



GOALS

Through this session students will...

- learn that God gives each of us a choice to respond with obedience and blessing or disobedience and curses.
- learn of the distractions that eventually led Israel away from God.
- track Israel's obedience to see how well they maximized their ministry potential as a group.
- be challenged to examine themselves and your group to see what things might be distracting them from full obedience to God.

MATERIALS: Group

- whiteboard and markers

MATERIALS: Each Student

- student journal pages for Session 3 (which includes the Scripture)
- a Bible and pen (Students should bring their own Bibles. You can decide if you would like them to use a physical Bible or a Bible app like, "YouVersion.")
- colored pencils/highlighters for students

Leading Up to the Session:

Consider connecting with students who missed your last session. Offer to bring them up to speed on what they missed and let them know how much you value their role in your group.

Second, keep the mission statement out in front of your group this week. Encourage students to review the mission statement from their journal pages or from whatever creative means that you used to give them the mission statement. Challenge them to apply the principles and purposes that they selected to their lives this week.

Review any social media interaction or texting between your group regarding your last session. You may want to send a message out as a memory jogger or thought provoker.

Don't forget your prayer team! Update your team by giving them copies of the mission statement that your team crafted. Encourage them to pray for courage and faithfulness for your group as you seek to live out this mission. You may even consider giving your prayer team a list of student names so they can pray specifically for each student.

SESSION INTRO

Prayer

Once everyone has arrived and settled, begin your session with a time of prayer. Pray for God's guidance through this session. Pray that your group would learn from God's Word how to remain faithful to God and continue to receive His blessings. Pray for the strength for your group to continue to honor God by persevering in the mission that God has set before you.

Review

After prayer begin with a short review of the previous session. Here are a few bullet points to get you started:

- God gave Israel the Law so that they might be set apart from other nations.

- Israel's commitment to the Law would ultimately lead other nations to recognize Israel's God.
- Abiding by the Law would allow Israel to receive the promise that God had made to them.
- Israel initially responded favorably to this deal from God and agreed to follow His commands.

Open

Before diving in, take a moment to review the mission statement that your group created last week. Talk through how the group implemented the mission with these questions:

In what ways did our group mission filter into your week?

What changes have you made in order to live out the mission?

What is one way that living this mission has impacted your life this week?

DIGGING IN

Explain the following in your own words:

The book of Deuteronomy records Moses' final speech to the people of Israel before they finally moved into the Promised Land and before Moses handed the reigns of leadership over to Joshua. In the passage we will be reading Moses reviews God's laws with the Israelites and reminds them of the blessings that come along with obedience to their God as well as consequences of disobedience.

Distribute the colored pencils or highlighters to your group. Have students read Deuteronomy 30:15-18 which is printed on their journal pages. As they read, have them note the following:

- 1. Mark all commands given to Israel.**
- 2. Underline any blessings that come from obeying these commands.**

Give students time to work through this activity individually or in small groups of two or three.

As students are completing their exercise, draw two columns on your whiteboard similar to the diagram below. (But no answers yet.)

God's Commands of Israel	Blessings from Obedience
-Love the Lord -Walk in His Ways -Keep his commands and decrees	-you will live and increase -you will live and increase -the Lord will bless you in the land you are possessing

As students finish, encourage them to share what they found regarding commands and blessings from obeying those commands. As they share record their responses on your board. Make sure that they cover the responses provided above. If they miss any answers, point them back to specific verses.

Now have students read the passage again and note the following:

- 1. Mark warnings that God gives Israel.**
- 2. Underline any consequences of disobedience.**

Once again allow students to work in small groups or alone. As they are working, draw two columns on the whiteboard similar to the diagram below. (As before, no answers yet.)

God's Warnings to Israel	Consequences of Disobedience
-If your heart turns away -If you are not obedient -If you are drawn away to other Gods	-You will be destroyed -You will NOT live long in the land

As students finish, encourage them to share what they found. As they share record their responses on your board. Make sure that they cover the responses provided above. If they miss any answers, point them back to specific verses.

TAKING IT INWARD

Explain that this passage represents the relationship between God and Israel and discuss the following questions.

Why do you think that God has to include consequences for disobedience to him? Wouldn't the blessings that come along with obedience be enough for Israel to obey?

What kind of blessings can you expect from your professor / boss / supervisor / coach if you are obedient? What are some consequences for disobedience?

God's law and commands were His expectations for an ongoing relationship with Israel. What kind of expectations do we have for people whom we have relationships with? What kind of expectations do you have for friends or roommates? How about for girlfriend or boyfriend?

Are the expectations you have for people in your life important to you? Why?

Have you ever been in a situation where you had to spell out some of these expectations to someone else? Is it easier to let them know your expectations up front, or after they have let you down?

