Gershonites received as a group. Find Kishion, Daberath, Jarmuth, and En Gannim on the map. Pause this audio here.

The Gershonites receive four cities from the land of the tribe of Asher, and the surrounding pasturelands for their animals. These four cities are Mishal, Abdon, Helkath, and Rehob.

Stop here and look at the map of the cities the Gershonites received as a group. Find Mishal, Abdon, Helkath, and Rehob on the map. Pause this audio here.

The Gershonites receive three cities from the land of the tribe of Naphtali, and the surrounding pasturelands for their animals. These three cities are Kedesh in the region of Galilee, Hammoth Dor, and Kartan. Kedesh is also a city of refuge for someone who kills another person accidentally. The city of Hammoth Dor is also called Hammath in a previous passage in the book of Joshua, and Hammon in another part of the Old Testament.

Stop here and look at the map of the cities the Gershonites receive as a group. Find Kedesh, Hammoth Dor, and Kartan on the map. Pause this audio here.

The Gershonites receive a total of 13 cities and their surrounding pasturelands from the land of the half tribe of Manasseh on the east side of the Jordan River, and from the land of the tribes of Issachar, Asher, and Naphtali.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 21:27–33 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 five scenes.

In the first scene: The Gershonites receive two cities from the land of the half-tribe of Manasseh who live on the east side of the Jordan River. One of the cities is a city of refuge.

In the second scene: The Gershonites receive four cities from the land of the tribe of Issachar.

In the third scene: The Gershonites receive four cities from the land of the tribe of Asher.

In the fourth scene: The Gershonites receive three cities from the land of the tribe of Naphtali. One of the cities is a city of refuge.

In the fifth scene: The Gershonites receive a total of 13 cities and their surrounding pasturelands.

The characters in this passage are:

- Leaders of Israel
- Gershonite clan of the Levites
- Half-tribe of Manasseh, who live on the east side of the Jordan River
- Tribe of Issachar
- Tribe of Asher
- And the tribe of Naphtali

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

Remember that in the previous passages, the leaders of Israel gave the Kohathites who were descendants of Aaron their 13 cities to live in, and the surrounding pasturelands for their animals. The leaders of Israel also gave the Kohathites who were not priests 10 cities to live in, and the surrounding pasturelands.

In the first scene, remember that now the clan of Gershon receives their cities. Gershon is one of the three sons of Levi. Remember that the cities for the Gershonites are all in the north of Canaan in the land of the half-tribe of Manasseh who lives on the east side of the Jordan River, and in the land of the tribes of Issachar, Asher, and Naphtali. The first cities are from the land of the half-tribe of Manasseh who lives on the east side of the Jordan River.

Remember that the Gershonites receive the city of Golan and its surrounding pasturelands. Golan is east of the Sea of Galilee in the region of Bashan.

Stop here and look at a picture of pastureland again as a group, if needed. Also, look at the map of the cities the Gershonites received again as a group if needed. Find Golan on the map. Pause this audio here.

Remember that Golan is also a city of refuge. A person who accidentally kills another person can have protection if they go to one of the six cities of refuge spread throughout Israel. Remember there is already one city of refuge distributed to the Levites who are descendants of Aaron, and one city of refuge distributed to the Kohathites who are not priests.

The Gershonites also receive the city of Beeshtarah in the land of the half-tribe of Manasseh who lives on the east side of the Jordan River. They also receive the pastureland around this city. Beeshtarah is also in the region of Bashan east of the city of Golan.

Stop here and look at the map of the cities the Gershonites received. Find Beeshtarah on the map. Pause this audio here.

Remember that Beeshtarah is also called Ashtaroth in another part of the Old Testament. Ashtaroth was a Canaanite goddess.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How will you translate the name of this city—Beeshtarah or Ashtaroth? Pause this audio here.

At the end of the first, second, third, and fourth scenes, there is a summary about the number of cities the Gershonites receive from that tribe. For example, in the first scene it describes the two cities, and then at the end of the first scene, it says "a total of two cities."

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What is the best way to translate the last part of each of these scenes to show the total number of cities the Gershonites receive in the land of each of the tribes? How will you make it clear the total number of cities in each scene? Pause this audio here.

In the second scene, the Gershonites receive four cities from the land of the tribe of Issachar. They also receive the surrounding pasturelands around these four cities. The four cities are: Kishion, Daberath, Jarmuth, and En Gannim. Kishion is southeast of Nazareth, and Daberath is east of Nazareth. Jarmuth is south of Kishion, and En Gannim is southwest of the Sea of Galilee.

Stop here and look at the map of the cities the Gershonites received again as a group, if needed. Find Kishion, Daberath, Jarmuth, and En Gannim on the map. Pause this audio here.

In the third scene, the Gershonites receive four cities from the land of the tribe of Asher, and the surrounding pasturelands. These four cities are Mishal, Abdon, Helkath, and Rehob. The locations of Mishal, Helkath, and Rehob are unknown. The city of Abdon is northeast of Acco.

Stop here and look at the map of the cities the Gershonites received again as a group, if needed. Find Mishal, Abdon, Helkath, and Rehob on the map. Pause this audio here.

Also, stop here and discuss this question as a group: Would it be more natural in your language to translate "and its surrounding pastureland" with each of the cities, or to list the names first and then say they all have surrounding pasturelands? For example: "The Gershonites received the city of Mishal and its surrounding pastureland, the city of Abdon and its surrounding pastureland from the land of the tribe of Asher." Pause this audio here.

In the fourth scene, the Gershonites receive three cities from the land of the tribe of Naphtali, and the surrounding pasturelands. The three cities are: Kedesh, Hammoth Dor, and Kartan. Remember that Kedesh is also a city of refuge for someone who kills another person accidentally. This is the second city of refuge that the Gershonites receive. Kedesh is northwest of the Sea of Galilee in the region of Galilee. Hammoth Dor is probably on the western coast of the Sea of Galilee. Remember that Hammoth Dor is also called Hammath and Hammon. The location of the city of Kartan is unknown.

Stop here and look at the map of the cities the Gershonites received again as a group, if needed. Find Kedesh, Hammoth Dor, and Kartan on the map. Pause this audio here.

Also, stop here and discuss this question as a group: How will you translate the city of Hammoth Dor? Will you say Hammoth Dor, Hammath, or Hammon? Pause this audio here.

In the fifth scene, there is a summary statement of all the cities that the Gershonites receive. In total, the Gershonites receive 13 cities and their surrounding pasturelands from the land of the half-tribe of Manasseh who lives east of the Jordan River, and from the land of the tribes of Issachar, Asher, and Naphtali.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How will you translate this summary statement about the 13 cities the Gershonites receive? Pause this audio here.

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

As you visualize the passage and the action in it, make sure to use objects to represent the 13 cities that the Gershonites receive. Think about how you can show Golan and Kedesh are cities of refuge and are different from the other 11 cities in this passage. Use the map to help find the location of all 13 cities.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 21:27–33 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:

- Leaders of Israel
- Gershonite clan
- Half-tribe of Manasseh, who live on the east side of the Jordan River
- Tribe of Issachar
- Tribe of Asher
- And the tribe 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.

The leaders of Israel now throw the lots for the Gershonites. The Gershonites receive two cities from the land of the half-tribe of Manasseh who live east of the Jordan River. The cities are Golan in Beeshtarah in the region of Bashan, along with their surrounding pasturelands. Golan is also a city of refuge for someone who accidentally kills another person.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Gershonites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "We feel honored to be chosen to serve in Golan, a city of refuge," or
- "We feel nervous about moving to the east side of the Jordan River—it is so far away from the other Israelites" or
- "We feel worried about living on the border of Israel's land because it might be more dangerous there," or
- "We are not excited to serve Yahweh in Beeshtarah, because the people there worshiped a Canaanite goddess."

The Israelite leaders distributed four cities and their surrounding pasturelands to Gershonites in the land of the tribe of Issachar. These four cities are Kishion, Daberath, Jarmuth, and En Gannim.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the tribe of Issachar, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "We feel honored that our lands will have these Gershonites living in them," or
- "We are glad to welcome the Gershonites into our land," or
- "We are wishing that we had the descendants of Aaron serving in our land instead of these Gershonites who are not descendants of Aaron."

The Gershonites also receive four cities and their surrounding pasturelands from the land of the tribe of Asher. These four cities are Mishal, Abdon, Helkath, and Rehob.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the tribe of Asher, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "We feel happy we do not need to share more than four cities with the Gershonites," or
- "We feel glad to welcome the Gershonites into our land to help us learn to follow Yahweh," or
- "We are wishing we had a city of refuge in our land like other tribes have."

The Gershonites also receive three cities and their surrounding pasturelands from the land of the tribe of Naphtali. These three cities are Kedesh, Hammoth Dor, and Kartan. The Gershonites receive a total of 13 cities and the surrounding pasturelands.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the tribe of Naphtali, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "We are glad that we are able to share three of our cities with the Gershonites," or
- "We feel happy we did not need to share more than three cities with the Gershonites," or
- "We are glad that we get to have a city of refuge in our land with Levites living in it too."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 21:27–33 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

The leaders of Israel distribute certain cities with their **pasturelands** to the Gershonite **clans** of the **Levites**. These Gershonites are not priests, but they do serve Yahweh. Translate pasturelands, Levites, and clans the same as you have in previous passages. For more information on Levites, refer to the Master Glossary.

The leaders of Israel throw lots for each of the cities they give to the Levites. The Gershonites now receive their 13 cities in the land of the half-tribe of Manasseh that is on the east side of the Jordan River, and from the land of the tribes of Issachar, Asher, and Naphtali.

A **city** is a large settlement of people. During the time of the Levites, a city had a wall around it to protect the people who lived inside the city, while a town did not have a wall around it. Translate city the same as you have in previous passages.

The Gershonites receive Kedesh in the land of the tribe of Naphtali. Kedesh is also a **city of refuge** for someone who kills another person accidentally. Kedesh is in the region of **Galilee**. Translate city of refuge and Galilee the same as you have in previous passages. For more information on Galilee, 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.

Joshua 21:27–33**Audio Content**

[webm zip](#) (12992036 KB)

- [FIA Step 1](#)
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Joshua 21:34–40

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 21:34–40 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 21:34–40 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 Joshua 21:34–40 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The Israelites are in the land that Yahweh promised to give to them. In a previous passage, the Levites came to the leaders of Israel and asked for their cities and surrounding pasturelands for their animals. The leaders of Israel threw lots and gave 48 cities to the Levites throughout the land of the Israelites. Each of the Levite clans received their cities and the surrounding pasturelands. This passage has the names for the 12 cities for the Merarites.

The Kohathites who are descendants of Aaron, the Kohathites who are not priests, and the Gershonites already received their cities and the surrounding pasturelands. All the Levites who were not named yet in the previous passages are in the Merarite clans. Now, this final clan of Levites—the Merarites—receive their cities. The Merarite clans are descendants of Merari, one of the 3 sons of Levi, who was one of the 12 sons of Israel. The Merarites are Levites who are not priests, but they serve Yahweh by carrying the tabernacle structures when the Israelites move, and by doing other duties in the tabernacle.

The 12 cities that the Israelite leaders distribute to the Merarites are in the land of the tribes of Zebulun, Reuben, and Gad. Remember that Zebulun, Reuben, and Gad are all sons of Israel, and 3 of the 12 tribes of Israel. Two of the 12 cities given to the Merarites are cities of refuge.

Remember that the Merarites are probably not the only people living in these cities. The Levites who are from the Merarite clan live in the cities to be an example to the people and to teach the people how to follow Yahweh.

The Merarites receive four cities from the land of the tribe of Zebulun. The four cities are Jokneam, Kartah, Dimnah, and Nahalal.

Stop here and look at a map of the cities for the Merarites. Find the cities of Jokneam, Kartah, Dimnah, and Nahalal as a group. Pause this audio here.

The Merarites also receive the surrounding pasturelands around the four cities in the land of the tribe of Zebulun. Pastureland is an open area of grass that grows without help from people. These pasturelands were for the Levites' animals to eat the grass.

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

The Merarites receive four cities from the land of the tribe of Reuben, and the surrounding pasturelands for their animals. Remember that the land of the tribe of Reuben is on the east side of the Jordan River. The four cities the Merarites receive are Bezer, Jahaz, Kedemoth, and Mephaath. From other passages in Joshua, we know that Bezer is one of the six cities of refuge in Israel for someone to go to if they kill another person accidentally.

Stop here and look at a map of the cities for the Merarites. Find the cities of Bezer, Jahaz, Kedemoth, and Mephaath as a group. Pause this audio here.

The Merarites receive four cities from the land of the tribe of Gad, and the surrounding pasturelands for their animals. These four cities are Ramoth in Gilead, Mahanaim, Heshbon, and Jazer. Ramoth is the sixth and final city of refuge where someone can go if they kill another person accidentally.

Stop here and look at a map of the cities for the Merarites. Find the cities of Ramoth in Gilead, Mahanaim, Heshbon, and Jazer as a group. Pause this audio here.

The Merarites received a total of 12 cities and their surrounding pasturelands from the land of the tribes of Zebulun, Reuben, and Gad.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 21:34–40 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: The Merarites receive four cities from the land of the tribe of Zebulun.

In the second scene: The Merarites receive four cities from the land of the tribe of Reuben.

In the third scene: The Merarites receive four cities from the land of the tribe of Gad.

In the fourth scene: The Merarites receive a total of 12 cities and their surrounding pasturelands.

The characters in this passage are:

- Leaders of Israel
- Merarite clan of the Levites
- Tribe of Zebulun
- Tribe of Reuben
- And the tribe of Gad

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

Remember that in the previous passages, the leaders of Israel gave 13 cities and pasturelands to the Kohathites who are descendants of Aaron. The leaders of Israel gave 10 cities and pastureland to the other Kohathites, and 13 cities and pasturelands to the Gershonites.

Remember that now the clan of Merari receives their cities. Merari was one of the three sons of Levi. The Merarites are the final clan of Levites to receive their cities. The author of this passage gives the extra information that these Merarites are the "rest" of the Levites.

Remember that the cities for the Merarites are from the land of the tribes of Zebulun, Reuben, and Gad. Remember that the land of the tribe of Zebulun is on the west side of the Jordan River, and the land of the tribes of Reuben and Gad are both on the east side of the Jordan River.

In the first scene, remember that the Merarites receive four cities and their surrounding pasturelands in the land of the tribe of Zebulun. The cities are Jokneam, Kartah, Dimnah, and Nahalal. The land of the tribe of

Zebulun is in the north of Israel between the Mediterranean Sea and the Sea of Galilee. The city of Jokneam is northwest of Meggido at the foot of Mount Carmel. The locations of the cities of Kartah and Nahalal are unknown. Dimnah is probably the same city that is called Rimmon in an earlier passage.

Stop here and look at a map of the cities for the Merarites. Find the cities of Jokneam, Kartah, Dimnah, and Nahalal again as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

At the end of the first, second, and third scenes, there is a summary about the number of cities the Merarites receive from that tribe. It says "four cities" at the end of each scene.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What is the best way to translate the last part of each of these scenes to show the Merarites receive four cities from each of the tribes in this passage? Pause this audio here.

In the second scene, the Merarites receive four cities from the land of the tribe of Reuben. They also receive the surrounding pasturelands around these four cities. The four cities are: Bezer, Jahaz, Kedemoth, and Mephaath. We know from another part of the book of Joshua that Bezer is a city of refuge, even though it is not identified as a city of refuge in this passage. Bezer is east of the Jordan River, and Jahaz is probably east of the Dead Sea, southeast of Madaba. Kedemoth is probably east of the Dead Sea and north of the Arnon River. Mephaath is south of the city of Amman in what is now the country of Jordan.

Stop here and look at a map of the cities for the Merarites. Find the cities of Bezer, Jahaz, Kedemoth, and Mephaath again as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Also, stop here and discuss this question as a group: Would it be more natural in your language to translate "and its surrounding pastureland" with each of the cities, or to list the names first and then say they all have surrounding pasturelands? For example: "The Merarites received the city of Bezer and its surrounding pastureland, the city of Jahaz and its surrounding pastureland, and all the other cities from the land of the tribe of Reuben." Pause this audio here.

In the third scene, the Merarites receive four cities from the land of the tribe of Gad, and the surrounding pasturelands. These four cities are Ramoth in Gilead, Mahanaim, Heshbon, and Jazer. Remember that Ramoth is a city of refuge. Mahanaim is on the border of the lands that belong to the clans of Gad and Manasseh. Ramoth is to the north, Heshbon is to the southwest, and Jazer is to the west of the city of Amman in what is now the country of Jordan.

Stop here and look at a map of the cities for the Merarites. Find the cities of Ramoth in Gilead, Mahanaim, Heshbon, and Jazer again as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

In the fourth scene, there is a summary statement of all the cities that the Merarites receive. In total, the Merarites receive 12 cities and their surrounding pasturelands from the land of the tribes of Zebulun, Reuben, and Gad.

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

As you visualize the passage and the action in it, make sure to use objects to represent the 12 cities that the Merarites receive. Think about how you can show Bezer and Ramoth are cities of refuge and are different from the other 10 cities in this passage. Use the map to help find the location of all 12 cities.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 21:34–40 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:

- Leaders of Israel
- Merarite clan of the Levites
- Tribe of Zebulun
- Tribe of Reuben
- And the tribe of 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.

The leaders of Israel now throw the lots for the Merarites. The Merarites receive four cities and their surrounding pasturelands from the land of the tribe of Zebulun. The cities are Jokneam, Kartah, Dimnah, and Nahalal.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the tribe of Zebulun, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "We feel honored that our lands will have these Merarites living in them," or
- "We are glad to welcome the Merarites into our land," or
- "We are wishing that we had the descendants of Aaron serving in our land instead of these Merarites who are not descendants of Aaron."

The Israelite leaders distribute four cities and their surrounding pasturelands to the Merarites in the land of the tribe of Reuben. These four cities are Bezer, Jahaz, Kedemoth, and Mephaath.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Merarites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "We are nervous about moving to the east side of the Jordan River—it is so far away from the other Israelites," or
- "We are worried about living on the border of Israel's land because it might be more dangerous there," or
- "We feel honored to serve Yahweh in the land of the tribe of Reuben."

The Merarites receive four cities and their surrounding pasturelands from the land of the tribe of Gad. These four cities are Ramoth in Gilead, Mahanaim, Heshbon, and Jazer. Ramoth is a city of refuge for someone who kills another person accidentally. The Merarites receive a total of 12 cities and the surrounding pasturelands.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the tribe of Gad, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "We are glad that we are able to share four of our cities with the Merarites," or
- "We are looking forward to meeting the Levites who will live in our land," or
- "We are glad that we get to have a city of refuge in our land with Levites living in it too."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 21:34–40 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

The leaders of Israel distribute certain cities to the Merarite **clans** of the **Levites**. These Merarites are not priests, but they do serve Yahweh. Translate Levites and clans the same as you have in previous passages. For more information on Levites, refer to the Master Glossary.

The leaders of Israel throw lots for each of the cities they give to the Levites. The Merarites now receive their 12 cities in the land of the tribes of Zebulun, Reuben, and Gad.

