

Unit 6: Away from the Land

Unit Description: When God's people arrived at the border of the promised land, they did the unthinkable: they disbelieved God's faithfulness and disobeyed His command by refusing to enter. As a result, God forced His people away from the land to wander in the wilderness where they continued in their disbelief and sin against a good, loving, and holy God.

Big Picture Question: What is God like? God is holy, good, and loving.



SESSION 1: The People Didn't Go Into the Land Numbers 13–14



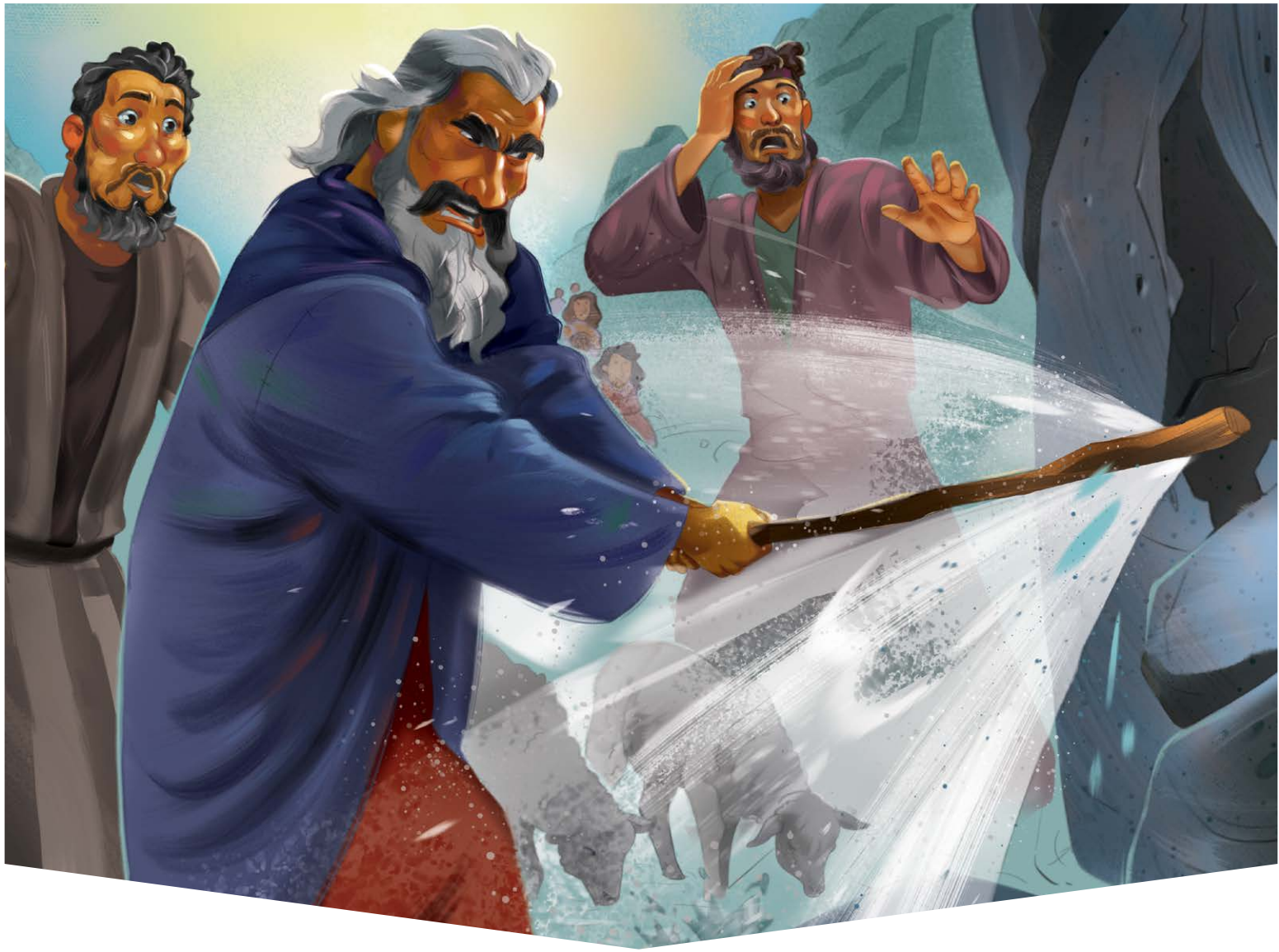
SESSION 2: Moses Disobeyed God Numbers 20



