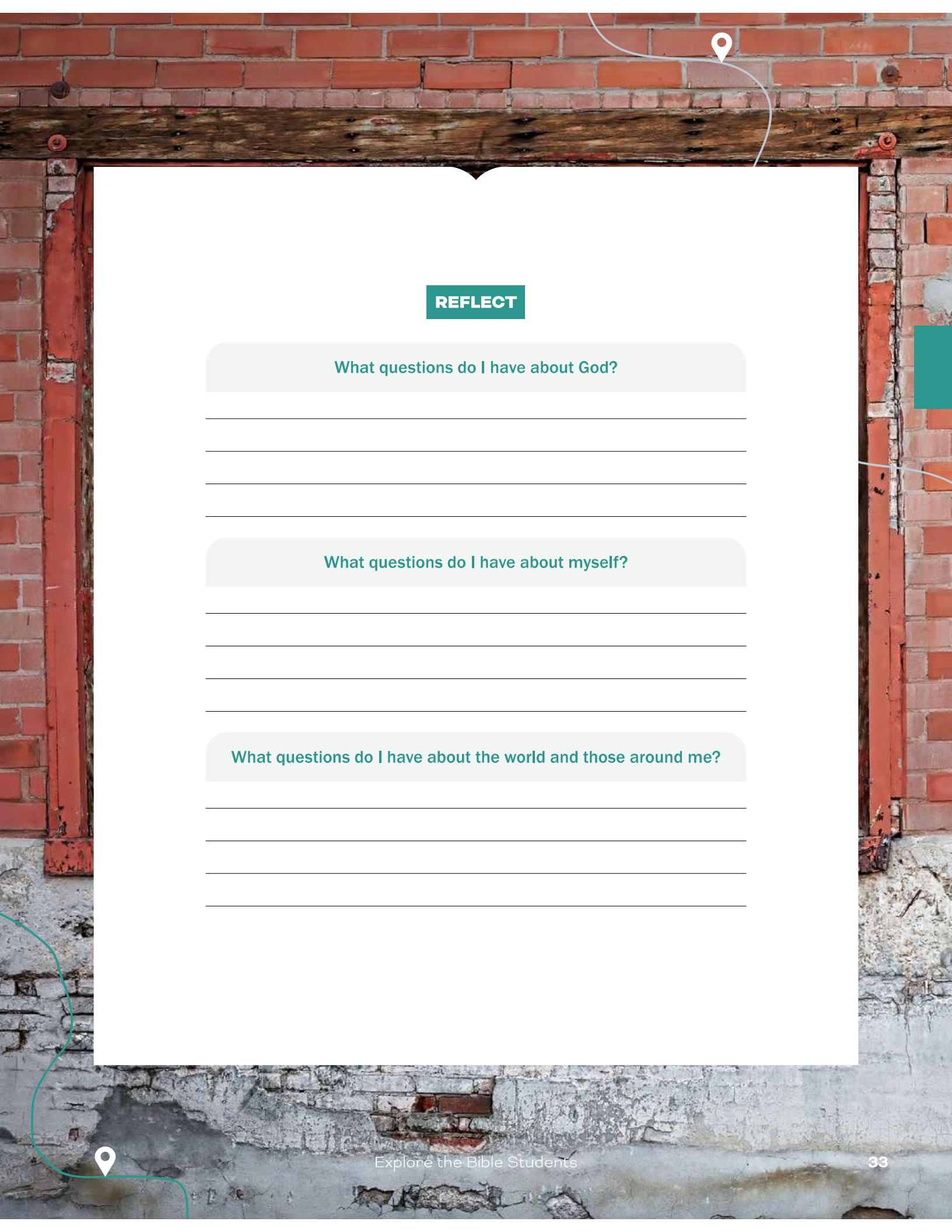


Session 04

Costly DISOBEDIENCE

CENTRAL TRUTH | We must remember God's character and cling to His promises.

Have you ever arrived somewhere, and it wasn't quite what it seemed, so you wanted to turn around? Maybe you showed up in a costume to a party where no one else was dressed up. Or your friends promised they'd be at the football game Friday, then backed out at the last minute. Maybe your family read reviews on this great mini golf place to check out on vacation, but you pulled in the parking lot and discovered the pictures were really outdated—and so was the course. We've all experienced that tingly sense of fear when we end up somewhere different than we expected. The same thing happened to the Israelites on their journey to the promised land. But their fear came from their failure to trust God. Through their story, we'll see that we must remember God's character and cling to His promises.