A **city** is a large settlement of people. During the time of the Levites, a city had a wall around it to protect the people who lived inside the city, while a town did not have a wall around it. The Levites also receive the **pastureland** around the city. Translate cities and pastureland the same as you have in previous passages.

The Merarites receive Ramoth in the land of the tribe of Gad. Ramoth is a **city of refuge**. Translate "city of refuge" the same as 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.

Joshua 21:34–40

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (10590763 KB)

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

Joshua 21:41–45

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 21:41–45 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 21:41–45 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 Joshua 21:41–45 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The Israelites are in the land that Yahweh promised to give to them. In a previous passage, the Levites came to the leaders of Israel and asked for their cities and surrounding pasturelands for their animals. The leaders of Israel threw lots and gave 48 cities to the Levites throughout the land of the Israelites. Each of the Levite clans received their cities and the surrounding pasturelands. Now, this section of the book of Joshua concludes with

a summary about the Levitical cities. There is also a reminder that Yahweh kept all his promises to his people Israel by giving them the land he promised to give them.

The Kohathites who are descendants of Aaron receive 13 cities. The Kohathites who are not priests receive 10 cities. The Gershonites receive 13 cities. And the Merarites receive 12 cities. The Levites also receive the surrounding pasturelands around each of these 48 cities.

Stop here and look at a map of all 48 Levitical cities as a group. Take notice of the 6 cities of refuge included in the 48 Levitical cities. Also, look at a picture of pastureland again as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

The Levites do not own these cities as their own inheritance in the same way that the other tribes of Israel own the land that Yahweh gave to them as an inheritance. The Levites are different from the other tribes of Israel because the Levites serve Yahweh, and Yahweh himself is their inheritance. Yahweh provides a place for them to live, and pasturelands for their animals to eat the grass.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Talk about a time when God provided for your needs or the needs of someone else you know. Pause this audio here.

Remember that the Levites are probably not the only people living in these 48 cities. The Levites live in the cities to be an example to the people and to teach the people how to follow Yahweh.

Yahweh promised Abraham and his descendants that he would give them the land of Canaan. In the beginning of the book of Joshua, Yahweh reminded Joshua again of his promise to the Israelites' fathers that he would give them the land of Canaan. Now, Yahweh is showing he kept his promise by giving the Israelites the land of Canaan. The fathers of the Israelites are all the ancestors of the Israelites.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a promise that God gave to your ancestors. What happened to the promise? Pause this audio here.

Yahweh had assigned the land to the other tribes of Israel, and now the Levites who serve Yahweh also have cities to live in, and pasturelands for their animals to eat the grass. All the cities for the Levites are within the land of the other tribes of Israel. The Israelites took the land and made it their home. The ancestors of the Israelites did not own any of the land of Canaan, but the current Israelite tribes own the land. Yahweh promised this land to Abraham many years ago, and later he promised it to Jacob and Jacob's descendants. It has been several hundred years, and now the promise is coming true.

Throughout the book of Joshua, we see that the people of Israel still have not completely conquered the land. But here, Yahweh emphasizes that he will keep his promises—Yahweh will give the Israelites the complete land that he promised them. Israel still needs to be obedient to conquer some parts of the land.

Yahweh had also promised to Israel's ancestors to give them rest, or peace from all their enemies. None of the enemies of Israel had been able to fight against Israel and win. The reason none of the enemies of Israel could defeat Israel is because Yahweh gave the Israelites victory. Yahweh is the one who defeated all of Israel's enemies and gave Israel rest. This kind of rest emphasized that they did not have to fight their enemies anymore and could finally settle in one place to live.

Yahweh kept all his good promises to the house of Israel. The house of Israel is the people of Israel, including the ancestors of the current Israelites. None of Yahweh's promises failed, and everything happened just as Yahweh said it would happen. This is one of the most important parts of the book of Joshua, because it clearly shows the theme of the book of Joshua. Yahweh did what he said he would do—Yahweh gave them the land, and Yahweh gave them rest.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 21:41–45 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 two scenes.

In the first scene: The Levites receive a total of 48 cities and their surrounding pasturelands.

In the second scene: Yahweh kept all his promises to give his people Israel the land.

The characters in this passage are:

- Levites
- Yahweh
- The people of Israel
- Israel's ancestors
- And Israel's enemies

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

Remember that the previous passages gave details about the locations of the 48 cities that the Levites received. This passage is the conclusion to the section about all the cities that the Levites received, and a conclusion to the entire book of Joshua, as well. The passages in the book of Joshua that follow this one are just extra information.

In the first scene, remember there is a summary statement about all the cities and pasturelands that the Levites received throughout the land of all the tribes of Israel. In total, the Levites received 48 cities. Remember that the Kohathites who were descendants of Aaron received 13 cities, the Kohathites who were not priests received 10 cities, the Gershonites received 13 cities, and the Merarites received 12 cities. There are three cities of refuge distributed to the Levites to the east of the Jordan River, and three cities of refuge distributed to the Levites to the west of the Jordan River.

Stop here and look at a map of all 48 Levite cities again as a group, if needed. Take notice of the 6 cities of refuge included in the 48 Levite cities. Pause this audio here.

The 48 Levite cities are throughout all the rest of the land of the tribes of Israel. In the original language, it repeats "the Levites received the pasturelands around each city" several times to emphasize that every city had pastureland around it.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Is it most natural in your language to summarize that each city had pastureland, or should you repeat it after the name of each city to emphasize that each city had pastureland around it for the Levites to use? For example: "Each one of these cities had its own pastureland around it." Pause this audio here.

The author starts the second scene clearly. He is summarizing the theme of the entire book of Joshua. Yahweh reminds Israel that he kept all his promises to Israel's ancestors, including promises to give them land and promises to give them rest from their enemies.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How will you translate the start of the second scene? How can you show this scene begins with an important summary of the book of Joshua? Pause this audio here.

Remember that a major theme of the book of Joshua is that Yahweh gives the land of Canaan to Israel, just as he had promised Israel's ancestors that he would do. At the beginning of the book of Joshua, Yahweh repeats this promise. Now, Yahweh kept his promise. It might be more natural to rearrange this part of the passage to talk about Yahweh's promise in the past first, and then how Yahweh kept his promise by giving Israel the land.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How will you translate this part of the passage? Would it be more natural to mention the promise of Yahweh in the past first, and then how Yahweh kept his promise? Pause this audio here.

The promise Yahweh made was to Israel's fathers, meaning the ancestors of the people of Israel. These fathers included Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They were the Israelites' ancestors from long ago. Yahweh promised to give the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob the land of Canaan.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What words do you use when you talk about your ancestors, or fathers, from long ago? Pause this audio here.

Remember that the people of Israel took possession of the land, or conquered the land. They lived in the land and made it their home. Your translation should make that clear.

Yahweh also kept his promise to Israel's ancestors to give Israel rest on every side. Remember that rest means Israel had peace from all their enemies and could live peacefully in the land. None of Israel's enemies could stand up to them. Israel defeated all their enemies. It might be more natural to rearrange this part of the passage so the defeat of Israel's enemies is first, and then the promise that Yahweh made to give Israel peace. Finally, the last part would be a reminder that Yahweh kept his promise.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How will you translate this part of the passage? Would it be more natural to mention that Israel defeated all of its enemies, and then that Yahweh kept his promise to Israel? Pause this audio here.

None of the enemies of Israel could defeat Israel. In the original language, it says, "A man from all their enemies did not stand before them." This means that none of Israel's enemies were able to fight against them and win. Remember that the reason Israel's enemies could not defeat them was because Yahweh handed all their enemies over to them.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How will you translate the reason that Israel's enemies could not defeat them? Some examples are: "Yahweh caused Israel to win their battles" or "Yahweh gave all Israel's enemies into their hands." Pause this audio here.

Remember that none of Yahweh's good promises to Israel failed. In the original language, it says, "Not a word fell from all the good words that Yahweh spoke to the house of Israel." Every promise Yahweh made to Israel came true.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What is the best way to translate the idea that Yahweh did not break his promises? Pause this audio here.

Remember that the passages that follow this one are additional information after the conclusion of the book of Joshua.

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

In the first scene, it might be helpful to draw or use objects to represent all 48 Levite cities throughout the land of Israel. You could use a different color or different type of object for the four different groups of cities distributed to the different clans of the Levites, which are the descendants of Aaron, the other Kohathites, the Gershonites, and the Merarites. Make sure to also use a different type of object to represent the six cities of refuge.

In the second scene, remember to show that Yahweh kept his promise to give the land to Israel and to give Israel rest from their enemies. All of Yahweh's promises came true.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 21:41–45 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:

- Levites
- Yahweh
- Israel
- Israel's ancestors
- And Israel's enemies

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 Levites received a total of 48 cities to live in throughout the land of the tribes of Israel. The Levites also received the pasturelands for their animals around each of the 48 cities.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Levites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "We feel relieved that we all received our cities and pasturelands, just as Yahweh commanded Moses to give to us," or
- "We are ready to serve Yahweh and the people of Israel in each of our assigned cities," or
- "We are glad that we also have pasturelands for our animals."

Yahweh gave Israel all the land that Yahweh promised to give to Israel's ancestors. Israel conquered the land and lived in the land. Yahweh also kept his promise to Israel's ancestors that he would give Israel rest in the land.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing Israel's ancestors, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "We are thankful that Yahweh kept his promises to give us the land, even though we never got to see the land ourselves," or
- "We are wishing we could have lived long enough to see the land Yahweh promised to give to us," or
- "We are happy for our descendants to have their own land to live in."

Also, ask the people playing Israel, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "We are glad that we are alive now so we can see the land Yahweh promised to give to our ancestors!" or
- "We are thankful to have a home finally," or
- "We are happy to settle down in our own land and have rest."

None of Israel's enemies could defeat Israel, because Yahweh gave Israel victory. All of Yahweh's good promises to Israel came true, and none of them failed.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing Israel's enemies, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "How was Israel able to defeat us when they were so small?" or
- "We are wondering what kind of god Israel serves since they could defeat us," or
- "We are not wanting to fight against Israel again, because they will surely defeat us again."

Also, ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I am glad to keep my good promises to my people Israel," or
- "I am not able to fail in my promises—it is who I am," or
- "I want Israel to have rest in their land for a long time."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 21:41–45 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

The leaders of Israel distributed certain cities to all the clans of the **Levites**. The Levites all served Yahweh and they did not receive their own land. Translate Levites the same as you have in previous passages. For more information on Levites, refer to the Master Glossary.

A **city** is a large settlement of people. During the time of the Levites, a city had a wall around it to protect the people who lived inside the city, while a town did not have a wall around it. The Levites also receive the **pastureland** around the city. Translate cities and pastureland the same as you have in previous passages.

The cities for the Levites were throughout the land of the **Israelites**. Translate Israelites the same as you have in previous passages. For more information on Israelites, refer to the Master Glossary.

Yahweh gave Israel the land that Yahweh promised to give Israel's ancestors. Israel refers to the Israelite people. Translate Yahweh the same as you have in previous passages. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary.

In the beginning of the book of Joshua, Yahweh reminded the Israelites of his promise to give the land of Canaan to the Israelites. Promise can also mean "swear an oath" or "solemnly promise."

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How will you translate the idea of Yahweh solemnly promising to give Israel the land? Remember to translate "solemn promise" or "swear an **oath**" the same as in the beginning of the book of Joshua. For more information on solemn promises and oaths, see oath in the Master Glossary. Pause this audio here.

The Israelites took the land and conquered it. They lived in the land. This is exactly what Yahweh promised to Israel at the beginning of the book of Joshua, that Israel would take possession of the land.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How will you translate the idea of Israel **taking possession of the land**, or conquering it? Remember to translate "take possession of the land" the same as in the beginning of the book of Joshua. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh gave the people of Israel rest and security in the land. This also fulfilled Yahweh's solemn promise to Israel's ancestors to give Israel rest in the land. None of the enemies of Israel could defeat Israel.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How will you translate the idea of "rest on every side?" Some examples might be: "peace throughout the land," or "all around them." Pause this audio here.

All of Yahweh's good promises to the house of Israel came true. None of the promises failed. The **house of Israel** is all the people of Israel. Translate "house of Israel" the same as you have in previous passages that talk about the house of a people, or the family group. For more information on the house of Israel, refer to household 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.

Joshua 21:41–45

Audio Content

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Joshua 22:1–12

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 22:1–12 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 22:1–12 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 Joshua 22:1–12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Up until this point in the book of Joshua, the Israelites have fought together as a united people. The Israelites have faithfully obeyed Yahweh and followed their leader Joshua to conquer towns and cities throughout the land of Canaan. In turn, Yahweh has helped Israel to conquer these places, giving Israel victory over their enemies. Remember, over 400 years earlier Yahweh promised Abraham to give the land of Canaan to Abraham's descendants. Yahweh kept his promise and distributed the land between the tribes of Israel, giving more land to larger tribes and less land to smaller tribes. Then the Israelites chose cities with pasturelands for the Levites to live in and special cities of refuge throughout the land, according to Yahweh's instructions through Moses.

In this passage, Joshua will keep another promise, which Moses first spoke and later Joshua repeated. This promise to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh was about the portion of land that Yahweh would give them for an inheritance.

You will remember from previous stories that these tribes made a solemn promise to Moses, and later to Joshua. The leaders of these tribes said they would send their men to war and help the other tribes of Israel to conquer the land of Canaan. As a reward for being faithful, Moses made a promise to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh. He promised them a portion of land on the east side of the Jordan River for their

families and livestock. Some Bible scholars group the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh together and call them the "eastern tribes" because they asked for land east of the Jordan River.

If needed, stop here and look at a map of the divisions of land between the tribes of Israel on the east and west sides of the Jordan River as a group. Notice the location of Shiloh. Pause this audio here.

This story begins in Shiloh, where the tabernacle stood and the Israelites camped. Joshua gathers the men of the eastern tribes to speak with them about a very important matter. Joshua begins by praising these tribes for obeying Israel's leaders—first Moses and then Joshua himself.

Joshua refers to Moses as "Yahweh's servant," because Moses was careful to do everything that Yahweh told him to do. In this way, Joshua implies that whenever Moses gave instructions, or commandments, to Israel, he did so on behalf of Yahweh and in obedience to Yahweh. So, by following Moses' and Joshua's instructions to help the rest of the Israelites conquer the land Yahweh gave them west of the Jordan River, the eastern tribes were obeying Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Who has the highest authority in your culture? How does that leader send important messages to the people? If the leader uses another person to send a message, how can the people know the message is actually from the leader? Pause this audio here.

Joshua praises the eastern tribes because they have been faithful to keep their promise, or word, to help the other Israelite tribes take possession of the land. Joshua recognises that the eastern tribes kept this promise for a long time. Some Bible scholars think perhaps as many as 30 years could have passed since the men of the eastern tribes left their families in the land to the east of the Jordan River to help the rest of the Israelites.

The eastern tribes kept their promise to stay with the rest of the tribes of Israel, and Yahweh kept his promise to give the Israelites rest from their enemies. Now, Joshua keeps *his* promise by allowing the eastern tribes to return to their homes, east of the Jordan River. This is the land that Moses promised to give them as an inheritance if they faithfully keep their promise.

Stop here and have someone from the group share a story about a time when they kept a promise to do something. In your culture, what happens if someone keeps a promise? What happens if they do not do what they promised? Pause this audio here.

Before the eastern tribes leave, however, Joshua encourages them to continue being good and faithful Israelites in their homeland, east of the Jordan River. Joshua urges them to remain united with the rest of Israel by obeying all that Yahweh commanded through Moses in the law and by only worshipping Yahweh. Joshua tells the eastern tribes to show their love to Yahweh by doing all the things that Moses said were pleasing to Yahweh, and by being faithful and loyal to Yahweh by serving him well. Joshua says the eastern tribes should do these things with all their heart and soul. This means that the people in the eastern tribes should totally follow Yahweh with their thoughts, actions, and emotions.

At this point, the author reminds us that Moses previously gave an area of land called Bashan to the eastern half of the tribe of Manasseh. Meanwhile, Joshua gave the other half of the tribe of Manasseh a portion of land with their brothers on the west side of the Jordan River. Bashan means "fruitful." Bashan is a region on the northeast side of the Jordan River that has good soil for raising livestock. In another story, Yahweh gave the Israelites victory over Og the king of Bashan and all his army.

When Joshua sends the eastern tribes away to their homes, he also blesses them. In their culture, at that time, a blessing is a custom which a leader, or father of a family, might do when saying goodbye to someone. The person will often ask Yahweh to do good things for the other person and to give them material and spiritual benefits. Joshua blesses the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh by telling them to return to their tents, east of the Jordan River, with great wealth from the things, or spoils, the Israelites collected from the battles they fought in Canaan. This wealth includes many herds of cattle, valuable metals such as silver, gold, bronze and iron, and a large amount of clothing.

Stop here and discuss these questions as a group: What customs do leaders in your culture have when they say goodbye to someone? What things do people in your culture think of as valuable gifts? Pause this audio here.

Joshua also tells the eastern tribes to share the spoils with their relatives back home, much like another time, in a previous story, when Yahweh commanded Moses to split the spoils equally between the men that fought

in war and the people that remained at home. This practice suggests that Yahweh probably wanted everyone who helped the nation of Israel to receive a reward.

The eastern tribes left the rest of the Israelites at Shiloh in Canaan and started their journey towards home in the land of Gilead, a rocky region which Yahweh previously told Moses to give them. Bashan, the half-tribe of Manasseh's land, borders the north of Gilead.

Before the eastern tribes leave the land of Canaan and cross over the Jordan River into Gilead, they arrive at a place that is sometimes called Geliloth. Geliloth means border, or boundary. Geliloth may be the name of an actual place, or it may be a description of a place on the border of Canaan, near the Jordan River. The exact location of Geliloth is unknown. Some Bible scholars believe it is the place where Yahweh told each of the tribes of Israel, in a previous story, to build a memorial of rocks that they had taken from the riverbed where they crossed the Jordan River on dry land to enter Canaan.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How does your culture mark important events or agreements between people groups? Pause this audio here.

The eastern tribes decide to pause their journey and build a very large altar near the Jordan River. An altar usually refers to a type of table or platform built of stones, where the Israelites killed and burned animals as an offering to God. We do not know why the eastern tribes built the altar, or what it looked like. We also do not know how big this altar was. However, the altar was probably big enough for people to see from a distance.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of an example of a stone altar. Pause this audio here.

Soon, all of the Israelites on the west side of the Jordan River hear about this, and they are not happy! The Israelites all come together at Shiloh, ready to go to war against the eastern tribes. Suddenly, just a short time after Joshua blessed the eastern tribes and sent them on their way, there is danger of disunity between all the tribes of Israel.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 22:1–12 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 three scenes.

In the first scene: Joshua blesses the eastern tribes and allows them to return to their inheritance of land east of the Jordan River.

In the second scene: The eastern tribes pause their journey home to build a big altar near the Jordan River.

In the third scene: The rest of Israel reacts to news of the altar that the eastern tribes have built.

The characters in this passage are:

- Joshua the son of Nun
- The men of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, sometimes called the eastern tribes
- Moses, the servant of Yahweh
- The remaining tribes of Israel
- And Yahweh

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

Scene one takes place in Shiloh, probably at the tabernacle, or tent of meeting, some time after Yahweh divided the land amongst the Israelites.