SESSION 3: God Healed the People Numbers 21



SESSION 4: No One Is Like God 1 Peter 1



UNIT 6 | SESSION 2

MOSES DISOBEYED GOD

NUMBERS 20

KEY PASSAGE:

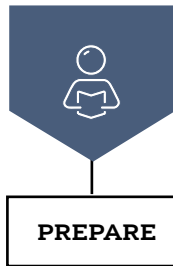
Exodus 15:11

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

What is God like? God is holy, good, and loving.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

Moses disobeyed God and did not enter the promised land. We all have disobeyed God by sinning. But God gave us His Son, Jesus. Jesus always obeyed God. When we trust in Him, Jesus brings us into God's kingdom forever.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



LEADER Bible Study

Many of us categorize sins, whether we intend to or not. There are the major sins—the really bad ones like murder that are clearly wrong. Thankfully, few of us are prone to commit these sins, so we are pretty safe from them.

Then there are the significant sins, like getting angry or lying. We know these are harmful, but we don't see them on the same level as the major ones. These are the sins that trip us up. If it weren't for these sins, we would be such good people. Then there are the little sins, like jaywalking or taking some paper clips from work. We know these are wrong, but they are so innocent and do so little harm that we tend to excuse them. In fact, we often live as if these sins are not really sins—they don't feel wrong to us.

Sound familiar? There's a big problem with this though. While sins might have different consequences, the Bible teaches that all sins are serious because they are rebellion against a holy God. Even if all we ever did was jaywalk, God would be just to pour out His wrath on us.

If we approach Numbers 20 with a flawed categorization of sin, we will likely walk away from this passage confused. What did Moses do that was so wrong? All he did was hit a rock instead of speaking what God said,

right? And for that, God would not allow Moses to enter the promised land. After all that Moses had been through, this was how his story would end?

But we must remember that all sin is rebellion against God and is therefore serious. Moses' rebellion here is quite serious. Notice what Moses, with Aaron standing next to him, said just before striking the rock: "Must we bring water out of this rock for you?" Who was Moses crediting for the miracle that would transpire? Surely not God.

That water flowed from the rock even in Moses' disobedience shows once more that God is a God of mercy and grace. But there is another way we see God's mercy and grace in this account, only we need to turn to the Gospels to see it. God graciously allowed Moses to enter the land long after this generation had died off. At the Transfiguration (Matt. 17), Moses stood in the land—along with Elijah—and Jesus, the One who had come to provide living water to God's people.

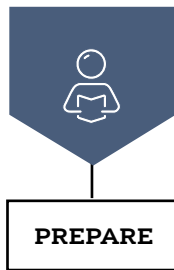
GOD'S PROVISION FOR ISRAEL

Exodus 15:25; 16:12-15:
food and water

Exodus 25-40: the tabernacle

Deut. 5:6-21: the Law

Exodus 17:8-13:
protection from their enemies



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- ☐ "Easy or Hard" activity page

Session Starter (Option 2)

- ☐ watercolor paints
- ☐ paintbrushes
- ☐ water



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- ☐ countdown video

Big Picture Question

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- ☐ Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- ☐ "Moses Disobeyed God" video
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster

Questions from Kids

- ☐ "Unit 6, Session 2" questions from kids video

Missions Moment

- ☐ Printable: "Samuel Zwemer Story"

Key Passage Activity

- ☐ Key Passage Poster
- ☐ "Lord, Who Is Like You (Exodus 15:11)" song
- ☐ sticky notes
- ☐ worship song of your choice (optional)



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- ☐ Small Group Timeline and Map Set
- ☐ world map



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- ☐ Printable: "Samuel Zwemer Review"
- ☐ ball

Activity Choice (Option 2)

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster
- ☐ small flat stones, 1 per kid
- ☐ permanent markers

Journal and Prayer

- ☐ Journal Page
- ☐ "Attributes of God" activity page



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

| **SAY** “ Think about a time you disobeyed someone. Were there consequences? What were they? ”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Easy or Hard” on the activity page.

| **SAY** “ Which instructions on the activity page would be easy to obey? Which ones are harder to obey? In today’s Bible story, we’ll learn about some instructions God gave Moses. Do you think they were easy or hard to obey? ”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

☐ OPTION 1: HAVE YOU EVER?