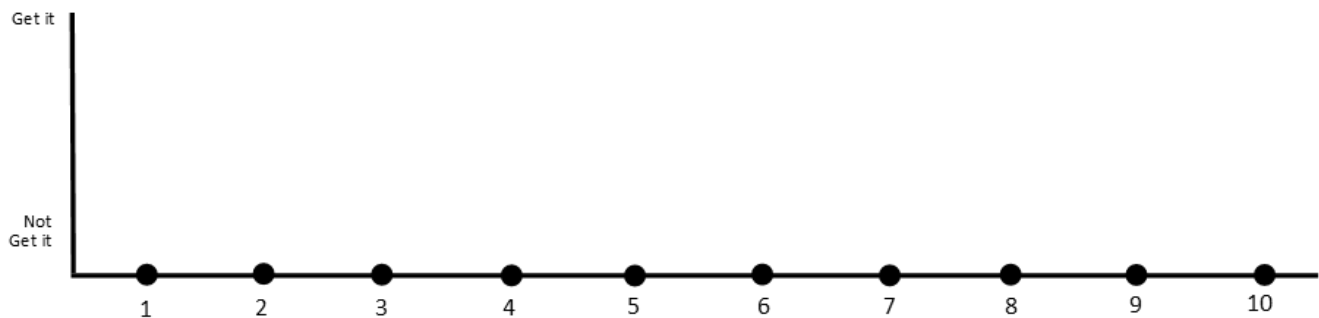
Based upon what we have discussed, do you think that God is being severe or harsh communicating His expectations to Israel, or was this actually an act of love? How so?

What are characteristics of God that we learn about from this interaction with Israel?

What would you say God's primary concerns for Israel are based upon this interaction?

DIGGING DEEPER

Share with your students that the following passages will help them see whether Israel kept God's laws and commands that led to God's blessing, or whether they chose to disobey and experience the consequences that God warned them about. Draw a chart similar to below on your whiteboard.



The verse references are noted on the student journal pages; students will need to read them from a Bible or Bible app. Assign each passage to a different student and have him or her read to the group. (Make certain that anyone you choose is comfortable reading aloud in front of a group). After each student reads the passage, work as a group to plot Israel's obedience on the chart.

Option: you may want to consider having your students do this exercise in solitude

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|--------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Exodus 12:50-51 | 6. Judges 10:6-7 |
| 2. Exodus 14:10-12 | 7. 2 Chronicles 33:1-6 |
| 3. Exodus 16:1-3 | 8. 2 Chronicles 33:21-23 |
| 4. Exodus 17:3 | 9. 2 Kings 17:5-7 |
| 5. Judges 2:11-12 | 10. 2 Kings 25:8-12 |

After the above verses have been read and dots have been plotted, take a moment to connect the dots of Israel's obedience.

TAKING IT INWARD

Ask the group to take a moment to look at the chart. Then discuss the following questions:

What can we see about Israel's obedience from this diagram?

- They didn't always live in obedience to God's laws
- They weren't always faithful
- Their obedience changed over time

What do we learn about God's faithfulness to His promises (even the ones that deal with consequences)?

- He is faithful to keep His promises of blessings when we obey
- He is also faithful in allowing us to experience the consequences that He warned us about when we are disobedient

If you could boil down Israel's problem to just one or two things based upon what we just read, what would you say?

- Israel got distracted and turned away from God to follow other gods
- They didn't fully trust God at times

PUTTING INTO PRACTICE

Share:

Over the past couple of weeks we've looked at how God brought Israel together as a nation. What was God's purpose for forming this nation?

- To set them apart and make them holy*
- To allow other nations to recognize God through His people*

In the same way that God brought Israel together, God has set events in motion to bring us together as a group.

What events have led us to come together as a group?

- Encourage students to talk through some of the ways that God has been instrumental in bringing your group together.*

The questions below are printed on your students' journal pages. Invite them to take a couple minutes to read the questions and then choose two they'd like to answer. After allowing time for them to answer their two questions, move through the questions. Invite students to answer the questions they responded to. Their responses can serve as a catalyst for group discussion of each question.

Just as God assembled Israel and gave them a purpose, He has done the same for our group. What kind of response does this demand from us?

We can learn a lot about what to do as well as what not to do from Israel. What behaviors or traits do we observe in Israel that we should adopt as a group? What are some behaviors we observe that we should avoid?

Have we already picked up some bad habits as a group that we need to ditch in order to become more like the group that God has called us to be? If so, what do we need to change?

We saw several times that the Israelites became distracted and forgot their primary purpose as well as their first priority, God. What are some things that might distract us from accomplishing our purpose?

What are some consequences that might come from being distracted from our purpose?

Do we really desire to maximize the potential for God to do something amazing in and through our group, or are we merely content with keeping things the way they always have been? What do we need to do about this?

Let's be real for a moment. In order for God to use this group, it will definitely cost each of us something. Following God always does. Are we really ready to give up anything, perhaps everything, to follow Him? What are you worried that following God might cost you?

How might God bless this group if we continue to strive for obedience and allow Him to use us?

Share in your own words:

God made it very clear to Israel that obedience to Him meant that they had chosen life. Disobedience on the other hand would only lead them to death. As you've just read, we saw both promises fulfilled in just a few generations. God places the same choice in front of us today, life or death, blessing or consequences, obedience or disobedience. What will we choose this day?

This final set of questions will help your group initiate action steps out of their convictions from this session.

What do we need to change in order to be used to our fullest potential?

What ways do we need to be more obedient?

What distractions do we need to watch out for?

How can we keep our focus upon God?