Joshua calls the eastern tribes, and he praises them because they "listened to his voice." Joshua is praising them for obeying his instructions.

Stop here and discuss what word or phrase you will use to show that the Israelites obeyed Moses and Joshua. Pause the audio here.

Joshua also praises the eastern tribes' loyalty towards their fellow Israelites. Joshua releases the eastern tribes from their vow to stay with the rest of the Israelites. Joshua allows the eastern tribes to return to the land that Moses, Yahweh's servant, gave them on the east side of the Jordan River.

Notice that Joshua twice refers to Moses as "Yahweh's servant." Joshua does this to draw the eastern tribe's attention to certain things about Moses. Firstly, Joshua is reminding them that Moses' authority came from Yahweh and that the things Moses told the Israelites were from Yahweh. Secondly, Joshua uses Moses as an example for the eastern tribes to follow. As "Yahweh's servant," Moses was a great leader of the Israelite people, but he was also a humble follower. Moses led the people well by showing with his own life how to faithfully follow Yahweh's instructions.

Joshua urges the eastern tribes to continue obeying Moses' rules when they are far away from their Israelite brothers in the land east of the Jordan River.

Joshua instructs the eastern tribes to remain loyal to Yahweh their God. Joshua says they should make sure to love Yahweh by walking in all his ways. This is a way of saying the eastern tribes should do everything they can to please Yahweh. Joshua says the eastern tribes should hold firmly to Yahweh. In other words, the eastern tribes should cling to, be loyal to, or be faithful to Yahweh. The eastern tribes should not worship any other god apart from Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss how you will describe that the eastern tribes should love Yahweh and be loyal to Yahweh. Pause the audio here.

Then Joshua says the eastern tribes should serve Yahweh with all their heart and all their soul, which is a way of saying that they should worship and serve Yahweh in everything they think and in everything they do.

Stop here and discuss how you will describe how to serve Yahweh with all of your heart and soul. Pause the audio here.

Here, the author gives some extra information and says that Moses specifically gave the region of Bashan, on the east side of the Jordan River, to half the tribe of Manasseh. The other half of the tribe of Manasseh received land on the west side of the Jordan River.

Joshua blesses the eastern tribes and says they should return to their families with a large portion of the great wealth that Israel had taken when they conquered the cities in the land of Canaan. The things people take in battle are called spoils, or plunder. In this story, the spoils include vast herds of cattle, precious metals of silver, gold, bronze, and iron, and lots of clothing. After Joshua blesses the eastern tribes, Joshua allows them to go back to their land and share the spoils with their families.

In scene two, the eastern tribes leave the rest of the Israelites at Shiloh and begin the journey towards the land of Gilead, which Moses had given them. When the eastern tribes journey towards their homeland with all the spoils Joshua has given them, they must be a very large group of people and animals. Remember a previous story when Moses did a census and counted all the men in the eastern tribes who could go to war. It is possible this group leaving Shiloh is as many as 100,000 men, plus many big herds of cattle.

Before the eastern tribes leave the land of Canaan, they decide to stop and build a very large and impressive altar near the Jordan River at a place called Geliloth. In those days, the people usually built altars from stones, but we do not know what materials the eastern tribes used to build this altar.

In scene three, the rest of the Israelites hear the news about the eastern tribes building a large altar. The news causes great concern amongst the rest of the people of Israel. The whole congregation, or community of the other Israelites, come together at Shiloh, ready to go to war against the eastern tribes. The whole community of Israelites in this case refers to the fighting men of the western tribes.

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 Joshua 22:1–12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has three scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Joshua the son of Nun
- The tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, who are sometimes called the eastern tribes
- Moses, the servant of Yahweh
- The remaining tribes of Israel
- 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.

Joshua, the leader of the Israelites, gathers the eastern tribes together. Joshua praises the eastern tribes for their obedience to his and Moses' leadership. Joshua also praises their loyalty to the rest of Israel and their care in obeying Yahweh's commands.

Joshua confirms that Yahweh has fulfilled his promise to give Israel rest, or peace, in the land. This means the time has come to release the eastern tribes from their promise to stay with the rest of Israel. Joshua declares that they are now free to return to their own families in the land they inherited, east of the Jordan River.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I am very happy with the eastern tribes. They have shown great loyalty to Yahweh and the rest of the Israelites by keeping their promise to leave their families and go to war. They fought alongside the rest of the Israelites until Yahweh gave them all victory over the land of Canaan," or
- "The eastern tribes have set a good example to others with their good attitudes and faithfulness. I am happy they can now go home."

Joshua tells the eastern tribes to continue to obey the law that Moses gave them. Joshua encourages them to demonstrate their love and worship towards Yahweh through their obedience, loyalty, and humble service.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "It is very important that the eastern tribes remain faithful to Yahweh. I am old, and once they leave, I may never see them again. I must take this opportunity to remind them to wholeheartedly love Yahweh by worshipping, obeying, and serving only him," or
- "Yahweh has been very good to us! I hope the eastern tribes will choose to continue to be faithful to him in all their ways," or
- "Even though the eastern tribes will be separated from the rest of the tribes of Israel by the Jordan River, as long as we all worship and serve Yahweh, we will be a united people and will continue to receive Yahweh's blessings."

Joshua blesses the eastern tribes with great wealth to take home and share with their families.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I want to reward the eastern tribes and their families with these material things in recognition of their loyalty. They gave up the chance to be with their own families all this time to benefit the rest of Israel," or
- "The people from the eastern tribes who stayed home to care for the children, the old people, and to work the farms are equally deserving of receiving the blessings of this great wealth. I want to reward their efforts to help the rest of Israel. I hope the families of the eastern tribes will rejoice greatly for the rest that Yahweh has finally given to Israel."

The eastern tribes leave the rest of Israel and begin their journey homeward, towards the land of Gilead on the east side of the Jordan River.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the eastern tribes, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "We have waited a long time for this moment to come! We are very happy because Yahweh has kept his promise to his people Israel, and we can finally go home to our families. Although we feel sad to be leaving our Israelite brothers, we are really looking forward to telling our children and our grandchildren about all the wonderful things Yahweh has done for his people in the land of Canaan."

Whilst still in the land of Canaan, the eastern tribes pause to build a very large altar. When the rest of the Israelites hear about this, they are greatly concerned, so they join together in Shiloh, ready to go to war against the eastern tribes.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the remaining tribes of Israel, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "We feel shocked that our brothers in the eastern tribes are turning away so quickly from Yahweh to worship other gods! Surely they know by now that sacrifices for Yahweh can only be burnt on the altar in the tabernacle at Shiloh!" or
- "We must be loyal to Yahweh above all things! We cannot allow anyone amongst the tribes of Israel to worship another god."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 22:1–12 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Joshua, the appointed leader of the Israelites, calls for a meeting with the eastern tribes of Israel. The eastern tribes are the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh.

Joshua says the eastern tribes have done everything that **Yahweh's servant**, Moses asked them to do, and that they have followed Yahweh, their **God**. Joshua says the eastern tribes also obeyed Joshua's instructions and have helped the other Israelites. Yahweh is God's personal name, and God is the general term for the creator God. Use the same words for Israelites, Yahweh, and God as you used in previous passages. Yahweh and God are in the Master Glossary. A servant, or slave, is a man or woman who works for another person. Use the same word for servant that you have used in previous passages. For more information refer to servant in the Master Glossary.

Joshua instructs the eastern tribes to obey all the **commandments** and **laws** that Yahweh has given them through Moses, his servant. Both commandments and laws are the general instructions that Yahweh gave his people. The law can refer to the general instructions that Yahweh gave his people for living, and commandments can refer to the more specific instructions that Yahweh gave his people for worshipping him. In any case, both terms refer to the general instructions Yahweh gave his people. Use the same words you have been using for commandments and laws, and remember that both commandments and laws are in the Master Glossary.

If needed, stop here and discuss how you will talk about **commandments** and **laws** together in this passage. If you have translated these ideas together in previous passages, use the same words or phrases here. Pause this audio here.

Joshua **blesses** the eastern tribes and sends them away across the **Jordan River**. Use the same words for bless and Jordan River as you have used previously, and remember that bless and Jordan River are in the Master Glossary. But before they leave, Joshua tells them to take lots of valuable things from the battle **plunder**. Plunder is the name for all the valuables and **livestock** that people take when a group attacks and overcomes another community. Plunder is like a reward, or prize, that is shared amongst the warriors who fought for victory. Use the same words for plunder, livestock, **silver**, **gold**, **bronze**, and **iron** that you have used in previous passages.

Before the eastern tribes left **Canaan**, they came to Geliloth, a border located somewhere close to the Jordan River. The eastern tribes stopped there to build a large **altar**. An altar may refer to a place where people kill and burn animals as an offering to God, or a place where they burn incense. People often build altars of stones, perhaps like a table or small platform. Use the same word for Canaan and altar as you used in previous passages. For more information, refer to Canaan and altar in the Master Glossary.

The **community**, or **congregation**, of the Israelites heard about the altar and prepared themselves to go to war against the eastern tribes. Use the same word for community or congregation 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.

Joshua 22:1–12**Audio Content**

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Joshua 22:13–20

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 22:13–20 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 22:13–20 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 Joshua 22:13–20 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the previous story, the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh, also known as the eastern tribes of Israel, left Shiloh and travelled east towards the land that Yahweh had given them on the other side of the Jordan River. However, before they left Canaan, the eastern tribes stopped to build a great altar somewhere close to the Jordan River. The remaining tribes of Israel, sometimes known as the western tribes, heard about the great altar the eastern tribes had built, and they gathered at Shiloh. They wanted to go to war against the eastern tribes.

In this story, we will discover why the western tribes reacted so strongly. We will see how the Israelites try to deal with this situation, which threatens to break the unity of the Israelite people.

The people of the western tribes in Shiloh decide not to go to war against their brothers, the eastern tribes, right away. First, they send a delegation, or a group of men who represent all the people, to talk to the eastern tribes. Phineas the priest leads the delegation, which includes a chief leader from each of the nine and a half western tribes. They send a priest and chief leaders because they are very seriously concerned about the altar.

Phineas is the son of Eleazar, and the grandson of Aaron, who was the original high priest. In a previous story, Eleazar replaced his father Aaron as the high priest of Israel after Aaron died. Part of the work of a priest was to teach the people of Israel how to worship Yahweh in a way that pleased Yahweh. Phineas is a very faithful priest. You will remember a previous story when some Israelites were unfaithful to Yahweh at Peor. They worshipped false gods, but Phineas showed everyone he was loyal to Yahweh by killing the wrongdoers with a spear. It is probably for this reason the people of the western tribes send Phineas to lead the delegation and talk to the eastern tribes about the altar.

The delegation of men from the western tribes travel all the way to Gilead, where they find the eastern tribes. Gilead is the hilly region on the east side of the Jordan River that Yahweh gave to the eastern tribes as an inheritance. Here, the group of men, who represent all the people from the western tribes of Israel, speak to the eastern tribes.

Stop here and look at a map of the land of the Israelites with the location of Shiloh and the region of Gilead marked on it. Pause this audio here.

The delegation says they bring a message from all of Yahweh's people, but really they are only referring to the community of the western tribes. Perhaps they say "all of Yahweh's people" to make a point about how faithful the western tribes are to Yahweh, because in their message, the western tribes demand to know why the eastern tribes have rebelled against Yahweh. The western tribes want to know why the eastern tribes have broken faith, or betrayed Yahweh, by building a new altar that Yahweh did not allow.

An altar usually refers to a type of table, or platform, built of stones, where the Israelites kill and burn animals as an offering to Yahweh. Yahweh told the Israelites in a previous story how and where to build an altar for him. It seems that Yahweh had not told the eastern tribes to build this altar.

The western tribes remind the eastern tribes about the time when the Israelites sinned against Yahweh in a place called Peor. The Israelites suffered greatly because they sinned, or rebelled, against Yahweh. You will remember in that story how some of the Israelites sinned by worshipping the idols, or false gods, of Baal. As punishment for that sin, Yahweh sent a plague, or terrible disease, that killed 24,000 people. Yahweh stopped the plague because Phineas the priest killed the wrongdoers.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What happens to people in your culture when they sin? What do people in your community think when they see a person suffer when that person sins? Talk about a time when you told someone not to do something wrong because you knew it would have bad consequences for you or other people. Pause this audio here.

The western tribes say they have still not cleansed themselves of that sin, which probably means they are still recovering from all the people who died of the plague that Yahweh sent on them. The western tribes seem to think the eastern tribes built the altar to worship false gods, which will make Yahweh angry. The western tribes are worried that the eastern tribe's rebellion might bring deadly consequences to all the tribes of Israel.

The western tribes think that perhaps the eastern tribes found the land to the east of the Jordan River to be unclean, or unfit for worshipping Yahweh. The western tribes think this might be why the eastern tribes built another altar. The western tribes offer a generous solution to this potential problem by inviting the eastern tribes to return to the land of Canaan, where Yahweh's tabernacle stands, west of the Jordan River. The tabernacle, or tent of meeting, is the place of Yahweh's official altar, where the people of Israel may worship Yahweh and offer animal sacrifices. The problem of the altar concerns the western tribes so much that they are willing to share the land of their inheritance with the eastern tribes to make sure that Yahweh does not become angry with them.

The western tribes do not want to be associated with any sin, or rebellion, of the eastern tribes. They plead with the eastern tribes not to rebel against Yahweh by building another altar in addition to Yahweh's special altar in the tabernacle.

The western tribes end their message by reminding the eastern tribes about another time when the whole congregation of Israel suffered because of the sin of just one man. You will remember a previous story when Yahweh gave Israel's enemies victory over Israel in battle because one man, Achan, sinned and stole the things that Yahweh said the Israelites should destroy. The western tribes do not want Yahweh to consider them rebels along with the eastern tribes and suffer the consequences for the eastern tribe's sin.

The western tribes also remind the eastern tribes that Yahweh did not punish only Achan for his sin. Approximately 36 men of war died in the battle of Ai, but in addition to this, the congregation of Israel stoned Achan and his sons and daughters before they burned everything Achan owned with fire. Perhaps they say this to make the eastern tribes think about what might happen to the families of the eastern tribes if they sin.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 22:13–20 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: The western tribes send a delegation of men to the region of Gilead to ask the eastern tribes why they built an altar.

In the second scene: The delegation speaks to the eastern men.

The characters in this passage are:

- The community of the western tribes of Israel
- A delegation of men from the western tribes, including Phineas the priest and 10 chief leaders
- And the community of the eastern tribes of Israel

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

The first scene begins where the previous story ended, in Shiloh, where the tabernacle is, in the land west of the Jordan River. The western tribes gather here, ready to go to war against the eastern tribes, because they heard the news that the eastern tribes built an altar without asking Yahweh. In the first scene, the Israelites are worried. However, before the community of the western tribes goes to war, they decide to first send Phineas the priest to lead a delegation, or group of men, to question the eastern tribes. The group of men make the long journey from Shiloh to the region of Gilead on the east side of the Jordan River.

This story probably happened soon after the eastern tribes built the altar. We can believe this because the delegation speaks to the eastern tribes all together at Gilead. This means that Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh from the eastern tribes are still together. They have still not separated from each other to go to the land Yahweh gave them.

In scene two, the delegation talks to the eastern tribes in Gilead as representatives of Yahweh's people from the western tribes. They ask why the eastern tribes have broken faith with Yahweh, or are disloyal to Yahweh. The delegation uses repetition of Yahweh's name to make it clear from the beginning that this matter is about the eastern tribe's sin against Yahweh. They say, "We belong to Yahweh," and when they accuse the eastern tribes they say, "You have betrayed the God of Israel. You have turned away from, or stopped following, Yahweh. You have rebelled against Yahweh."

Stop here and discuss what word or phrase you will use to show that the eastern tribes had broken faith with Yahweh, or were disloyal to him. Pause this audio here.

Then the delegation asks a question that is not really a question, but a way to say to the eastern tribes, "We have suffered enough punishment for the sin of the people at Peor. Do not bring more punishment upon us by rebelling against Yahweh." The delegation continues to warn the eastern tribes that they should stop their rebellion that very same day. Otherwise, they will make Yahweh angry with the people of Israel the next day. This is a way of saying that there will be future bad consequences for all of Israel.

After accusing the eastern tribes of rebellion, the delegation appears to understand that perhaps the eastern tribes did not intentionally sin against Yahweh. By saying, "But now, if the land is unclean, or unfit to worship Yahweh," it is as if the delegation is saying, "Maybe you sinned because you felt like you had to." Under those circumstances, the delegation says that the western tribes would be happy to help the eastern tribes. They make an offer to share the land Yahweh has given them on the condition that the eastern tribes do not rebel and cause Yahweh to be angry with the whole community of Israel.

Finally, the delegation asks the eastern tribes a question that is not really a question. They ask, "When Achan sinned, did not Yahweh punish the whole community of Israel?" This is really a statement to say that they do not want to receive more punishment from Yahweh because of other people's sin. They remind the eastern tribes about what happened when one man, Achan, betrayed Yahweh. Achan disobeyed Yahweh's instructions about what Israel should do with the devoted things, or the things that Yahweh wanted Israel to destroy. This caused Yahweh to be angry with the whole community of Israel. The delegation ends their speech with the solemn reminder that Achan was not the only person who died for his sin. We do not know if they say this in a pleading way or a threatening way, but the eastern tribes probably remember how the community of Israelites dealt with Achan by stoning Achan's family and burning all his belongings.

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 Joshua 22:13–20 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:

- The community of the western tribes of Israel
- A delegation of men from the western tribes, including Phineas the priest and 10 chief leaders
- And the community of the eastern tribes 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.

The previous story ended when the western tribes of Israel gathered at Shiloh, ready to go to war against the eastern tribes because of news that the eastern tribes built a great altar. Now, the western tribes send a delegation, or group of men, to the region of Gilead, to question the eastern tribes about the altar. Phineas the priest leads the group of men.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the community of the western tribes, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "We feel shocked and outraged by the news of this new altar. We are ready to go to war!" or
- "This is such a serious matter that we will send our most important leaders and our most zealous priest to speak to the eastern tribes," or
- "We are afraid of what Yahweh might do to all of us if we allow our brothers to betray Yahweh in this way."

Once the group of men reach the community of the eastern tribes in the region of Gilead, they ask the eastern tribes why they rebelled against Yahweh, their God, by building an altar. The group of men say they represent all of Yahweh's people, and they demand a reason for the eastern tribe's betrayal.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the group of men that Phineas the priest led, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "We must be sure the eastern tribes understand that our loyalty is firstly towards Yahweh," or
- "We are not afraid to confront them about it."

The group of men led by Phineas continue the story by reminding the eastern tribes about a time when Yahweh punished the whole community of Israel because of the sins of some Israelites who worshipped false gods at Peor.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the group of men led by Phineas the priest, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "We are surprised the eastern tribes seem to have forgotten so quickly how Yahweh punished those people who sinned against him in Peor. They do not seem to have learnt their lesson from this experience!" or
- "Do they not understand that if they sin in this way against Yahweh, he may punish all of us, just like he did then?" or
- "We are desperate for the eastern tribes to understand what they have done. We will remind the eastern tribes of the consequences of Israel's sin at Peor. It will make them remember the zeal of our priest Phineas who was not afraid to punish the people who sinned against Yahweh."