Instruct kids to stand. Ask them, “Have you ever ... ” and read one of the prompts. Kids who can answer yes should sit down. Continue until all kids are seated. Prompts:

- ... left your room a mess after your mom told you to pick up?
- ... played ball indoors when you know you shouldn’t?
- ... pushed a kid when you were angry?
- ... spoken disrespectfully to an adult?
- ... refused to share a toy or video game?
- ... taken something an adult said you weren’t allowed to have?
- ... jumped on the bed after your dad told you to stop?
- ... stayed up after your grandma sent you to bed?

| **SAY** “ We’ve all disobeyed. Why do you think we disobey our parents or teachers? Why do we disobey God? In today’s Bible story, we will hear about a time Moses disobeyed God. What do you think happened? Let’s find out. ”

☐ OPTION 2: HIDDEN MESSAGES

Before the session, cut rock shapes from white paper. Use white crayon to write God provides on some of the rock shapes and Obey God on others.

Distribute rock shapes, watercolor paints, and paintbrushes. Explain how to brush paint over the rock to reveal the hidden message.

| **SAY** “ God provides! What are some things God has provided for you? [Pause for kids to respond.] Today we are going to hear about a time God provided water for His people in the wilderness. God told Moses to speak to a rock. Sounds simple, right? But this story doesn’t exactly have a happy ending. Let’s find out what went wrong. ”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (2 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “Welcome! I’m [your name]. I am so glad you are here. Now, please follow my instructions. Ready? Stand up. [Allow kids to stand and as soon as they stand, ask them to jump. As soon as they jump, ask them to sit. Once they sit, ask them to stand again.]

You may be wondering why I asked you to stand, jump, and sit. Well, today our Bible story is about obeying God and following His instructions. Today, we will see if Moses followed God’s instructions. [Instruct kids to sit.] Do you think Moses obeyed or disobeyed God? ”

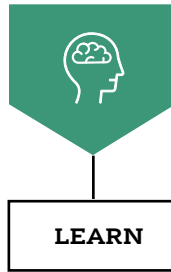
2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

SAY “Last week, we learned a new big picture question: **What is God like?** Does anyone remember the answer? [Allow kids to respond.] The answer is, **God is holy, good, and loving.** What are some ways we know this is true? How has God demonstrated his holiness, goodness, and love? [Invite kids to share their thoughts.] As you hear today’s Bible story, listen for ways God showed He is holy, good, and loving. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (2 minutes)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “God’s people were already in a hard place. They had been to the edge of the promised land and refused to go in. So God sent them into the wilderness to wander for 40 years. Still, God was with His people and provided for them. Today’s story is called ‘Moses Disobeyed God.’ Why would Moses do that? Let’s find out what went wrong. ”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Numbers 20. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Moses Disobeyed God.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

MOSES DISOBEYED GOD

“ The Israelites did not trust God to lead them into the promised land, so God made them wander in the wilderness for 40 years. **God’s people set up camp, but there was no water to drink. The people complained and argued with Moses.**

“Why did you bring us here?” they asked. **“We will die here, and so will our animals.” The people wished they had never left Egypt.** The wilderness had no grain, no fruit, and no water.

Moses and Aaron went to the tabernacle to meet with God. **God told Moses and Aaron to stand in front of all the people and speak to a rock. God said water would come out of the rock.** Then the people and animals would have water to drink.

So **Moses called the people together** and stood in front of the rock. **But instead of talking to the rock, he** told the group, “Listen up! Do we have to bring water out of this rock for you?” Then Moses **hit the rock twice with his staff.** Water poured out, and the people and animals drank.

But **God was angry that Moses and Aaron did** not obey His instructions. They did not **honor Him as holy by trusting in His power.** **So God said Moses and Aaron would not lead the Israelites into the promised land.** Instead, God would give His people a new leader.

Christ Connection: Moses disobeyed God and did not enter the promised land. We all have disobeyed God by sinning. But God gave us His Son, Jesus. Jesus always obeyed God. When we trust in Him, Jesus brings us into God’s kingdom forever. ”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Use props: Bring an empty cup and an empty water jug to help illustrate the thirst God’s people experienced in the story.

Make eye contact: Draw kids into the Bible story by making eye contact as you speak.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “Open your Bible to Numbers 20. Why did the Israelites complain to Moses? Look at verses 2-5. [Choose a volunteer to read aloud Num. 20:2-5.] The Israelites were thirsty and needed water for their animals too.

The wilderness was a dry and desolate place, similar to a desert. The Israelites couldn't just go to the store to buy supplies; they needed to find a water source. But there was no good water anywhere close. They were desperate. The Israelites began arguing, complaining, and doubting God's faithfulness to provide.