REFLECT

What questions do I have about God?

What questions do I have about myself?

What questions do I have about the world and those around me?

NUMBERS 14:1-4

¹ Then the whole community broke into loud cries, and the people wept that night. ² All the Israelites complained about Moses and Aaron, and the whole community told them, “If only we had died in the land of Egypt, or if only we had died in this

wilderness! ³ Why is the LORD bringing us into this land to die by the sword? Our wives and children will become plunder. Wouldn’t it be better for us to go back to Egypt?” ⁴ So they said to one another, “Let’s appoint a leader and go back to Egypt.”

NUMBERS 14:5-10

⁵ Then Moses and Aaron fell facedown in front of the whole assembly of the Israelite community. ⁶ Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh, who were among those who scouted out the land, tore their clothes ⁷ and said to the entire Israelite community, “The land we passed through and explored is an extremely good land. ⁸ If the LORD is pleased with us, he will bring us into this land, a

land flowing with milk and honey, and give it to us. ⁹ Only don’t rebel against the LORD, and don’t be afraid of the people of the land, for we will devour them. Their protection has been removed from them, and the LORD is with us. Don’t be afraid of them!” ¹⁰ While the whole community threatened to stone them, the glory of the LORD appeared to all the Israelites at the tent of meeting.

NUMBERS 14:18-23

¹⁸ The LORD is slow to anger and abounding in faithful love, forgiving iniquity and rebellion. But he will not leave the guilty unpunished, bringing the consequences of the fathers’ iniquity on the children to the third and fourth generation. ¹⁹ Please pardon the iniquity of this people, in keeping with the greatness of your faithful love, just as you have forgiven them from Egypt until now.” ²⁰ The LORD responded, “I have pardoned

them as you requested. ²¹ Yet as I live and as the whole earth is filled with the LORD’s glory, ²² none of the men who have seen my glory and the signs I performed in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tested me these ten times and did not obey me, ²³ will ever see the land I swore to give their ancestors. None of those who have despised me will see it.”

Day01

EXODUS 34:6-7



Refer to page 5 for a description of the 7 Arrows of Bible Reading.

📍 READ & RESPOND

This week, we continue exploring the story of Joshua and Caleb, who stood ready to enter the promised land, contrasting with the ten other scouts who feared the daunting inhabitants of Canaan. However, today's passage takes us back to Exodus, specifically with Moses on Mount Sinai a second time to receive a new set of commandments after the first were destroyed. This passage is considered one of the most important in Scripture due to its repetition (we will see it again later this week!). The characteristics of God listed here provide a concrete picture of God's nature. He is defined by both love and justice. As we will see, God is compassionate and merciful, but He will not tolerate disobedience. The Israelites were about to experience this balance firsthand.

🔄 Why do you think it is significant for God to reveal Himself in this way to Moses?

↑ God is described as "slow to anger" and "abounding in faithful love and truth." What does this tell you about how God deals with people who mess up?

→ Why can't God ignore our sin? How should we respond to His love and anger toward sin?

📍 MEMORIZE

On a piece of paper, write down **Numbers 14:18** five times. Doing this makes all the different parts of your brain turn on at the same time, which forces you to think about the information in a much deeper way.

📍 PRAY

Yahweh, You are both perfectly compassionate and perfectly just. Help me walk in obedience today.

Day02

NUMBERS 14:1-4

📍 READ & RESPOND

Even with Caleb's unwavering faith, the scouts swayed the Israelites into panic, turning on Moses and Aaron. In their lamenting, they foolishly wanted to go back to Egypt. These are the same people who saw firsthand as God miraculously and powerfully saved them from arguably the most powerful nation in the world, yet they want to return to that bondage. In our sin, humans—even among Christians—lose wisdom and discernment. Worry and fear can dominate our thought patterns and decisions can be irrational. That's what's happening here. In sight of the promised land, they're ready to give it all up, completely forgetting God's promises and rejecting God's plan.