The group of men offer a generous solution to the problem of the altar and offer to share the land Yahweh gave them on the west side of the Jordan River, as long as the eastern tribes do not continue in their rebellion against Yahweh.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the group of men that Phineas the priest led, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "We are prepared to offer a peaceful solution to our brothers to avoid going to war. Even if it costs us greatly, we want to try and keep unity between us. We do not want to fight our brothers unless we must."

Then the group of men remind the eastern tribes of another time when the whole community suffered the consequences of the sin of just one man, named Achan.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the group of men that Phineas the priest led, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "We feel desperate! They need to remember the terrible things that happened to many because of what Achan did," or
- "Angry! We have offered a peaceful solution, but we will not stand by and let the eastern tribes sin against Yahweh and us."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 22:13–20 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

The western tribes send Phineas the **priest** to lead a delegation of men to speak to the eastern tribes in the region of Gilead. For more information on priest, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for priest as you used in previous passages.

The delegation includes **chief** leaders from the families, or **clans**, of the **tribes** of Israel. Use the same word or phrase for chief leaders, clans, and tribes as you have used in previous passages.

The delegation gives a message from all of **Yahweh's** people, referring to the whole community of the western tribes of Israel. Yahweh is the personal name for God, which showed the close relationship the Israelite people had with God. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for Yahweh as you used in previous passages.

The delegation speaks for the whole **community**, or congregation, of **Israelites**. This includes all the people in the western tribes. Use the same words for community and Israelites as you have used in previous passages. Remember that Israelites is in the Master Glossary.

The delegation talks about turning away from the **God** of Israel. God is the general term for God. For more information on God, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for God as you used in previous passages.

The western tribes ask why the eastern tribes betrayed Yahweh and built an **altar**. For more information on altar, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for altar as you used in previous passages.

The western tribes speak about the **sin** of the people in Peor and the **plague** that Yahweh sent amongst them. Sin is an act of rebellion against God when someone disobeys God's rules. Another word for sin is iniquity. For more information on sin, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for sin as you used in previous passages.

A plague is a form of punishment that Yahweh gives when he judges a person or group of people. In many passages of the Bible, a 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.

The western tribes think that perhaps the land of the eastern tribes is **unclean**, or **defiled**, meaning that the land may have been ritually unfit as a place where the Israelites could worship Yahweh. Refer to clean and unclean in the Master Glossary for more information. Use the same word or phrase for unclean, or defiled, as you used in previous passages.

The western tribes suggest that the eastern tribes return to the land west of the Jordan River, to the place where Yahweh's **tabernacle** is. The tabernacle, or House of God, is a large tent that the Israelites moved from place to place. The tabernacle is sometimes called the tent of meeting, and it is where the Israelite people used to worship Yahweh. For more information, refer to tabernacle in the Master Glossary.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **tabernacle**. 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 western tribes remind the eastern tribes that Achan brought punishment to the Israelites because he stole the **devoted things** that Yahweh said to destroy. Use the same word or phrase for "devoted things" 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.

Joshua 22:13–20

Audio Content

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Joshua 22:21–34

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 22:21–34 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 22:21–34 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 Joshua 22:21–34 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

The previous story ended with the western tribes of Israel very concerned that the eastern tribes were being disloyal to Yahweh, the God of Israel. You will remember that the group of men who represented the western tribes of Israel accused the eastern tribes of rebelling against Yahweh and being unfaithful to Yahweh by building another altar like the one in the tabernacle at Shiloh.

In this story, the eastern tribes respond to the group of men from the western tribes, and we discover the reason why the eastern tribes decided to build an altar. Remember, an altar is usually a structure where people offer sacrifices to their gods, and in this case, to Yahweh, the God of Israel, as a form of worship.

The eastern tribes respond strongly to the group of men who are the leaders of the families of Israel. They call on the name of Yahweh. They say three names for God—The Mighty One, Yahweh, and God. "The Mighty One" means Yahweh is greater than any god because he is the only true God. Some versions of the Bible use the phrase "God of gods." The eastern tribes make a strong appeal to Yahweh, not once but twice, to testify as a witness about why they built the altar. It is like they are saying, "We appeal to Yahweh, the Almighty God, because he knows why we did this. And we want you men to know why too!"

They call on Yahweh himself to testify for or against them by handing them over to the western tribes to punish them by death if they are guilty of what the western tribes say they are guilty of. The eastern tribes are saying that they actually agree with the western tribes that anyone who does not keep faith, or who is disloyal to Yahweh, should be punished by death.

The eastern tribes wholeheartedly condemn the idea of turning away from Yahweh to worship other gods, or to offer sacrifices on an altar that Yahweh did not authorize. In fact, the eastern tribes call to Yahweh yet again to punish them if he finds them guilty of offering burnt offerings, grain offerings, or peace offerings on the new altar. In this culture, a burnt offering is a form of sacrifice that people can bring to Yahweh to show their devotion to Yahweh. A grain offering is a different form of sacrifice that people can bring to Yahweh to thank him for his provision. A peace, or fellowship offering, is another type of thanksgiving sacrifice that people can give to Yahweh. All of these sacrifices are forms of worship.

Stop here and discuss the kinds of sacrifices or offerings that people give to God or to the gods in your culture. Tell a story about how people in your communities thank God for the things he has done for them. Pause this audio here.

Then the eastern tribes explain why they built the altar. Although the western tribes accused them of being unfaithful, the eastern tribes actually built the altar because they wanted to make sure that their future generations would always be able to worship and serve Yahweh. The eastern tribes were afraid that future generations of the western tribes would tell future generations of eastern tribes that they have no right to worship Yahweh, the God of Israel. The Jordan River separates the land of Canaan, or the Promised Land, from the region of Gilead. Gilead is the land Yahweh gave to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh. The eastern tribes thought the future generations of the western tribes might use the natural boundary of the Jordan River as a reason to stop future generations of the eastern tribes from worshipping Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss these questions as a group: How can future generations of your people know about agreements that their leaders made in the past? If the people groups live far away from each other, what might the leaders in your community do to make sure everyone remembers the agreement? Pause this audio here.

Because they were afraid of this, the eastern tribes decided to build an altar. The eastern tribes built the altar as a witness, or sign, to prove they had served Yahweh by offering him sacrifices at the altar in Shiloh, where the tabernacle stood. The eastern tribes did not build the new altar to offer any sacrifices on it. They wanted the altar to be a permanent reminder to future generations of both the eastern and western tribes of Israel that Yahweh is the God to all the tribes of Israel. The altar shows that the eastern tribes have the same rights as the western tribes to worship Yahweh. In this culture, the people sometimes used objects as reminders of an agreement between different people.

The eastern tribes purposefully built the altar to look like Yahweh's official altar that their ancestors built. This is probably because they knew that the Israelites were the only people who had entered the tabernacle and seen the original altar. No one else knew what it looked like. They did this to prove that they were also Israelites and Yahweh's people.

Stop here and as a group look at a picture of an altar like the altar that was in the tabernacle. The altar the eastern tribes made was somehow like this altar in the tabernacle, although we do not know exactly how it was the same. Pause the audio here.

The eastern tribes repeat that they had no intention to turn away from worshipping Yahweh or to rebel against him by building an altar on which to offer sacrifices. They understand that people should offer sacrifices only on the altars that Yahweh tells them to use, like Yahweh's altar in Yahweh's tabernacle.

Phineas the priest and the leaders of the families of the western tribes of Israel listen to everything the eastern tribes say, and they are very happy. Phineas agrees that Yahweh is still with both the eastern tribes and the western tribes.

Stop here and talk about a time when there was a great misunderstanding among two groups of people. How did the people work out the misunderstanding? Pause the audio here.

Phineas praises the eastern tribes. Because the eastern tribes have been loyal to Yahweh, Yahweh will not be angry with them all and destroy them.

Then Phineas and the other leaders leave the land of Gilead and return to the land of Canaan to tell the rest of the people in the western tribes what happened. The report also makes them happy, and they praise and thank Yahweh because they no longer need to go to war against their brothers in the eastern tribes.

From that time, the western tribes spoke no more about destroying the land where the eastern tribes lived.

Stop here and discuss these questions as a group: What might cause your people to go to war against another group of people? Discuss the ways that war has affected, or could affect, your community. Pause this audio here.

The story ends when the people of Reuben and Gad name the altar "Witness," or "It is a witness between us that Yahweh is God," to show that the eastern tribes worship Yahweh, the same God the western tribes worship.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 22:21–34 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: The eastern tribes say they are not guilty. The eastern tribes appeal to Yahweh and then explain the reason why they built the altar.

In the second scene: Phineas the priest and the chief leaders of the western tribes are happy with the eastern tribes' response to the accusations.

In the third scene: Phineas and the chief leaders of the western tribes return to the land of Canaan and explain everything the eastern tribes said. The report makes the rest of the people of the western tribes of Israel happy, and they stop talking about going to war against the eastern tribes.

In the fourth scene: The eastern tribes name the altar.

The characters in this passage are:

- The people of the eastern tribes of Israel, including the tribes of Rueben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh
- The chief leaders of the western tribes of Israel
- Phineas the priest
- And the rest of the people of the western tribes of Israel, sometimes called the Israelites

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

The atmosphere is probably very tense at the beginning of this passage. There might soon be war between the two groups of Israelite tribes. At this moment, the continued unity of the tribes of Israel depends entirely on what the eastern tribes say in response to the accusations of the western tribes.

In the first scene, the eastern tribes appeal to Yahweh to act as a witness for them.

The eastern tribes call on the name of Yahweh by repeating the phrase, "Yahweh, the Mighty One, he is God!" Some translations of the Bible say, "Yahweh, the God of gods," which means that Yahweh is the only true God. This phrase shows that Yahweh is all-powerful and has supreme authority. When the eastern tribes repeat this phrase, it is like they are saying, "We know and are completely convinced that Yahweh is the Almighty One, the God above all gods."

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will say, "Yahweh, the Mighty One, he is God!" Pause the audio here.

The eastern tribes know that Yahweh sees everything they have done and that he knows the truth about why they built the altar. At this point the eastern tribes are insisting on their innocence. It is like they are saying, "Yahweh knows we are innocent of the rebellious actions that you accuse us of."

The eastern tribes are so confident of their innocence that they are willing to have Yahweh strike them down, or kill them, if they did break their covenant with him. In fact, twice, they call for Yahweh to punish them if he finds them guilty of turning away from worshipping Yahweh and building an altar to offer any kind of sacrifice. The eastern tribes mention three types of sacrifices: the burnt offerings, the grain offerings, and the peace offerings. These are all types of gifts that a person gives to Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will include this list of different types of sacrifices when you act out this passage. If you have translated burnt offering, grain offering, and peace offering in previous passages, use the same words or phrases you used before. Pause the audio here.

The eastern tribes defend themselves by saying the reason they built the altar was because they believed the future generations of the western tribes might try to stop the future generations of the eastern tribes from being able to worship Yahweh. They thought the future generations of the western tribes might ask if the eastern tribes had a right to worship Yahweh by saying, "What right do you have to worship Yahweh, the God of Israel?" This is not really a question that needs to be answered. It is a way to say, "You have no right to worship Yahweh because you are not part of Israel."

The eastern tribes were afraid that future generations of the western tribes would not believe that the future generations of the eastern tribes were a part of Israel because the Jordan River separated their lands. The eastern tribes use repetition to show their concern. They say the future generations of the western tribes might say that the future generations of the eastern tribes have no portion, or share, in Yahweh and stop them from worshipping Yahweh. Your version of the Bible might say they have "no claim" to Yahweh, or no right to be

Yahweh's people. It is important to make clear in your translation that the eastern tribes are talking about what the future generations might say at some point in the future. It is not clear why this portion of the passage only speaks of Reuben and Gad but does not mention the half-tribe of Manasseh.

The eastern tribes say they decided to build an altar because of their fears. The eastern tribes repeat that they did not build the altar with the intention to offer any kind of sacrifices, but rather, to be a witness to all the future generations of Israel that the eastern tribes have an equal share with the western tribes to worship Yahweh as their God. When two people, or groups of people, make a covenant or agreement, they often make a witness, or memorial or sign, that they have made the agreement. The altar would somehow serve as a witness, or sign, that they worship Yahweh, the God of Israel. It is not clear how the altar would serve as a witness, but the purpose of the altar is clear. What is important to make clear is that the altar was supposed to show, or provide evidence, to the future generations that the eastern tribes can also offer sacrifices to Yahweh on Yahweh's altar in his sanctuary, the place where Yahweh lives, in the tabernacle.

Until this point, we do not know what the altar looks like, but now the eastern tribes give more information. They say that it is a copy of the altar that the ancestors of the people of Israel built. It is a copy of Yahweh's official altar, but they repeat that they did not build it to offer sacrifices. Then the eastern tribes say the phrase, "Far be it from us to rebel against Yahweh," which is a way of saying, "We have no desire whatsoever to rebel against Yahweh." They emphasize once more that they do not want to turn away from, or betray, Yahweh by building an altar to offer sacrifices of worship instead of Yahweh's official altar that is in the tabernacle.

This is a very serious matter which is probably why the eastern tribes took care to explain themselves clearly by repeating themselves many times.

Stop here and discuss as a group: When you are trying to convince someone that you are telling the truth, what kinds of things do you say? How do you say them? What tone of voice do you use? Pause this audio here.

In scene two, we hear that the words of the people of the eastern tribes were "good in the sight of" Phineas the priest and the chief leaders of the western tribes. This is special language to say that it pleased them, or that they were happy or satisfied with what the eastern tribes said.

Stop here and discuss as a group what phrase you will use to say the eastern tribes' response pleased Phineas and the chief leaders of the western tribes. Think about how you would say that someone thinks something is very good. Pause the audio here.

Remember from the previous passage that Phineas the priest is the leader of the group of leaders from the western tribes of Israel. As the leader, Phineas responds to the eastern tribes, and the atmosphere changes to one of joy and gladness. Phineas confirms that Yahweh has not abandoned the people of Israel, because the eastern tribes have not abandoned Yahweh. Phineas says the eastern tribes have saved the Israelites from "Yahweh's hand," which means that Yahweh will not punish the Israelites.

In scene three, Phineas the priest, who is the son of Eleazar the priest, together with the chief leaders of the western tribes of Israel, leave the tribes of Reuben and Gad in Gilead to go back to their people in the land of Canaan. It is not clear why the half-tribe of Manasseh is not mentioned again in this portion of the passage. When Phineas and the chief leaders arrive, they tell the rest of the Israelites what happened with the eastern tribes. The report makes the rest of the Israelites happy, and they praise Yahweh. They do not speak any more about going to war against their brothers in the eastern tribes of Israel, Reuben and Gad.

It is not clear when scene four happened. Scene four may have happened either before or after Phineas and the leaders left the land of Gilead. In scene four, the people of Reuben and the people of Gad named the altar. Some versions of the Bible say they named the altar "Witness" because it is a witness between the eastern tribes and the western tribes that Yahweh is God to all the tribes of Israel. Other versions say they named the altar, "It is a witness between us that Yahweh is God." Either way, the name highlights the purpose of the altar: it is to be a reminder between the east and west tribes that they all serve the same God, 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 Joshua 22:21–34 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:

- The people of the eastern tribes of Israel, including the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh
- The chief leaders of the western tribes of Israel
- Phineas the priest
- And the rest of the people of the western tribes of Israel, sometimes called 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 eastern tribes respond to the western tribes. The eastern tribes call out to Yahweh as a witness of their intentions for building the altar. The eastern tribes are willing to receive punishment from Yahweh if he finds them guilty of being disloyal to him and offering sacrifices in an unauthorised place or to another god.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the eastern tribes of Israel, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "We are worried because it seems our brothers in the western tribes of Israel have misunderstood why we built the altar. Thankfully, Yahweh, the Almighty God of Israel sees everything we do and even knows our intentions. He knows we did not do the things they accused us of," or
- "We appeal to Yahweh, because Yahweh knows the truth and will judge rightly! He is the highest authority. Yahweh will save us from war with our brothers in the western tribes," or
- "We would never sin against Yahweh our God by offering sacrifices in an unauthorised way or to another god! That would break our covenant with him and we would deserve Yahweh's punishment."

The eastern tribes then explain to Phineas the priest and the chief leaders of the western tribes the reason why they built the altar. The eastern tribes thought future generations of western tribes might try to stop future generations of the eastern tribes from worshipping Yahweh, so they wanted to do something to make sure this would not happen. They decided to build a copy of the altar in the tabernacle at Shiloh as evidence, or proof, to all future generations that the eastern tribes have the same right as the western tribes to worship Yahweh.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the eastern tribes of Israel, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "We feel very privileged to be called Yahweh's people, along with all the other tribes of Israel. As Yahweh has been with us, we want Yahweh to be with our future generations," or
- "We thought that if we built a copy of Yahweh's altar, it would prove to everyone that we are also Israelites, because the people of Israel are the only people who know what Yahweh's altar, in the tabernacle at Shiloh, looks like."

The eastern tribes finish their response to the western tribes by strongly stating they have no desire to rebel against Yahweh and turn away from him by building an altar to offer various sacrifices.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the eastern tribes of Israel, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "The things the Western tribes accuse us of are the opposite of what we want. We want to worship Yahweh with all our heart, and we want our children, and grandchildren for many generations to do the same!"

The eastern tribes' response makes Phineas the priest and the chief leaders of the western tribes of Israel happy. Phineas says that the eastern tribes have rescued Israel from Yahweh's discipline, or correction.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing Phineas and the chief leaders of the western tribes of Israel, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "We are happy to hear what our brothers in the eastern tribes have said, because now we know with certainty that Yahweh is with us all," or
- "We feel so relieved that we do not have to go to war!"

Phineas and the chief leaders of the western tribes return to the land of Canaan and tell the rest of the western tribes what has happened. Their report makes all the people very happy and the people praise Yahweh. The western tribes no longer want to go to war against the eastern tribes.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the rest of the people of the western tribes of Israel, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "We love our brothers in the eastern tribes and want to live in peace with them, but our loyalty is first towards Yahweh our God. We thank and praise Yahweh because he has brought unity to Israel once again!"

The tribes of Reuben and Gad give a name to the altar that they and the half-tribe of Manasseh built. They call it "Witness," because it is a sign between the eastern and western tribes of Israel that Yahweh is the God to all Israel.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the eastern tribes of Israel, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "We are glad Phineas and the chief leaders of the western tribes came to speak to us about the altar. Now we can be sure that all the future generations of all the tribes of Israel will know when they see this altar that we are all Yahweh's people."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 22:21–34 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

The eastern tribes answer the leaders of the **clans** of **Israel**. They appeal to **Yahweh** as their witness. Yahweh is the personal name for God. The eastern tribes also talk about Yahweh, the **God** of Israel. For more information on Yahweh, God, and Israel, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for Yahweh, God, clans, and Israel as you used in previous passages.

