



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
- two plastic megaphones: you may need to ask around or purchase online (you will also need one for Session 8 so you may want to add that in)
- two orange safety cones: you can find these at Home Depot, Lowes, or possibly Wal-Mart
- black Sharpie Markers

MATERIALS: Each Student

- the 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.

Also, keep the mission statement in front of your group this week. Come up with some creative ways to keep them connected to their mission: shoot a quick video and post it on social media, see if a local business or theater will let you rent their marquee for a few days and put your mission on it Just remember the more memorable you make it, the better your students will remember it! Challenge them to apply the principles and purposes that they selected to their lives this week.

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.

Prayer

Begin this week's session with a time of prayer once everyone has arrived and settled in. 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.

Invite your group to form a circle and place two plastic megaphones in the middle of the circle. 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, encourage them to pick one color to mark any commands given to Israel. With a separate color have them mark any blessings that come from obeying these commands. You can choose to work through this activity as a group or consider breaking into smaller groups.

As students are reading and marking the passage, label your two megaphones: one "Commands" and the other "Blessings."

After a few minutes draw your group's attention to the megaphones. Ask for two volunteers to serve as recorders. Ask your group what commands they found and what blessings from obedience they found. Have your recorders write these on the appropriate megaphone.

| 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 share, 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 of Scripture once again. This time select two other colors. Use the first color to identify warnings that God gives Israel. The final color will be used to identify any consequences of disobedience that God warns them about.

As students are reading, place two orange safety cones in the middle of the group. Label one "warnings" and the other "consequence."

| 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 |

Ask for two other volunteers to write responses on the safety cones. 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

Share that this passage represents the relationship between God and Israel. To help students internalize this passage, 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?

Think about your earthly parents or grandparents. What are some of the expectations that they have for you? What happens when you keep these expectations? What are some consequences when you don't?

Why would people who love and care about you provide you with consequences for not obeying?

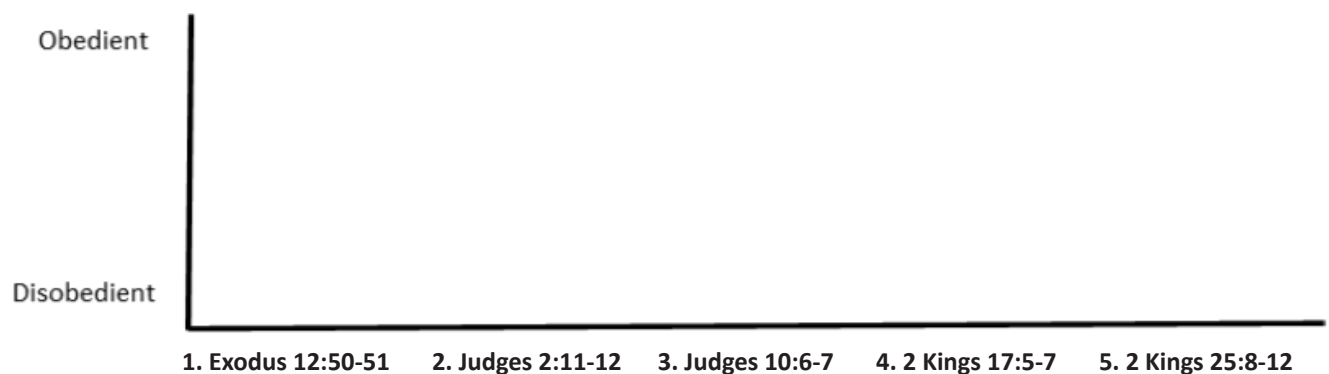
Think about your life from your first memory to now, how might your life have been different, or difficult, if your parents or family hadn't given you any guidelines or expectations along the way?

Do you have any expectations of people whom you have a relationship with (friends, boyfriend/girlfriend, teammates)? What kind of expectations do you have for them? Why are these expectations important to you?

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 passages are noted on the student journal pages. You may want to 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.



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

Let's be honest, if you made a similar diagram that recorded your faithfulness to God over time, would you notice that it changed over time too? What things keep us from being obedient to God all the time? What kinds of things distract us from God?

PUTTING INTO PRACTICE

Close your time by discussing your favorite three questions out of these listed below. After you ask each question, give students a moment to write a response on their journal pages under Putting Into Practice.

Just as God assembled Israel and gave them a purpose, He has done the same for our group. How, then, should we respond to God as a group?

Sometimes Israel got it right when it came to obeying God. Other times they messed up completely. What can we learn from Israel about how God responds to us when we are faithful and obey? What about when we disobey?

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 we might experience if we get so distracted that we forget what God has called us to?

Do we really want God to use this group for His mission even if it means putting away distractions in our lives? What if these are distractions that we enjoy?

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

Share with your group:

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?

Close your time out in prayer. Use the following questions to help guide your prayer.

- What do we need to change in order to be used to our fullest potential?
- What ways do we need to do to be more obedient?
- What distractions do we need to watch out for?
- How can we keep our focus upon God?