🔄 Who did the people blame for their problems in verse 3?

← What did the Israelites' crying and complaining reveal about what they had forgotten about God's faithfulness and promises up to that point?

→ In tough situations, how can you choose to remember God's character instead of letting fear lead you to panic, irrational thinking, and sin?

📍 MEMORIZE

Using your phone, tablet, or computer, write out **Numbers 14:18** in a notes app using emojis. Be creative! Send the emojis to a few friends or family members and see if they can decipher the passage.

📍 PRAY

Father, thank You that I can cling to Your unchanging character and powerful promises when fear tries to take over me. Help me obediently follow You, even when the path forward seems daunting.

Day 03

NUMBERS 14:5-10

READ & RESPOND

Aaron and Moses bowed in submission to God, and Caleb and Joshua dramatically tore their clothes in grief over the people's disastrous response. The two faithful scouts reiterated that the promised land was extremely good and confidently proclaimed victory over the people of the land. However, they knew that victory would be contingent on if the Lord was pleased with them. The scouts tried to talk the Israelites out of rebelling against God, but things were spiraling out of control quickly. Threatening to stone the God-appointed leaders, the Lord appeared in all His glory to put a stop to the chaos. Enough was enough.

← The Israelites were focused on the giants. Why did Joshua and Caleb remind them that the land was extremely good? What hope were they trying to restore?

↑ What does Joshua and Caleb's faith teach us about the strength of God's presence when we face our biggest problems?

→ What is one way you can show courage this week by standing for the truth, even if others disagree with you?

MEMORIZE

Let's map out this week's passage. Write out **Numbers 14:18**. Underline the important nouns in the passage. Circle the important verbs. Put an appropriate symbol next to any word that might be important.

PRAY

Lord, thank You for the bold examples of Joshua and Caleb. When You've called me to obedience, help me remember Your powerful presence and remove fear from my heart.

Day 04

NUMBERS 14:18-23

📍 READ & RESPOND

God was ready to strike the Israelites down with a plague, but Moses appealed to God: the world was watching. Moses repeated God's own words back to Him from Exodus 34:6-7 (see Day 1) to beg forgiveness for the Israelites. God forgave the Israelites, but consequences were required. That entire rebellious generation would wander and die in the wilderness. They would never see the land they refused to enter. Just as their doubt cost the Israelites the opportunity to fulfill God's covenant, our own sin can cost us the chance to see God's incredible plan unfold in our lives.

↓ What does the Israelites' repeated disobedience reveal about how easily people forget the powerful, great things God has done?

↔ How should God's patience influence the way you deal with a person who has annoyed you or tested your patience many times?

→ How do you need to be obedient to God's plan in your life? How does this passage encourage you to trust God's plan?

📍 MEMORIZE

Go for a walk! Recite **Numbers 14:18** aloud while walking. Assign one phrase to a set number of steps (for instance, walk five steps while saying the first phrase).

📍 PRAY

God, thank You for being slow to anger and abounding in faithful love when I fail You. Help me to truly trust Your power and never despise Your plan.

Day 05

PSALM 103:1-10

READ & RESPOND

David calls us, in today's psalm, to remember God's character. But what are the benefits we receive from God? He forgives, heals, redeems, crowns, and satisfies us. He rights wrongs and brings justice. When we bless or praise the Lord, we are remembering all of these amazing things He has done for us. Verse 8 is almost a direct quote of Exodus 34:6-7, of His character that He revealed to Moses. In verses 9-10, we are reminded that God has not given us what we deserve for our sins because He is compassionate, gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in faithful love. And for all of "his ways," we praise and "bless his holy name" and remember all He's done for us.

🔄 Reread today's passage. Take time to circle what God does for us and then underline what our response should be to Him.

↓ Why is it so easy for us to forget all the good things God has done?

→ We've seen the words of verse 8 several times this week. How has your understanding of God's character changed from reading these words on Day 1 to Day 5?

MEMORIZE

Once you know **Numbers 14:18**, teach it to someone else—a sibling, a parent, or a friend. Explain what it means and why it's important.

PRAY

Heavenly Father, I praise You and bless Your holy name. Help me remember all Your benefits, the wonderful things You have done for me.