The eastern tribes repeat the phrase, "Yahweh, the Mighty One, is God!" "The Mighty One" is a title for God that refers to Yahweh's unlimited power.

The eastern tribes say that Yahweh has made the **Jordan River** a boundary between them and the western tribes. Use the same words for Jordan River as you have used previously, and remember that Jordan River is in the Master Glossary.

The eastern tribes are afraid that in the future the western tribes will tell the eastern tribes that they are not a part of Yahweh's people, and they will cause the eastern tribes to stop fearing, or worshiping, Yahweh. Use the same phrases for **fear of Yahweh** that you have used in previous passages, and see the Master Glossary for more information about fear of God.

The eastern tribes tell the chief leaders of the western tribes that they did not build the **altar** to offer burnt offerings, grain offerings, or peace offerings on it. These are all different types of sacrifices which people offer to Yahweh on an altar. An altar is a special place for people to bring gifts to Yahweh. For more information on altar, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for altar as you used in previous passages.

A **sacrifice** is a gift offered to Yahweh on the altar. It is usually an animal, but it can also be food items or sweet-smelling spices. For more information on sacrifices, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for sacrifices as you used in previous passages.

A **burnt offering** is when a person brings a whole animal to kill and then burn on the altar as a way to say to Yahweh, "I recognise I have done wrong and I want to devote myself to you." For more information on burnt offering, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for burnt offering as you used in previous passages.

People offer a **grain offering**, usually of barley or wheat, as a way to thank Yahweh for his provision. A **peace or fellowship offering** is a type of animal sacrifice offered to Yahweh to thank him for his goodness. Refer to grain offering and peace or fellowship offering in the Master Glossary for more information.

Stop here and discuss what words or phrases you will use to say **grain offering** and **peace or fellowship offering**. Use the same words or phrases as you used in previous passages. Pause the audio here.

The eastern tribes wanted to make sure their future generations could continue worshipping Yahweh by offering sacrifices on the altar in Yahweh's **tabernacle**. For more information on _descendants and tabernacle, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same words or phrases for descendants and tabernacle as you used in previous passages.

The eastern tribes built the altar to be a kind of witness, or testimony, which would remind all the future generations of Israel that the eastern tribes form part of Israel and therefore have the right to worship Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will talk about the altar as a **witness** that both the eastern and western tribes of Israel worship Yahweh the God of Israel. Pause this audio here.

Phineas the **priest** and the chief leaders of the western tribes of Israel are happy with the explanation from the eastern tribes. For more information on priest, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for priest as you used in previous passages.

The western tribes of Israel **bless** or praise Yahweh when they hear the report from Phineas and the chief leaders, and they do not speak any more about going to war against their brothers in the eastern tribes. Use the same word for bless that you have used in previous passages, and remember that bless 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.

Joshua 22:21–34

Audio Content

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Joshua 23:1–8

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 23:1–8 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 23:1–8 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 Joshua 23:1–8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This story probably begins many years after Yahweh gave peace to the Israelites from all their enemies. Joshua has become a very old man. Joshua gathers all the tribal elders, family leaders, judges, and officials of Israel to share some final words of encouragement with them. The elders, family leaders, judges, and officials are all men with different positions of authority within Israel who serve under Joshua's leadership. These men probably help Joshua by giving advice about matters of war and other important issues. These men also help Joshua lead Israel by following his instructions about how to organise and keep the Israelites' camp in order.

Joshua addresses these people, saying he has become a very old man. This suggests that Joshua is aware that he may not live for very much longer, which is probably the reason why Joshua calls Israel's leaders together. Joshua then makes three separate calls for the Israelites to obey Yahweh. The first call to obey is part of this story. The second and third calls to obedience are part of the next story.

Joshua says that the Israelites have all seen with their own eyes everything that Yahweh, the God of Israel, has done to help them. Joshua reminds the Israelites that Yahweh defeated the enemy nations for them. Joshua repeats the phrase "Yahweh your God" throughout this message to highlight a very important fact: Yahweh is the only God of the Israelites. You will remember from a previous story how Israel made a special agreement,

or covenant, with Yahweh to always obey him. By saying "Yahweh your God," Joshua is reminding the officials of Israel about Israel's agreement not to worship any god other than Yahweh.

Joshua reminds all the officials of Israel about the land that he previously gave to the different tribes of Israel. Joshua is talking about the land known as Canaan, which was between the Jordan River on the east side and the Mediterranean, or Great Sea, on the west side. It is the same land Yahweh gave to the tribes of Israel as an inheritance, or gift. The Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River are both large bodies of water that provide natural borders to the east and west sides of the land that Yahweh gave to the Israelites as an inheritance.

Stop here and look at a map of the land of Canaan that shows the divisions of the land for the Israelite tribes, and the natural borders of the Mediterranean Sea to the west and the Jordan River to the east. Pause this audio here.

Joshua reminds the leaders that the Israelites still need to conquer and take possession of some of that land, but he promises that Yahweh will help them. Joshua says that Yahweh will drive out, or force, all the non-Israelite people who are living there now to leave the land and go somewhere else. Joshua says all these things will happen because Yahweh will keep the promise that Yahweh made to Israel.

Joshua tells the officials of Israel to be strong! The officials should obey exactly the instructions that Moses wrote in the Book of the Law. "The Book of the Law" refers to the first five books of the Bible, also known as the Pentateuch. The Pentateuch contains the laws, or set of instructions, that Yahweh gave to Moses.

In saying this, Joshua reminds the Israelites again about their covenant, or special agreement, with Yahweh. Remember from a previous story how the Law of Moses described the things that Israel had agreed to do as Yahweh's people. If the Israelites continued to be faithful and do what they promised, Yahweh would continue to be their God and bless them in the land that he gave them as an inheritance.

Then Joshua lists some things that the Israelites must never do. Joshua says they must not make friends with the people who Yahweh plans to force out of the land. This is probably because Yahweh does not want the Israelites to be influenced by the people from those nations and worship their gods. Joshua clearly says the Israelites must not even say the names of the gods of those people, or pray to those gods, or make promises in the names of their gods. Joshua says the Israelites must never serve those gods or bow down to worship them.

To worship means to give special honour to someone or something. The nations who lived in the land that Yahweh had given to the Israelites used to worship many false gods, called idols. These gods were not really gods, because they had no power or authority. They were often just images, statues, or objects that the people of the land worshipped. Sometimes, when the people worshipped those gods, they would do horrible things because they thought it pleased their gods.

Stop here and as a group discuss the things people in your culture might worship, or devote themselves to. What things do they do to show their devotion?

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 23:1-8 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 one scene.

In this scene: Joshua speaks to the leaders of Israel and calls them to keep devoting themselves to Yahweh and to keep obeying Yahweh's instructions, because Yahweh has done good things for them. Joshua warns the Israelites not to make friends with the people who live in the land that Yahweh promised to give them as an inheritance.

The characters in this passage are:

- Joshua
- And the elders, the heads of families, the judges, and the officials of Israel

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

This story probably begins many years after Yahweh gave peace to the Israelites from all their enemies. Joshua has become a very old man. Joshua gathers all the elders, leaders, judges, and officials of Israel to share some final words of encouragement with them. These are all important people, which shows that Joshua has something very important to say. It is not clear where this story happens, but some Bible scholars think it probably happened in Shiloh, where the tabernacle was.

Joshua addresses the people and says he is now a very old man. He says they have all seen with their own eyes everything that Yahweh, the God of Israel, has done to help them. Joshua reminds them that Yahweh defeated the enemy nations for Israel by fighting for the Israelites. Joshua repeats the phrase "Yahweh your God" throughout this whole passage to highlight a very important fact. Yahweh is the only God of the Israelites. It is important to note that Joshua is not excluding himself from Yahweh's people when he says this. It is possible that he says "Yahweh your God," instead of "Yahweh our God," because he is speaking from a position of authority towards the people. You may use either "your God" or "our God," depending on what is clearer in your language.

Stop here and discuss as a group whether you should call Yahweh "your" God or "our" God. Be sure to use the same phrase throughout the passage. Pause the audio here.

Joshua reminds the officials that they still need to conquer and take possession of some of the land that Yahweh has given them as an inheritance. Joshua says he previously led the Israelites to conquer, or cut off, some of the nations, but some nations still remain. Joshua says that Yahweh will keep his promise to give them the land by "driving the people out," or forcing the people who lived there to leave.

Joshua says that Yahweh has defeated Israel's enemies, and Yahweh will soon force the people out from the land he has given the Israelites. So, in return, the Israelites should respond by being loyal to Yahweh. Joshua tells the officials of Israel they should be very careful to make sure they follow the instructions that Moses wrote in the Book of the Law. Joshua says they should not turn to the right hand nor the left, which is special language meaning that they should not disobey any part of the law. This type of language shows that when the Israelites fully obey Yahweh, it is like they are carefully following a straight path. Joshua is calling the Israelites to focus their attention on keeping on the straight path by obeying Yahweh completely.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use to show that the Israelites must obey Yahweh's instructions exactly, without "turning to the left or right." Pause the audio here.

Joshua says the Israelites must not mix with, or make friends with, the non-Israelite people who are still left in the land. Some Bible translations say the Israelites must not "go into," or marry the non-Israelite people. Then Joshua says the Israelites must not pray to, or make promises in the name of the gods of the people who Yahweh will force out of the land. Joshua says the people must not serve, or bow down to worship, those gods, but rather, the Israelites should continue to be loyal, or "hold tightly," to Yahweh their God. To hold tightly to Yahweh is special language. When a person has something that is very valuable to them, they might hold it very tightly in their hand to make sure they do not lose it. In a similar way, the Israelites would show how much they valued Yahweh by carefully following all his instructions. In your translation, it is important to show a strong contrast between what Joshua says the Israelites must not do, and what they must do, in response to Yahweh's faithfulness towards them.

Stop here and discuss as a group what words or phrases you will use to show the strong contrast between Joshua's commandments for Israel not to worship the gods of the non-Israelite people but rather, to be loyal to Yahweh. Then practise talking about the contrast in your translation.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 23:1-8 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:

- Joshua
- And the elders, the heads of families, the judges, and the officials 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.

Joshua gathers together the elders, heads of families, judges, and officials of Israel. Joshua tells them he is now a very old man and reminds them that they have seen the many things that Yahweh their God has done to help them defeat the enemy nations around them.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I am now an old man, and I have seen Yahweh's faithfulness to Israel for many years. I am sad. This may be the last time I am able to speak to the leaders of Israel. The best thing I can do for the Israelites now is to help them remember that it was their God Yahweh who gave them victory over their enemies."

Joshua reminds the officials that they still need to conquer and take possession of some of the land that Yahweh has given them as an inheritance. Joshua says that Yahweh will keep his promise to give them the land by "driving the people out," or forcing all the people who were living there to leave the land and go somewhere else.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "The Israelites need to be strong and brave when they go in to conquer the remaining land. It may not be easy to take over the land, but remembering Yahweh's promises will help make them strong and brave."

Then Joshua says the Israelites must not make friends with the non-Israelite people currently living in the land. Joshua also says the Israelites must not pray to, or make promises in the name of the gods of the people who Yahweh will force out of the land. Joshua says they must not serve or worship those gods, but rather, the Israelites should continue to be loyal to Yahweh their God.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Yahweh has been so good to us. Yahweh has kept his promises. I hope that Israel will remember Yahweh's goodness and continue to be loyal to him as they have until now. It would be terrible if the Israelites made friends with those other nations and copied them by worshipping their gods."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 23:1-8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Joshua gathers together the various leaders of Israel, the **elders**, heads of families, **judges**, and **officials**. These are all people in positions of authority in Israel. Elders were the leaders of the various tribes of Israel. Judges had authority to decide how to deal with a problem between two people. Officials had positions of authority over soldiers, or warriors. Use the same words for elders, judges, and officials as you used in previous passages. Refer to elder and judge in the Master Glossary for more information.

Joshua reminds the people how **Yahweh** their **God** fought for Israel and defeated their enemies. Yahweh is the personal name for God. For more information on Yahweh and God, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same words or phrases for Yahweh and God as you used in previous passages.

Joshua says he had divided the land of the Israelites' **inheritance** between them, and that many **nations** had already been conquered between the **Jordan River** and the Mediterranean Sea. A nation is a group of people who belong together, who live in the same country, and who have the same ruler. Use the same words for inheritance, nation, and Jordan River as you have used in previous passages, and remember that nation and Jordan River are in the Master Glossary.

Joshua tells the Israelites to respond to Yahweh's goodness by being diligent to obey everything that Moses commanded in the **Book of the Law**. Use the same word or phrase for "Book of the Law" as you used in previous passages. Refer to law in the Master Glossary for more information about law.

Joshua says the Israelites must not make friends with the non-Israelite people. Joshua also says the Israelites must not pray to, serve, or bow down to worship any of the gods of the non-Israelite nations. The gods, or idols, of the other nations were not really gods. They were actually false gods, because only Yahweh is the one true God. Refer to gods in the Master Glossary for more information.

Stop here and discuss what word you will use for **gods**. If you have translated the word "gods" in a previous passage, 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.

Joshua 23:1–8

Audio Content

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Joshua 23:9–16

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 23:9–16 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 23:9–16 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 Joshua 23:9–16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

This passage continues the previous story when Joshua gathered all the tribal elders, family leaders, judges, and officials of Israel to say some final words of encouragement to them. Joshua's whole speech to the leaders of Israel includes three separate calls for the Israelites to keep their covenant promise to obey Yahweh. We heard the first call to obey in the previous story. Now, we will continue to hear Joshua's second and third calls for the Israelites to keep their covenant promise to Yahweh. The covenant was an unbreakable agreement between Yahweh and the Israelites. In this agreement, both Yahweh and the Israelites promised to do certain things.

The previous story ended with Joshua telling the Israelite leaders to cling to Yahweh. This is special language to say the Israelites should not separate themselves from Yahweh by worshipping other gods.

Now Joshua calls them a second time to obey Yahweh. Joshua repeats the reasons why the Israelites should be loyal to Yahweh and only worship Yahweh. Joshua says for the second time that Yahweh has already driven, or forced out, great and powerful nations from the land for the people of Israel. Because of Yahweh's help, no one has been able to defeat the Israelites. Joshua says that because Yahweh has kept his promise to fight for the Israelites, just one Israelite soldier can make 1,000 enemy soldiers run away. This means that the Israelites easily defeated their enemies because Yahweh helped them!

Joshua instructs the officials to be very careful to love Yahweh, the God of Israel, above all things. To love Yahweh is to choose to be completely devoted to him. Joshua expects Israel to devote themselves to Yahweh because of the good things Yahweh has done for them.

Then Joshua warns the officials about what will happen if they turn away from Yahweh by disobeying Yahweh and making friends with, or even marrying, the non-Israelite people who remain in the land. Joshua wants the Israelites to know with all certainty what will happen to them if they choose to be unfaithful to Yahweh. Joshua says that Yahweh will no longer help the Israelites by forcing the non-Israelite people to leave the land. If the Israelites choose to follow the ways of those people instead of to follow Yahweh, then Yahweh will give them what they want: Yahweh will allow the non-Israelites to stay in the land. However, Joshua makes it very clear that this will not be a blessing for the people of Israel.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: What might happen if a person from your community wanted to marry someone from an enemy community? Would the people in charge allow this? How would that marriage affect your community? Pause this audio here.

Joshua uses special language to describe the problems that the non-Israelite people will cause. Joshua says the non-Israelite people will be a snare and a trap to Israel. A snare and a trap are things people use to catch and trap birds. People make them with wood or a net. Joshua then says the non-Israelite people will be a whip on the backs of the Israelites and thorns in their eyes. A whip is a long, flexible object used to hit the backs of either animals or people. A whip can cause much pain and suffering. Thorns are hard, sharp, and pointy parts of plants that cause pain when they prick the skin. Joshua says the Israelites would suffer because of the decisions of the non-Israelite people. This would go on until all the Israelites died and none remained in the good land that Yahweh had given them.

Stop here and look at pictures of a snare, a trap, a whip, and thorns as a group. Pause this audio here.

Then Joshua begins his third and final call to obey Yahweh by announcing that Joshua will soon die. This could possibly be the last time Joshua would address the officials in this way. Knowing this probably made the officials pay close attention to his words.

Joshua says that all the people of Israel know with all their hearts and souls that Yahweh has kept every one of his promises to them. Knowing something "with all their hearts and souls" is a special phrase the Israelites use that refers to the entire being of a person. It is like Joshua is saying the Israelites know it is completely true that Yahweh, their God, has kept all his promises to them. Joshua then says that Yahweh has kept every single promise he made to Israel and that Yahweh has not failed to keep any of his promises. Here, Joshua is repeating the same truth, but in different ways to emphasise how completely true it is that Yahweh has kept his promises to Israel. This is important because you will remember that Israel's special agreement, or covenant, with Yahweh is based on Israel and Yahweh keeping their promises to each other. Yahweh has kept his promises. Will Israel do the same?

Stop here and tell about a time when two groups of people were very loyal to each other. What kinds of things did they do to show their loyalty? Pause this audio here.

Joshua tells the officials that just as Yahweh has kept all his promises to do good to Israel, the Israelites can also be completely sure that Yahweh will fulfill all his warnings of judgement if they do not keep their promise to obey Yahweh their God. Joshua says that if Israel breaks the special agreement, or covenant, that they made with Yahweh their God, by serving and bowing down to worship other gods, then Yahweh's anger will be "kindled against them." This means that Yahweh will become very angry with the Israelites. If this happens, Joshua says that the Israelites will quickly die and disappear from the good land that Yahweh has given them.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 23:9–16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

This passage has two scenes.

In the first scene: Joshua makes his second call for the leaders of Israel to obey Yahweh. Joshua encourages them to keep devoting themselves to Yahweh because Yahweh has done good things for them. Joshua warns the Israelites not to make friends with or marry the people who live in the land that Yahweh promised to give them as an inheritance.

In the second scene: Joshua makes his third call for the leaders of Israel to obey Yahweh. Joshua announces he will soon die, and warns the leaders of Israel what will happen to the Israelites if they disobey Yahweh's instructions.

The characters in this passage are:

- Joshua
- And the elders, the heads of families, the judges, and the officials of Israel

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

This passage is a continuation of the previous passage. Joshua is still speaking to the elders, the heads of families, the judges, and the officials of Israel. In the previous story, Joshua made his first call for the Israelites to obey Yahweh. In this story, Joshua makes a second and third call for the Israelites to obey Yahweh. Joshua uses repetition at various points throughout this whole story to emphasise some very important subjects.

This story begins with Joshua repeating something he said in the previous story. Joshua explains why the Israelites should continue to be loyal to Yahweh. Joshua says the Israelites should continue to obey Yahweh because Yahweh drove, or forced out, great and powerful nations from the land for the people of Israel. Joshua says that because of Yahweh's help, no one has been able to defeat the Israelites. Joshua also says that because of Yahweh's help, just one Israelite soldier, or warrior, is able to "put to flight" 1,000 enemy soldiers, or to make those soldiers run away. This special language gives the idea of someone fleeing from something they think is very dangerous, like when a bird is afraid and suddenly flies away. With this special language Joshua is saying that the Israelites have been able to easily defeat their enemies because Yahweh helped them.

Joshua tells the officials to be very careful to love Yahweh, the God of Israel, more than anyone or anything else. In the Bible, the word love can mean different things. Here, to love Yahweh is to choose to be completely devoted to him. Joshua expects Israel to devote themselves to Yahweh because of the good things Yahweh has done for them.

After that, Joshua tells the Israelites what will happen if they make friends with, or marry, the non-Israelite people in the land. Joshua wants the Israelites to know with certainty what will happen. First of all, Joshua confirms that Yahweh, their God, will no longer force the remnant, or non-Israelite people, out of the land. Then Joshua uses special language to describe what it would be like for Israel if that happened. Joshua says the non-Israelite people remaining in the land would be as dangerous to Israel as snares and traps are to birds. Joshua says the non-Israelites would cause the Israelites as much pain and suffering as the lashes of a whip on their backs or like thorns in their eyes. This special language describes how terrible life would become for the Israelites if they chose to turn away from Yahweh. Joshua says the Israelites would suffer these consequences for their bad decisions until they had all died, or perished, and none remained in the good land that Yahweh, their God, had given them.

Stop here and discuss as a group what words or phrases in your own language you will use to describe the suffering that the enemy nations will cause the Israelites if they disobey Yahweh. Pause the audio here.

Joshua begins his third and final call for the Israelites to obey Yahweh by announcing that he will soon "go the way of all the earth." This is a phrase that means he will soon die, like everything on earth someday dies. The announcement that Joshua would soon die probably caused the people listening to pay close attention, because what Joshua is about to say could be his final words to them.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Talk about a time when you heard someone say that they would soon die. In your culture, how do people talk about dying soon? Pause this audio here.

Joshua says that all the people of Israel know with all their hearts and souls that Yahweh has kept every one of his promises, or words, to them. Knowing something "with all their heart and soul" is a special phrase in the language of the Israelites that refers to the entire being of a person. It is like Joshua is saying the Israelites know it is completely true that Yahweh, their God, has done everything that he said he would do. For Yahweh to keep his word means that Yahweh will do what he says. Yahweh will keep his promises.

Joshua then says that Yahweh has kept every single promise that he made to Israel, and that Yahweh did not fail to keep any of his promises. Joshua is repeating the same truth, but in different ways to emphasise how completely or fully true it is that Yahweh kept his promises to Israel.

Stop here and discuss these questions as a group: Talk about something that you know to be completely true. What word or phrase in your language can best explain that someone knows something to be completely true? Pause the audio here.

However, Joshua tells the officials that just as Yahweh kept all his promises of good to Israel, they can be sure that Yahweh will fulfil all his warnings of judgement and finally destroy the people of Israel if they disobey Yahweh their God. Joshua says that if Israel breaks the special agreement, or covenant, that they made with Yahweh their God, by serving and bowing down to worship other gods, then Yahweh's anger will be "kindled against them." This means that Yahweh will become very angry with the Israelites. In the Bible, anger is often compared to fire. Here, Yahweh's anger will be kindled against the Israelites. "Kindle" is what happens when a fire has just started and is beginning to burn. If the Israelites worship other gods, Joshua says that the Israelites will quickly perish from the good land that Yahweh has given them. This means that Yahweh will be quick to punish the Israelites for being disloyal, and will cause them to die.

Notice at the end, when Joshua says Yahweh will become angry with the Israelites, Joshua does not say the phrase "Yahweh your God" will become angry with you. This is probably because if the Israelites break their covenant with Yahweh and worship other gods, Yahweh will no longer be the God of the Israelites.

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 Joshua 23:9–16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has two scenes.

The characters in this passage are:

- Joshua
- And the elders, the heads of families, the judges, and the officials 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.

Joshua reminds the Israelite leaders that they should be loyal to Yahweh because Yahweh has helped them defeat their enemies and forced out great and powerful nations from the land for them.

Pause the drama.

Ask the people playing the Israelite leaders, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The people might answer things like:

- "What Joshua says is true. Yahweh has done great things for us by forcing out great and powerful nations from the land of Canaan. We remember many times when Yahweh helped us defeat our enemies, like the time when the walls of the city of Jericho fell down, and the time when Yahweh made the sun and moon stay still in the sky so we could defeat the Amorites. We still need Yahweh's help to finish driving the people out of the land of Canaan!"

Joshua also tells the Israelite leaders what will happen if the Israelites are unfaithful to Yahweh and mix with the non-Israelite people. Joshua says that Yahweh will no longer force the non-Israelite people out of the land, and that those people will cause the Israelites much pain and suffering, until they all die and there are no Israelites left in the land.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I hope these leaders understand how serious my warnings are," or
- "If the Israelites choose to follow the customs and religious practices of the nations remaining in Canaan, the Israelites will bring destruction upon themselves."

Joshua announces to the officials that he will not live for much longer. Joshua says that all the people of Israel know it is completely true that Yahweh, their God, has kept all his promises to them, and that he has not failed to keep any of them.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I believe that Yahweh will always complete what he says he will do. We Israelites have seen this happen again and again. It is good to know that we can trust Yahweh. Yahweh will not lie to us."

In the same way that Yahweh kept all his promises of good to Israel, Joshua says they can be sure that Yahweh will also fulfill all his warnings of judgement on the people of Israel if they disobey Yahweh their God and break their covenant with him.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I hope that after I die the Israelites will remember my words, and believe that Yahweh will always complete what he has said he will do."

If the Israelites serve and bow down to worship other gods, Joshua says that Yahweh will become very angry with the Israelites. If this happens, Joshua says that Yahweh will be quick to apply judgement to them by causing the people to die so they can no longer live in the good land that Yahweh had given them.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "Israel has a special relationship with Yahweh, a bit like a husband and a wife. Yahweh has been like a good husband to Israel. If Israel worships other gods, it will be as if Israel is an unfaithful wife. I really hope Israel remains faithful! Our God, Yahweh is such a good God!"

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 23:9–16 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Although this passage does not name them, Joshua is continuing to speak to the various leaders of Israel, the **elders**, heads of families, **judges**, and **officials**. These are all people in positions of authority in Israel. Elders were the leaders of the various tribes of Israel. Judges had authority to decide how to deal with a problem between two people. Officials had positions of authority over soldiers, or warriors. Use the same words for elders, judges, and officials as you used in previous passages. Refer to elder and judge in the Master Glossary for more information.

Joshua reminds the people how **Yahweh** their **God** fought for Israel and drove great and strong **nations** out of the land of Canaan. Yahweh is the personal name for God. For more information on Yahweh, God, and nations, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same words or phrases for Yahweh, God, and nations as you used in previous passages.

Joshua reminds the Israelites that they should **love** Yahweh because Yahweh has helped them defeat their enemies and forced out great and powerful nations from the land for them. Love can sometimes have different meanings, depending on the context it is used in. In the book of Joshua, to love Yahweh means to be consciously and completely devoted to Yahweh. Use the same word for love as you used in previous passages in Joshua.

Joshua tells them that Yahweh will not **drive out** the nations from Canaan if the Israelites are unfaithful to Yahweh and marry the **remnant** of non-Israelite people who had survived and remained in the land. Talk about Yahweh driving out the nations from Canaan in the same way as you have in previous passages. A remnant is a small portion of something, like people, that remains, or is left over, from a bigger group. Use the same word or phrase for remnant as you used in previous passages.

Joshua says that the Israelites know with **all their heart and soul** that Yahweh will keep his promises. Use the same phrase for knowing something with "all your heart and soul" as you have used in previous passages.

In the same way Yahweh kept all his good words, or promises, to Israel, Joshua says they can be sure that Yahweh will also fulfill all his **evil** words, or warnings, on the people of Israel if they disobey Yahweh their God by breaking their covenant with him. Yahweh's good words are his promises to his people. Yahweh's evil words are the warnings of judgment that Yahweh gives his people when they disobey. If you talk about "evil words," use the same word for evil as you have used in previous passages, and remember that evil is in the Master Glossary.

A **covenant** is an unbreakable agreement between two people. Each person promises to do certain things, but if they fail to do those things, then they must receive the consequences. Use the same word for covenant as you have used previously. For more information on covenant, refer to the Master Glossary.

If the Israelites serve and bow down to worship other **gods**, then Yahweh will become very angry and will punish the Israelites by death, so they can no longer live in the good land that Yahweh has given them. The gods, or idols, of the other nations were not really gods. They were actually false gods, because only Yahweh is the one true God. Refer to gods in the Master Glossary for more information. Use the same word or phrase for gods 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.

Joshua 23:9–16

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Joshua 24:1–13

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 24:1–13 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 24:1–13 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 Joshua 24:1–13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Joshua, who is an old man now, has been reminding the Israelite leaders of the promises Yahweh has made to them. In this section, Joshua gathers all the Israelites together to renew their covenant, or promise, with Yahweh. Joshua begins by telling the people what Yahweh has said. Yahweh reminds the Israelites of what he has done for them to show that he is a good and reliable God.

Joshua calls all the tribes of Israel to gather at the city of Shechem. Shechem was a city in the middle of Canaan, the land that Yahweh gave to the Israelites. Two of the Israelites' ancestors, Abraham and Jacob, had built altars to Yahweh here, so it was a holy city.

Stop here and look at a map of Canaan as a group. Look at the city of Shechem. Pause this audio here.

When the Israelites get there, Joshua tells all the elders, leaders, judges, and officials to come and present themselves before God. These are the same leaders that Joshua gathered to remind them what Yahweh has done and what the leaders should do. The leaders all come into the presence of God. The people had previously set up the tabernacle in the town of Shiloh, not in Shechem. The people normally met with Yahweh at the tabernacle in front of the tent of meeting that held the ark of the covenant. So, perhaps the ark of the covenant was at Shechem for this meeting, or perhaps the people met here because Shechem was also a holy place for the Israelites.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, when people and their leaders make a big decision or announcement, how do they show how important it is? Where do they normally make these important decisions? How do the leaders act? What do they do? Pause this audio here.

Then Joshua speaks to all the Israelites and their leaders, telling them the words Yahweh, Israel's God, has said. Yahweh tells the story of how he made the people group of Israel to be his people. Through his story, Yahweh is reminding the Israelites that they are Yahweh's people because of how Yahweh has protected and led them.

Yahweh says that long ago, Israel's ancestors, or past generations from the same family, lived in the land beyond the river. This was the east side of the Euphrates river, which was a big river to the east of Canaan.

Stop here and look at a map of Canaan as a group again, as needed. Look at the Euphrates River on the map. Pause this audio here.

Those ancestors, including Terah, the father of Abraham and Nahor, served and worshiped false gods. But even though Abraham's family did not worship Yahweh, Yahweh still called Abraham to follow Yahweh and move his family to Canaan. Yahweh led Abraham throughout the land of Canaan and gave Abraham many descendants. Yahweh gave Abraham a son, Isaac, and then gave Isaac two sons, who were Jacob and Esau. Yahweh gave Esau the land of Seir, which was a green land with hills southwest of Canaan. But Yahweh led Jacob and his family into the land of Egypt.

Stop here and look at a map of Canaan as a group again, as needed. Look at Seir and Egypt on the map. Pause this audio here.

For many years, the Israelites were slaves in Egypt, but Yahweh sent Moses and Aaron to lead the Israelites. When the Egyptians would not let the Israelites leave Egypt, Yahweh brought great trouble on the Egyptians. Yahweh says, "I brought you out of Egypt." Yahweh is no longer talking just about the Israelites' ancestors. Some of the people in the crowd were young children at that time the Israelites left Egypt and remember when Yahweh saved them.

When the Israelites came to a sea, or large lake, at the edge of Egypt, they saw the Egyptians following them with chariots and men on horses. Sometimes this body of water is called the sea of reeds, or the Red Sea.

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

Because they were afraid, the Israelites called out to Yahweh for help. To keep the Egyptians away from the Israelites, Yahweh put a dark cloud between the two groups. When Yahweh made a path through the sea for the Israelites to cross it, the Egyptians tried to follow. But Yahweh caused the sea to roll over the Egyptians and drown them. Yahweh reminds the Israelites that they know this to be true because some of them saw this when they were young.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about something strange or incredible that happened that you saw with someone else in the group. Listen for phrases the speaker uses that show that other people in the group saw it too. Pause this audio here.

After they crossed the sea, the Israelites lived in the desert, or wilderness, for many years. Then Yahweh led them to Canaan, the land he promised to give them. Other groups of people lived in Canaan and tried to stop

the Israelites from entering the land. One of those people groups was the Amorites. Sometimes people called all of the different people groups in that area "Amorites."

However, Yahweh defeated all of the people groups and gave their land to the Israelites. King Balak of Moab, who was the son of Zippor, was one of the enemies of the Israelites. When King Balak tried to stop the Israelites, he sent for the prophet Balaam to place a curse on the Israelites. But Yahweh would not allow Balaam to put a curse on the Israelites. Instead, Yahweh caused Balaam to put blessings on the Israelites again and again. Yahweh saved the Israelites from King Balak's hand, meaning he saved the Israelites from King Balak and his armies.

When the Israelites crossed the Jordan River, several people groups fought against Israel. There were the people of Jericho, as well as the Amorite, Perizzite, Canaanite, Hittite, Girgashite, Hivite, and Jebusite people groups. These people all followed other gods. Yahweh says he gave these people into the Israelites' hands, meaning he gave Israel victory over these people.

Stop here and look at a map of Canaan as a group again, as needed. Look at the Jordan River and Jericho on the map. Pause this audio here.

The Israelites did not win these battles because of their own weapons and strength. Yahweh "sent a hornet," or caused terror, among Israel's enemies, including the two Amorite kings, and caused these people to flee from the Israelites. Yahweh gave the land and cities of these other peoples to the Israelites. The Israelites did not have to plant the food they are eating now, or build any cities where they are living.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 24:1–13 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: Joshua tells the people of Israel to come to Shechem. The leaders present themselves before God. In front of the people and the leaders, Joshua announces that he will be repeating what Yahweh has said.

In the second scene: Yahweh says that he led Abraham to Canaan and gave him many descendants, even though Abraham's family did not serve Yahweh.

In the third scene: Yahweh reminds the Israelites that when they asked Yahweh for help, Yahweh defeated the Egyptians and brought the Israelites out of Egypt.

In the fourth scene: Yahweh then reminds them that he brought the Israelites to Canaan. Yahweh defeated other people groups who fought against the Israelites, including King Balak and the prophet Balaam.

In the fifth scene: Yahweh lists people groups that he destroyed after the Israelites crossed the Jordan River. Yahweh reminds the Israelites that they did not win Canaan because of their own strength. Yahweh is the one who gave the Israelites land, cities to live in, and fields of food to eat from.

The characters in this passage are:

- Joshua
- The people of Israel
- The elders, leaders, judges, and officials of Israel
- Yahweh, the God of Israel
- Terah, the father of Abraham and Nahor
- Abraham
- Isaac
- Jacob
- Esau
- Moses
- Aaron
- The Egyptians
- Balak, son of Zippor, who was the king of Moab
- Balaam, son of Beor, who was a prophet
- The people of Jericho
- And the other people groups in Canaan: the Amorites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hittites, Girgashites, Hivites, and Jebusites

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

Joshua is an old man and will not be able to lead the Israelites much longer. In this section, Joshua gathers the Israelites together to remind them what Yahweh has done for them before he asks them to promise to serve Yahweh.

Yahweh has spoken to Joshua and given him words to say to the people of Israel. So Joshua tells the Israelites to gather together to hear what Yahweh has said. Joshua then repeats what Yahweh has said about what Yahweh has done for the Israelites. These are stories that the Israelites know. Many of the people who are listening were alive when these stories happened, so Yahweh does not include all of the details. Yahweh wants to remind the people that Yahweh is the one who accomplished all of these victories and incredible things. These stories show that Yahweh is a reliable God.

The first scene begins when Joshua tells the Israelites to gather together at the city of Shechem. Since there are so many Israelites, they may have stood outside the city. Joshua tells the elders, leaders, judges, and officials of Israel to present themselves before God. This means that they gathered together in front of a holy place near all the people, such as the tabernacle or an old altar to Yahweh.

Joshua then speaks to all the leaders and the people. So that every one could hear him, Joshua may have had people standing in the crowd who would repeat his words to the people in the back. Joshua begins by letting the people know that Joshua will be repeating the words that Yahweh, the God of Israel, has said.

The second scene is what Yahweh has said. Yahweh begins by reminding the Israelites that long ago, over 750 years before this gathering, their ancestors lived on the east side of the Euphrates River. These ancestors, including Abrahams' father, Terah, worshiped other gods. But because of his kindness, Yahweh chose to lead Abraham to Canaan and give Abraham many descendants, including Isaac, Jacob, and Esau. Yahweh gave the hill country of Seir to Esau, but Jacob and his family went to Egypt.

The third scene begins when Yahweh begins to tell how he brought the Israelites out of Egypt. Now, instead of talking about their ancestors, Yahweh says, "I brought you out of Egypt." Some of these people were there in

Egypt. Yahweh does not remind the Israelites that they were slaves for 430 years there, as the people would remember that. Instead, Yahweh reminds them what he did. Yahweh sent Moses and Aaron to lead the Israelites, and Yahweh brought great trouble to the people of Egypt. When the Israelites came to the sea, and the Egyptians were chasing them, the Israelites called to Yahweh for help. Yahweh made a path for the Israelites through the water, but drowned the Egyptians when they tried to follow. Yahweh reminds the Israelites that some of them were there and saw what Yahweh did. Then, Yahweh says, they lived in the wilderness for a long time, about 40 years.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Pretend you are telling the story of your family history, all the way up to the present time, to your child or sibling. Pay attention to how you would address the child or sibling, especially when you get to the part where they remember the story. Pause this audio here.

In the fourth scene, Yahweh describes how he defeated the Israelites' enemies when he brought them to Canaan. The Israelites fought people groups who tried to prevent them from settling in Canaan, starting on the east side of the Jordan River. But Yahweh protected Israel. Yahweh destroyed the Amorites so that the Israelites could take the Amorites' land. When Balak, who was king of Moab, prepared to fight against Israel, he sent for a man named Balaam. Balak wanted Balaam to curse the Israelites, or wish bad things for them. However, Yahweh would not let Balaam curse them. Instead, Yahweh caused Balaam to bless, or pray good things for, the Israelites many times.

In the fifth scene, Yahweh describes what happened after the Israelites crossed the Jordan River. Again, Yahweh defeated the people groups who were there: the people of Jericho, the Amorites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hittites, Girgashites, Hivites, and Jebusites. Yahweh caused the other people groups to be terrified, including the two Amorite kings. Some versions say Yahweh "sent a hornet," the stinging insect that flies. However, most people think this means that Yahweh made the people very afraid, or made them panic. Yahweh clearly reminds the people that they did not win these battles because of how strong their weapons were. Yahweh gave the Israelites victory and brought them into a land that had cities and fields of food already ready for them. Yahweh mentions two of the most important crops for the Israelites: vineyards where they grow grapes and groves of olive trees. Yahweh has already provided these.

Stop here and look at photos of vineyards and a grove of olive trees. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In this story, Yahweh wanted to show the Israelites that they could trust Yahweh. Tell a story from your culture about a time when a person reminded someone else why they could trust that person. How did that person show that they were worthy of trust? What did they tell the other person? 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 Joshua 24:1–13 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:

- Joshua
- The people of Israel
- The elders, leaders, judges, and officials of Israel
- Yahweh, the God of Israel
- Terah, the father of Abraham and Nahor
- Abraham
- Isaac
- Jacob
- Esau
- Moses
- Aaron
- The Egyptians
- Balak, son of Zippor, who was the king of Moab
- Balaam, son of Beor, who was a prophet
- The people of Jericho
- And the other people groups in Canaan: the Amorites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hittites, Girgashites, Hivites, and Jebusites

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.

Joshua tells all the tribes of Israel to come together at the city of Shechem. When they get there, Joshua calls the elders, the leaders, the judges, and the officials to come and stand before God at a holy place. Then Joshua says to all the people, "These are the words that Yahweh, the God of Israel, says to you."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I will not be able to lead the people for much longer. I worry that they might forget what Yahweh has done and stop following him again," or
- "It is important that everyone hears what Yahweh has said, so that they can all follow him. I want to repeat God's words exactly, because I want to honor him. I am glad Yahweh is helping me remember what to say," or
- "I have seen and remembered how good Yahweh is. I want all these people to remember and rejoice in Yahweh's goodness too!"

Yahweh said, "Long ago, your ancestors lived on the east side of the Euphrates River. Your ancestors, including Abraham's father, Terah, worshiped gods other than me. But I took your ancestor Abraham from that land and led him to Canaan. I gave him his son, Isaac, and through Isaac, I gave him many descendants. I gave Isaac two sons, Jacob and Esau. I gave the hill country of Seir to Esau, but Jacob and his family went to Egypt."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Abraham, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I am surprised Yahweh spoke to me even though my family did not worship him," or
- "I was scared to leave my home country, but Yahweh promised me that he would lead me to a good land and give me many descendants," or
- "I am amazed at the way that Yahweh has continued to protect me from so many dangerous things, including my own mistakes."

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I know what is best for people, and I care for them, so I lead them where they need to go," or
- "I do not do things because of how good people are, but because of how good I am. So I am going to promise good things for Abraham and his family, even though he is still learning about me," or
- "I know that it is sometimes hard or scary for people to follow what I tell them to do, so I will give them guidance and promises of good things."

Then Yahweh said, "Later, I sent Moses and Aaron to you and your parents in Egypt. I brought great trouble on the people of Egypt, but I led you safely out of Egypt and to the sea. When the Egyptian army pursued you with war chariots and men on horses, I put a dark cloud between you and the Egyptians. I opened up the sea so that you could pass through safely. But when the Egyptians tried to follow, I caused the sea to cover them and drown them. Many of you were there and saw this happen. Then you lived in the wilderness for a long time."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Egyptians, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "When the Israelites' God brought great trouble against us, none of our gods could help us. Nothing we did could stop Yahweh. I am angry and want to hurt Yahweh's people because of the way he has embarrassed us," or
- "I am terrified by the power of the Israelites' God! He can control the light and darkness as well as the waters! What can he not do?" or
- "We have to recapture the Israelites. I do not want to lose all of our slaves! If they are gone, we will have to do more work!"

Ask the person playing Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I remember being there, with the Egyptians trapping us by the sea! We were all so scared, and we called out to Yahweh for help," or
- "I also remember seeing Yahweh make a path through the water to save us. I was amazed at the power of Yahweh!" or
- "While we saw how amazing Yahweh is, we have not always remembered that. It makes me sad to think how we had to live in the wilderness for a long time because we did not remember what Yahweh did and disobeyed him."

Yahweh continues his story and says, "Then I brought you to the land of the Amorites on the east side of the Jordan River. The Amorites fought against you, but I fought for you and destroyed them so you could take their land for yourselves. King Balak of Moab, who was the son of Zippor, prepared to attack you. He sent for the prophet Balaam to come and place a curse on you. But I would not allow Balaam to put a curse on you. Instead, I caused him to put a blessing on you."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Balaam, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I was amazed by the power of the Israelites' God. He stopped me from even speaking against his people!" or
- "The God of the Israelites has power over people who do not even worship him. Can any other god do this?" or
- "I was scared for my people. With this God on their side, the Israelites will surely win any fight!"

Then Yahweh says, "When you crossed the Jordan River, the people of Jericho fought you, but I caused you to defeat them. Then the Amorites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hittites, Girgashites, Hivites, and Jebusites fought against you. But I caused you to defeat all of them. I caused the other people groups to panic, including the two Amorite kings. I defeated them for you."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing these people groups, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I have seen the strength and weapons of the people around us. If Israel's God defeated them, then I am scared that we will lose too!" or
- "Who are these people? Were they not slaves? How are they beating all of these strong nations and their armies? I am confused and terrified!" or
- "I am angry that these Israelites want to come live in this land. It is our land and we will rule and do what we want here!"

Yahweh says, "It was not your own strength and weapons that gave you victory. I was the one who gave you their land and their cities. You did not have to prepare the land, plant any crops, or build any cities."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I want the Israelites to understand that I am reliable, and that they can trust me. I care for them and want the best for them!" or
- "It makes me sad when the Israelites do not follow me and end up hurting one another. I will speak to them clearly to remind them how good it is to follow me," or
- "I want to give my people good things. I rejoice when they live safely in good cities on good land! If they follow my commands, they can continue to live in peace and safety!"

Ask the person playing elders and leaders of the people, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "We have been listening carefully to the message that Yahweh gave to Joshua. We can see that these are true things and that we should remember them," or
- "I want to lead my people well, and as a leader, I should help the people I lead to remember what Yahweh has done," or
- "I am amazed when I remember what Yahweh has done! I want to praise him and continue to follow his good leadership."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 24:1–13 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Joshua calls all the tribes of **Israel** together. Israel refers to all the descendants of Jacob, or Israel. For more information on Israel, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for Israel as you used in previous passages.

Joshua tells the **elders**, leaders, **judges**, and officials of Israel to come before God at a holy place.

An **elder** is a person with authority in the community. For more information on elders, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for elder as you used in previous passages.

Judges were leaders who helped settle arguments or disputes and sometimes led the Israelites when in battle. For more information on judges, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for judge as you used in previous passages.

Joshua says that the words he will be speaking are **Yahweh's** words. Yahweh is God's proper name. Yahweh is a unique name—no other religion in the land around Israel used a name like this for their god. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for Yahweh as you used in previous passages.

Joshua says that Yahweh is Israel's **God**. There are a few times in this section that people use the general term for God. For more information on God, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for God as you used in previous passages.

Yahweh says that the Israelites' **ancestors** worshiped other gods. A person's ancestors are their parents, grandparents, and past generations from the same family. Use the same word or phrase for ancestor as you used in previous passages.

But Yahweh led Abraham to the land of **Canaan**. People named an area of land Canaan after Noah's grandson, Canaan. This is the land Yahweh gives to the Israelites. For more information on Canaan, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for Canaan as you used in previous passages.

Stop here and look at a map of Canaan as a group again as needed. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh gave Abraham many **descendants**. A person's descendants are his children, grandchildren, and all future generations from the same family line. The Israelites are descendants of Abraham. For more information on descendant, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for descendants as you used in previous passages.

After Yahweh rescued Abraham's descendants from Egypt, the Israelites lived for a long time in the **wilderness**. The wilderness is a lonely, barren place without water. There are almost no trees or bushes growing in the wilderness. For more information on wilderness, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for wilderness as you used in previous passages.

Then Yahweh brought the Israelites to the **Amorites'** land. The Amorites were a people group who lived in Canaan, but sometimes the Israelites used the word Amorites to refer to anyone in Canaan who was not an Israelite. Use the same word or phrase for Amorite as you used in previous passages.

Later, the Israelites crossed the **Jordan River**. The Jordan River is a long river that runs through Israel from north to south. For more information on the Jordan River, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for the Jordan River as you used in previous passages.

Balak, who was king of the people of Moab, called Balaam to **curse** the Israelites. When you curse someone, you wish that something bad will happen to them. People believed that a curse would come true. For more information on curse, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for curse as you used in previous passages.

However, Yahweh caused Balaam to **bless** the Israelites instead. When God blesses a person, God is doing, or promising to do, something good for that person. When a human speaks a blessing over another person, they are praying that God will do good things for this other person. For more information on bless, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for bless as you used in previous passages.

Yahweh destroyed the **Amorites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hittites, Girgashites, Hivites, and Jebusites**. These are all other people groups in Canaan who did not worship Yahweh. Use the same words or phrases for these people groups as you used in previous passages.

Yahweh says that he has given **vineyards** and **olive groves** to the Israelites. A vineyard is a garden where people grow fruit called grapes on a tree called a grapevine. Olive groves were gardens where people grew fruit called olives on trees. If you planted these trees and grapevines from a seed, they would need to grow for several years before they grew olives or grapes. Both grapes and olives were important crops for the Israelites.

Stop here and look at photos of vineyards and a grove of olive trees, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss as a group what words or phrases you will use for **vineyard** and **olive grove**. Look up vineyard 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.

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.

Joshua 24:1–13

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Joshua 24:14–28

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 24:14–28 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 24:14–28 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.

5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 24:14–28 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Joshua has been repeating Yahweh's words about what Yahweh has done for Israel. Now, Joshua will ask the people to choose which god they will serve: Yahweh, who has saved and protected them, or other gods. If the Israelites choose Yahweh, they must only worship Yahweh. After making sure that the Israelites understand how serious this choice is, Joshua writes down their promise in a covenant with Yahweh and sets up a stone as a reminder for this promise.

Because Yahweh has proved himself to be a good and reliable God, Joshua urges the Israelites to fear Yahweh, or to have great respect and awe for Yahweh. They should serve Yahweh by worshiping him with their whole heart and obeying him faithfully and completely. If they serve Yahweh, they must serve only him. The Israelites must stop serving the gods that their ancestors worshiped near the Euphrates River and in Egypt. The Israelites must throw away all statues or images of those gods.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a time when you decided to stop a bad activity or habit. How did you show you were stopping? What did you do with all the items that you needed to do that activity? How did you keep yourself from doing that activity again? Pause this audio here.

Joshua gives the people a choice, because Yahweh does not force people to serve him. If the Israelites are not willing to obey Yahweh, then they must choose who they will serve. The Israelites can choose the gods whom their ancestors worshiped, before they worshiped Yahweh. Or they can choose the gods of the Amorites, whom Yahweh has defeated. However, Joshua declares that Joshua and everyone in his household, the other people who live with Joshua, will serve Yahweh.

The Israelites firmly declare that they will never abandon Yahweh and serve other gods, because Yahweh is the one who saved them. They repeat and agree with what Yahweh said earlier: Yahweh brought them out of Egypt. Yahweh showed them great signs and protected them. Yahweh gave them the land they live on. Yahweh has shown that he is their God, the Israelites say, so they will serve Yahweh.

Joshua warns the people that this is a serious promise to make and Joshua wants them to think carefully. Joshua says that it is not easy to serve Yahweh. The Israelites have already served false gods and shown that they cannot serve Yahweh alone! Yahweh is holy. No other God is like Yahweh. Yahweh is also jealous, which means that Yahweh requires total obedience. Yahweh will not allow the Israelites to serve other gods as well as Yahweh. Yahweh has always been good to the Israelites, but they must never start serving other gods. If they do, Yahweh will not forgive that sin or disobedience. Yahweh will turn against the Israelites and punish them until he has completely destroyed them. Yahweh already told this to the Israelites when he gave them his law. The Israelites must completely understand this agreement and be prepared to do what they promise.

The people exclaim, "No, we will not serve other gods!" Again they say that they will serve Yahweh. Because of what they have said, Joshua says that the people are witnesses against themselves that they have chosen to serve Yahweh. Like a witness tells the truth about what they have seen in front of a judge, the Israelites will have to tell the truth about their broken promise to Yahweh if they serve other gods. Their own words will prove that they are guilty if they stop serving only Yahweh. The Israelites agree that they will be witnesses.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Discuss what would happen if a group of people made an important promise and broke it in your culture. How would people show that the group broke their promise? Who would give evidence, or proof, of how the people broke their promise? Pause this audio here.

Again, Joshua reminds the people that they must get rid of any other gods, or anything that they love or worship like a god. Instead, they must promise their loyalty to Yahweh. So the Israelites promise that they will serve only Yahweh, who is their God. They promise to obey all his commands.

So on that day when the people are gathered at Shechem, Joshua makes a covenant, or a solemn promise between them and Yahweh. Like the covenant at Mount Sinai, this one also includes the same laws and rules for the Israelites, which Joshua tells them they must obey. Joshua writes down everything that they have said and decided in the scroll of God's laws for his people. People made scrolls by writing on a long piece of parchment or papyrus, which was like paper, and then rolling it up.

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

Then Joshua gets a large stone and sets it up under a large terebinth tree. Sometimes this tree is also called an oak tree.

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

This tree was at a holy place, and may have been the same place that Abraham and Jacob built altars to Yahweh. Joshua tells the people to look at and remember this stone. It will be a witness, or reminder, of what the people have promised. Because the stone is there when the people spoke their promise, it is like the stone heard the promise. When the Israelites see this stone, they will remember the promise they made near the stone. So the stone will remind the Israelites not to rebel against their God.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, when people make an important decision or agreement, how do they remember this agreement? What objects do they use to help remind themselves of what they promised? Where do they put these reminders? Pause this audio here.

Then Joshua sends the people back to their own inheritances, the land that Yahweh had given them.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 24:14–28 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

This passage has five scenes.

In the first scene: Joshua gives the Israelites a choice to serve Yahweh or serve the gods of other people. Joshua announces that he and the people in his house will serve Yahweh.

In the second scene: The Israelites answer that they will serve Yahweh. Yahweh is their God and he brought them out of slavery to this land.

In the third scene: Joshua warns the Israelites how important this promise is. Yahweh is holy and will not accept any rivals. The people declare that they will serve only Yahweh.

In the fourth scene: Joshua explains the rules of this covenant. Joshua tells the people that they are witnesses against themselves, and the people agree. Then Joshua tells them to throw out other false gods and declare their loyalty to Yahweh. The people declare that they will serve Yahweh.

In the fifth scene: Joshua makes the covenant between the Israelites and Yahweh. Joshua sets up a stone as a reminder of this covenant. Then Joshua sends everyone back to the sections of land that Yahweh has given to them.

The characters in this passage are:

- Joshua and his household
- Yahweh
- The Israelite people
- The Israelites' ancestors
- And the Amorite people

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

After repeating Yahweh's words, Joshua now speaks to the people with his own words. Joshua urges the people to do two things: serve Yahweh and stop worshiping any other gods. The older Israelites have already made a solemn promise to worship Yahweh while they were in the wilderness. But they also chose to worship other gods as well. Joshua now wants all the Israelites to promise again to serve Yahweh and only Yahweh. Joshua speaks very clearly about how important this promise is, so that the Israelites will be prepared to keep their promise.

In the first scene, Joshua gives people a choice: to serve Yahweh or to serve other gods. Joshua urges them to fear Yahweh, or to treat Yahweh with deep respect and awe. If they serve Yahweh, they must serve him completely, faithfully, and sincerely. They cannot spend some of their time worshiping other gods. Instead, the people must stop worshiping the gods their ancestors worshiped while they were by the Euphrates River or in Egypt. They must throw out all statues or items that represent other gods.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: The people must serve Yahweh completely, with all their hearts. They must serve faithfully. They cannot serve Yahweh some of the time and then spend some time serving other gods. They must be sincere: their actions have to match what they say. Talk about what words you would use to describe the way the Israelites must serve Yahweh. Pause this audio here.

But, the people may decide that serving Yahweh is bad in their eyes, which means that it is too hard or they do not want to. If so, they can choose to serve other gods. They can choose the gods of their ancestors, ignoring all that Yahweh has done for them. Or they can choose the gods of the Amorites, whom Yahweh has defeated. Joshua is clear that they cannot serve both Yahweh and other gods.

Joshua, as their leader, sets a good example and announces that he chooses to serve Yahweh. Everyone who lives in Joshua's house will also do the same.

The people announce their decision in the second scene. The Israelites exclaim that they would never be unfaithful to Yahweh and serve other gods! "May this never happen," they say! Yahweh is their God, who saved them from slavery in Egypt and brought them safely to this land. They agree that Yahweh is the one who defeated the other people groups who lived in the land. So the Israelites say that they will serve Yahweh, because he alone is the Israelites' God.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your language, what expressions do you use to show that something could never happen or that you would never do a certain thing? As an activity, suggest to each other incredible or impossible events, and then discuss how you would respond. Pause this audio here.

In the third scene, Joshua makes sure the people understand how important this agreement is. Joshua tells them that it is not easy to serve Yahweh. Joshua tells them that they are not able to follow Yahweh correctly, with faithfulness and sincerity. To show how hard it is, Joshua exaggerates, saying they are not able to serve Yahweh! Even now, though Yahweh has been leading the Israelites for years, Joshua still has to tell the Israelites to get rid of false gods!

Yahweh is holy and different from other gods. Yahweh is jealous, which means that he will not let his people worship useless and evil gods. Yahweh will not forgive their sin if they do. While the Israelites were in the wilderness, Yahweh spoke to them and told them how to worship him. Yahweh told them he would give them good things if they obeyed him, but punish them if they did not. So, Joshua says, if the Israelites sin against Yahweh and disobey him by serving other gods, Yahweh will punish them. Just like Yahweh has given them good things that he promised, he will also punish them for their sin, just like he promised.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story about a time when you were making an important promise or agreement with someone else. Since it was so important, how did you prepare to make this promise? What did you do to make sure you both understood what you would have to do? Pause this audio here.

The Israelites respond with a strong "no," saying that they will not serve other gods! They choose to serve Yahweh!

In the fourth scene, Joshua makes sure the Israelites understand the rules of this promise. If they agree, the Israelites will be their own witnesses. Like witnesses in front of a judge, the Israelites themselves will have to confess and be proof of their own disobedience if they ever break their promise. The people agree that they are witnesses.

Then Joshua repeats the second part of the promise: to get rid of any other gods. Some of the Israelites still worshiped other gods as well as Yahweh. They probably had statues of foreign gods, perhaps with them now or in their homes. Joshua tells them to decide right now to stop serving these gods. And when they went home, the people would then get rid of anything they used to serve those other gods. Joshua tells the Israelites to promise their loyalty to Yahweh now. And the people do: they say that Yahweh is their God. They promise that they will worship only Yahweh and obey all his commands.

In the fifth scene, Joshua officially makes the covenant on that same day. The people promise to serve Yahweh, and Joshua, as Yahweh's representative, makes the covenant or solemn agreement. This covenant had laws which the people had to obey. Joshua explains the laws and instructs the people to follow them. Joshua writes down the agreement, the laws, and everything he and the people said in the scroll, or long piece of parchment, which listed God's laws for his people. Since it is an important book, people would keep it safe, so the record of the agreement would also be safe.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, how do you record important agreements or promises? Where do you keep these records? Pause this audio here.

Then Joshua sets up a large stone as a reminder. This stone would probably be a tall and wide stone, so that people could easily see and remember it. Other people may have helped Joshua roll the stone to a holy place under a tree. This may be the same place where Abraham had worshiped Yahweh and Jacob had gotten rid of the false gods from his house. Since this was a holy place, no one would move the stone, so it would stay there a long time for people to see.

Joshua tells the people to look at this stone now. Like a witness who hears an agreement between two people and reminds them of what they said, this stone is also a witness. It is here to remind the people of what they promised if they ever serve other gods.

Now that Joshua has done all he can to make sure the people understand, he sends them all back to their homes.

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 Joshua 24:14–28 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:

- Joshua and his household
- Yahweh
- The Israelite people
- The Israelites' ancestors
- And the Amorite 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.

Now Joshua speaks to the Israelite people with his own words: "Because of what Yahweh has done, honor and fear Yahweh. Serve him wholeheartedly! Throw away the idols your ancestors worshiped by the Euphrates River and in Egypt. Instead, only serve Yahweh! But, if you are not willing to obey Yahweh, then decide today what god you will obey. You will have to choose between the gods that your ancestors worshiped in the land beyond the Euphrates River and the gods that the Amorites worship in the land where you are now living. But I and everyone in my family have decided to obey Yahweh."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I care for the Israelites and want to prepare them to do well even after I am gone. The best way for them to live is to serve only Yahweh!" or
- "Since I am their leader, the Israelites will pay attention to what I do. I will set a good example for them to follow by announcing that I will serve Yahweh," or
- "I hope the Israelites will understand how it would be useless to follow these other gods, when Yahweh has shown that he is far more powerful than both these other people groups and their gods!"

The people answer, "We would never serve other gods! It was indeed Yahweh, our God, who brought us out of Egypt where we were slaves. He showed us incredible signs. On our way here we traveled through the territory of many nations, but Yahweh always kept us safe. When we got here, the Amorites were living in this land, but Yahweh drove them all out for us. We will serve Yahweh, for he alone is our God."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelite people, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "We have seen how Yahweh has protected us and are amazed. Of course we want to follow him!" or
- "I grew up in the wilderness worshiping Yahweh. Yahweh is our God, the God of my people, not the people we were fighting. This is not a hard choice to make," or
- "I want Yahweh to continue to bless and protect me, so I am going to choose to follow him."

But Joshua says to the people, "You may not be able to serve Yahweh. He is holy; no other gods are like him. Yahweh demands that you worship only him. If you worship other gods, Yahweh will not forgive you. Yahweh has always been good to you, but you must never quit worshiping him and start worshiping other gods. If you do, Yahweh will turn against you and punish you until he has completely destroyed you."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I am worried for the Israelites. I know they have served other gods in the past and I worry that when I am gone, they will stop serving Yahweh again," or
- "I want the people to understand how important this promise is. They must make every effort to keep this promise, because there is a serious punishment if they do not," or
- "Yahweh is so holy, so completely different and better than anyone else that he deserves all worship. I want Israel to see and understand that worshiping Yahweh is the best and right way to live!"

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I am completely trustworthy. When I promise something, I will do it. I promised good things to the Israelites, and I am giving them good things. If they disobey me, I will punish them like I said I would," or
- "I care so much about the Israelites and want what is best for them. I do not want them spending their time serving false gods who cannot help them!" or
- "I created this world and the best way to live in it. I have told the people the right way to live, and they can continue to learn as they serve me."

"No, we will not serve other gods," the people reply. "We will serve Yahweh!"

Then Joshua says, "You are your own witnesses. You said, 'We have chosen to serve Yahweh!'"

The people agree, "Yes, we are witnesses."

Joshua says, "Some of you still have idols of foreign gods with you. Destroy all of them and promise your loyalty to Yahweh, the God of Israel."

So the people promise, "Yahweh is our God. We will worship only him and obey all his commands."

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelite people, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I am thankful to Yahweh for all he has done, and want to show that by serving him faithfully!" or
- "I realize how important this promise is. I will remind my family and friends of their promise and hope they do the same for me," or
- "Everyone else is promising to follow Yahweh, so I suppose I will do the same. I do not want to be left out."

So on that day, when the people are together at Shechem, Joshua makes a covenant between them and Yahweh. This covenant includes laws and rules for the Israelites to obey. Joshua writes down everything they say and decide in the book of God's laws for his people.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "It pleases me when my people gather together and choose to do the right thing," or
- "I do not feel happy when I punish people for their disobedience. I want to give the people many reminders, like the book of the law, and each other, so that they will remember to obey me," or
- "I am not asking the Israelites to do anything unreasonable—I am just asking them to serve me like they promised to do when they were in the wilderness!"

To remind the Israelites of their agreement, Joshua finds a big stone. Joshua sets it up in a holy place under a tree. Then Joshua speaks to the people again: "Take a close look at this stone! It has heard everything that Yahweh has said to us. It is here to remind you not to rebel against our God."

Then Joshua sends everyone back to their homes on the land Yahweh gave them.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I have done all that Yahweh has asked me to do. Now I must trust the people to keep their promise and trust Yahweh to take care of them," or
- "As they settle into this new land, the Israelites will have a lot to focus on, such as setting up their homes and learning how to live here. I hope they will look at reminders like this stone or the book of God's laws so that they will not forget their promise."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 24:14–28 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Joshua urges the people to **fear** Yahweh. Here, fear means to have reverence, honor, and respect for God. People show this fear by obeying God because of the respect they have for God, not because they are afraid of cruelty from God. For more information on fear, refer to fear of God in the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for fear as you used in previous passages.

Yahweh is God's proper name. Yahweh is a unique name—no other religion in the land around Israel used a name like this for their god. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for Yahweh as you used in previous passages.

Joshua tells the people to get rid of the **gods** their ancestors served. These gods are false gods, not Yahweh. The people probably used idols, which are objects that people make in order to worship a god. Joshua is telling them

to get rid of these idols and stop worshiping these gods. Both Joshua and the people use the general term God for Yahweh when they discuss which god they will serve. For more information on God and other false gods, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for gods and for the general term for the creator God as you used in previous passages.

A person's **ancestors** are their parents, grandparents, and past generations from the same family. Use the same word or phrase for ancestor as you used in previous passages.

Joshua says that he and his **household** will serve Yahweh. In the Bible, a household means all the people who are living together in one house. People also used the word "house" instead of "household." For more information on household, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for household as you used in previous passages.

The Israelites agree that Yahweh brought them to the **Amorites'** land. Use the same word or phrase for Amorite as you used in previous passages.

The people declare that they will follow Yahweh, who showed them great **signs**. Sign is another word for miracle, which is something that happens that is very unusual and surprising and seems impossible. God performs signs to show the people that he is powerful and that they can trust him.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **sign**. Look up signs 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 people say that Yahweh **drove out** the Canaanites before them, meaning Yahweh defeated the Canaanites and caused them to leave the land. Use the same word or phrase for "drove out" as you used in previous passages.

Joshua tells the people that Yahweh is **holy**. This means God is completely good, completely pure, powerful, and majestic. It means that God is whole, complete, and unchangeable. He is completely different than anyone or anything that exists. Joshua later sets up a stone at a holy place. 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. For more information on holy, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for holy as you used in previous passages.

Joshua also says that Yahweh is **jealous**. Here, this means that Yahweh will not tolerate any rivals. This does not mean that God is petty or suspicious. He simply does not want his people to waste their time worshiping useless gods who do not love them.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for **jealous**. 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 that Yahweh will not **forgive** their sin if they worship other gods. To forgive someone who has done something bad to you, you stop being angry with that person. You do not punish them. Just like Yahweh told them before, if the people worship other gods, Yahweh will punish the people.

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

Sin is an act of rebellion against God. Any time that a person disobeys God's laws, they sin. For more information on sin, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for sin as you used in previous passages.

Joshua tells the people that they are **witnesses** for this promise. A witness is someone who declares the truth about something that they have seen. Use the same word or phrase for witness as you used in previous passages.

When the people agree, Joshua makes a **covenant** between the people and Yahweh. When people make a covenant, they make a solemn promise to each other that they cannot break. For more information on covenant, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for covenant as you used in previous passages.

Joshua writes all this down in the **Book or Scroll of the Law of God**. The Law was a set of instructions that God has given the people of Israel. People wrote down the Law on a scroll, or a long strip of papyrus or parchment. Papyrus is a thin sheet that people make from the fibers of a certain plant, and parchment is made from the skin of an animal. On both ends of the scroll people attached a narrow wooden handle, like a round stick. When people were reading from a scroll, they would unroll one side of the scroll, and roll up the other end around the stick. For more information on Law, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for "Book or Scroll of the Law of God" as you used in previous passages.

Stop here and look at a picture of a scroll as a group as 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.

Joshua 24:14–28

Audio Content

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Joshua 24:29–33

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Joshua 24:29–33 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 24:29–33 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 Joshua 24:29–33 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

In the last few passages, Joshua has urged the Israelites to serve Yahweh and they have agreed to a covenant to do so. Not long afterwards, Joshua dies and the people bury him. Joshua has completed the task Yahweh gave him. The Israelites are safely in their new home and are serving Yahweh. The people also bury Joseph's bones, which they brought with them from Egypt, and they bury Eleazar, the high priest. The remains of all these men are now buried in the land God had promised to their ancestors.

Some time after the big gathering in the last section, Joshua, the son of Nun, dies. Joshua was a "servant of Yahweh," just like Moses. Joshua's long life of 110 years was a sign of God's blessing. The people bury Joshua in his own land, the inheritance God gave to him. The people buried Joshua at a town called Timnath Serah, which was north of a mountain called Gaash. While we are not sure where exactly the mountain was, the town was in the hilly land where the Ephraimites lived.

Stop here and look at a map of Canaan as a group. Look for the hill country of Ephraim, as well as the town of Timnath Serah. Pause this audio here.

After Joshua died, the people of Israel did serve Yahweh for a while. Their elders or leaders who still lived after Joshua died were leading the people, and these elders had seen what Yahweh had done for Israel in the

wilderness and as they took over Canaan. These elders probably reminded the Israelites of their promise to serve Yahweh. So while these elders were alive, the Israelites were faithful to Yahweh.

One of the ways that the Israelites were faithful was by taking care of Joseph's remains. Remember, Joseph was the Israelites' ancestor, who helped bring the Israelites to Egypt. Before he died, Joseph had asked his brothers to promise that they would bring his bones to the Promised Land. The Israelites keep that promise when they bury those bones at Shechem, in the land Jacob had purchased for his family. This is the land that Joseph's descendants now own and live on, which Yahweh had promised to give them. Though the Israelites probably didn't bury Joseph at the same time they buried Joshua, the writer included this information here because it shows that Yahweh has done everything he said he would, even the promises from long ago.

Stop here and look at a map of Canaan as a group. Look for the town of Shechem.

Discuss this question as a group: After Joseph died, people put salt and spices on his body and wrapped it in fine cloth to preserve his bones for over 450 years. In your culture, how do people discuss or prepare for their own burial rituals? What are some things they ask for? How do their descendants try to honor their requests? Pause this audio here.

When the priest Eleazar, the son of Aaron, dies, the people also bury him in the hilly land of the Ephraimites. They bury him at Gibeah, which could be either a hill or a town that belonged to Eleazar's son, Phinehas.

The Israelites bury all three men in the land where their descendants, or relatives, now live. Since these people would take care of the burial places, these were good places to bury these men's bodies. The Israelites will not have to worry about other people disturbing the burial sites.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, what kind of places are good to bury people who have died? Why is the location important?

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 24:29–33 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 four scenes.

In the first scene: Joshua dies, and the Israelites bury his body at Timnath Serah.

In the second scene: The Israelites serve Yahweh during Joshua's lifetime and during the lifetime of the elders who have seen what Yahweh has done for Israel.

In the third scene: One way that the Israelites are faithful is by burying Joseph's bones at Shechem.

In the fourth scene: Eleazar dies and the Israelites bury his body at Phinehas's land.

The characters in this passage are:

- Joshua
- Yahweh
- The Israelites, including Joseph's descendants
- The elders
- Joseph
- Jacob
- The descendants of Hamor
- Eleazar
- And Phinehas, Eleazar's son

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

Joshua's story ends with his death and burial, but there are also two other burials at the conclusion. These men did not die in the listed order, nor were they buried one after another. The people probably buried Joseph's bones several years before the last section. However, all these burials are together at the end of the book to show that the book's main story is completed. It is important to remember that this story just says that the people buried Joshua, Joseph, and Eleazar, but it does not tell us how they buried them. In those times, people often put the bodies of dead people in caves in the sides of hills, or in shallow holes in the ground on top of which they built monuments. This story just uses general language for what people do with dead bodies.

Remember, this whole book has been a story of how Yahweh fulfilled his promise to Abraham to give the people this land. Joseph, at the time of his death, looked forward in faith to when Yahweh would fulfill that promise. So Joseph asked his descendants to bury his bones in that land. Joshua helped the Israelites get the land. Eleazar helped distribute the pieces of land to the people. Yahweh has fulfilled his promise and these men's work is done. So now the Israelites can bury these men's bodies in the land Yahweh has given to them.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, when you are telling a traditional story, or a story of someone's life, how do you end your story? How do you explain that the characters' work, or the story's purpose, is done? Pause this audio here.

In the first scene, Joshua dies some unknown amount of time after the people gathered in the last section. This section is a formal announcement, listing his father's name, his honorable title, and his age. After the Israelites complete their grieving rituals and burial preparations, they bury Joshua's body in his own land. This land, which was Joshua's inheritance, is at a town called Timnath Serah in the hill country of Ephraim.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, when you are briefly announcing a person's death, what kind of information do you include? Why are these things important to remember at a person's death? Pause this audio here.

The second scene describes the impact Joshua had on the Israelites. While Joshua was alive, the Israelites followed Yahweh. And after Joshua dies, the Israelites still have leaders who have seen what Yahweh has done for Israel. The Israelites continue to serve Yahweh during the lifetime of those leaders.

The third scene is about Joseph's burial. Many years ago, the Israelites' ancestor Jacob had bought a piece of land from the descendants of Hamor, the father of Shechem. Jacob had paid the descendants of Hamor 100 pieces of silver for this land. Joseph, before he died in Egypt, asked his descendants to bury his body in the land Yahweh promised to the Israelites. Joseph's descendants carefully preserved his bones. When the Israelites left Egypt, they brought Joseph's bones with them. They had carefully and respectfully carried the bones with them through their journeys, and then buried the bones in that piece of land that Jacob had bought at Shechem. This was the same land that Joseph's descendants now owned and lived in.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: As an activity, tell a story about something you did at an important historical place. At some point in the story, stop and explain why the place is important because of

what happened at this place in the past. Pay attention to how and when you choose to tell the place's background, or the second story that goes with your story about what you did. Pause this audio here.

The fourth scene is about Eleazar's death and burial. When Eleazar the son of Aaron dies, the Israelites also bury him in the hilly country of Ephraim. They bury him at Gibeah, a town or a hill which belonged to Eleazar's son Phinehas.

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 Joshua 24:29–33 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:

- Joshua
- Yahweh
- The Israelites, including Joseph's descendants
- The Elders
- Joseph
- Jacob
- The descendants of Hamor
- Eleazar
- And Phinehas, Eleazar's son

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.

Some time later, Yahweh's servant Joshua, the son of Nun, died. Joshua was 110 years old at the time. The Israelites buried him in his own land at Timnath Serah, in the hilly country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joshua, "What are you feeling or thinking as you will soon die?" The person might answer things like:

- "I have done the work God has given to me and I am glad to see that the Israelites are in their new home," or
- "I have done all I can to urge the Israelites to serve Yahweh. I hope they will continue to do so even after I die," or
- "I feel peaceful, living in my own land and knowing that after I die, I will be buried here."

After Joshua died, the Israelites remained faithful to Yahweh for a while. Their leaders had seen everything that Yahweh had done for Israel. So the people remained faithful to Yahweh as long as those leaders were alive.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing the Israelites, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I was not alive when Yahweh led our people from Egypt, but my leaders remind me of the amazing things Yahweh did! It is easier to serve Yahweh when I remember how amazing he is," or
- "Sometimes, I think it would be easier not to serve Yahweh, but then my leaders remind me that it is the best way to live. I am glad they are here to remind me," or
- "I am sad that Joshua has died. When he was in charge, I was not worried because he led so well! I hope our other leaders also lead us well."

Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I know my people can forget how good it is to follow me, so I will give them leaders who help remind them and lead them well," or
- "I am pleased by the way Joshua and the other leaders have encouraged the people and led them well. I am also pleased when my people serve me and are in good relationship with me!" or
- "I am glad that people follow me when their leaders encourage them to, but I also want people to follow me because they want to. I want them to rejoice as they serve and worship me!"

Many years ago the Israelites' ancestor Jacob had bought a piece of land from the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem. Jacob had paid them 100 pieces of money for this land. When the Israelites left Egypt, they brought the bones of their ancestor Joseph with them. They buried the bones in that piece of land that Jacob had bought at Shechem. This was the same land that Joseph's descendants now owned.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Joseph, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I have so much trust that Yahweh will fulfill his promise that I do not want people to bury me anywhere but in the land Yahweh said he will give to our people," or
- "I hope my bones will be a reminder to my descendants to trust in Yahweh as they wait for him to fulfill his promise," or
- "I am sad that I will not see the day my people live in the land Yahweh gives them, but I still look forward hopefully to when my descendants will."

When Eleazar son of Aaron died, the Israelites buried him at Gibeah. This town or a hill was in the hilly country of Ephraim and belonged to Eleazar's son Phinehas.

Pause the drama.

Ask the person playing Phinehas, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- "I am sad that my father has died, but I am glad that he served Yahweh all his life and completed the work Yahweh gave to him," or
- "It is a blessing that I now own land and can bury my father in honor here. I do not have to bury him beside the road in the wilderness or in someone else's land where people may destroy his grave," or
- "I will do my best to serve Yahweh as a priest, just like my father did. I want to follow his example to honor him."

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Joshua 24:29–33 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

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

Joshua was a servant of **Yahweh**. Yahweh is God's proper name. Yahweh is a unique name—no other religion in the land around Israel used a name like this for their god. For more information on Yahweh, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for Yahweh as you used in previous passages.

A **servant** is a man or a woman who works for another person. While a servant is often a low position, "servant of Yahweh" is an honorable title. For more information on servant, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for servant as you used in previous passages.

The Israelites bury Joshua in the hill country of **Ephraim**. Ephraim was one of the sons of Joseph and is also the name of the tribe of Ephraim's descendants. Use the same word or phrase for the hill country of Ephraim as you used in previous passages.

The land of Ephraim is the land of Joshua's **inheritance**. Use the same word or phrase for inheritance as you used in previous passages.

Israel, or the **Israelites**, serve Yahweh during the lifetime of certain elders. Here, Israel refers to the people descended from Israel, or Jacob. For more information on Israelites, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for the people of Israel as you used in previous passages.

An **elder** is a person with authority in the community. For more information on elders, refer to the Master Glossary. Use the same word or phrase for elder as you used in previous passages.

The Israelites **bury** Joshua's body, Joseph's bones, and Eleazar's body. Use a general word for what you do with people's bodies or bones after they 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.

Joshua 24:29–33

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