Moses and Aaron knelt down in the tabernacle and prayed for God to provide. God gave Moses two specific instructions. Let's look at verses 7-8 and read the instructions God gave Moses. [Choose a volunteer to read the verses aloud.]

Moses obeyed the first instruction, but the second instruction is where he disobeyed. Why do you think Moses decided to strike the rock instead of speaking to it?

Moses' disobedience made God angry. What was Moses' consequence for not obeying God's instruction to speak to the rock? Moses would not be allowed to enter the promised land. It wasn't just that Moses did not do what God asked; his actions revealed that He did not trust God. God wanted to show His holiness, but Moses had claimed he and Aaron would bring water from the rock.

God is serious about sin. Like Moses, we too have consequences for our disobedience. But the good news is God gave us His Son, Jesus, to take our sin upon Himself on the cross. When we trust in Him, our sins are forgiven and we can enter the promised land of eternity. ”

3 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY “Moses disobeyed God and did not enter the promised land. We all have disobeyed God by sinning. But God gave us His Son, Jesus. Jesus always obeys God. When we trust Him, He brings us into God's kingdom forever. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 6, Session 2” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. Why was it a big deal that Moses hit the rock?
2. Do you take all sin seriously? Why or why not?



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

SAY “God had compassion on His people and provided water, but when Moses disobeyed God, his sin had consequences. Our sin has consequences too, and we can only be forgiven through Jesus. Many people in the world have never heard of Jesus. We often refer to people like that as unreached. Today we’re going to learn about one man who felt so much compassion for unreached people that he spent most of his life far from his home country as a missionary.”

Show the Samuel Zwemer (zuh-WAY-mer) photos. Draw attention to Samuel with his wife and children. Explain that the men standing near the wall are Muslims, the people whom Samuel felt called to go to. Point out that Samuel adopted their style of dress at times. Discuss why he may have done that.

Challenge kids to listen for Samuel’s name as you read the story. When they hear it, guide them to use both hands to cover the tops of their heads, as a symbol of the head covering that Samuel is wearing in the picture.

Read the story. Then ask a volunteer to pray, thanking God for missionaries like Samuel Zwemer. Be sure to pray for any missionaries your church supports.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Before the session, write each word of the key passage on a separate sticky note. Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Exodus 15:11 together.

SAY “Last week, we introduced our new key passage from Exodus 15:11. It shows us about who God is and what He is like. Does anybody remember it? [Allow a volunteer to recite it from memory.] Memorizing Scripture is important as it helps us remember the truth about who God is, what He is like, and how we can always trust Him.”

Give each kid a prepared sticky note and challenge them to arrange themselves in the correct order. Lead kids to sing “Lord, Who Is Like You (Exodus 15:11).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

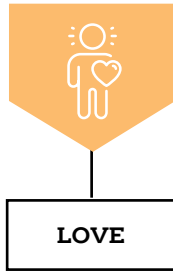
7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning from **LEARN** to **LOVE**.

SAY “Father, thank You for Your Word and how it teaches us to trust You. Help us to follow Jesus’ example in His obedience to You. We love You and praise You for always providing for our needs. Amen.”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the Old Testament Mediterranean Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Numbers 20. Explain that the Israelites wandered in the wilderness for 40 years. Ask a volunteer to find the area of Sinai (G9) on the map.

Consider comparing the Old Testament Mediterranean Map to a modern-day map to help kids understand where these stories took place. (Tip: Locate the area of northeast Egypt.) Choose a volunteer to read aloud Numbers 20:12.

| SAY “We know that God is good and is always faithful. Because of God’s faithfulness, we can trust Him even when life is hard. God wants us to trust Him so that His holiness and glory can be displayed in and through us.”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

| SAY “Why was God angry that Moses disobeyed?”

God was angry that Moses disobeyed because Moses didn’t trust God. When we disobey God, it’s because we choose to do things our way, instead of God’s way. Disobedience comes from our lack of trust in God. God’s way is always best, even if we think we have a better way.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Gen. 3:6-7.)

| SAY “What can we do to help us obey when obeying is hard?”

Guide kids to remember that God’s Word can help us when we doubt. Remind kids that God’s Word points to God’s faithfulness, love, and goodness.

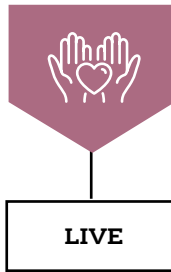
(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Ps. 28:7.)

| SAY “What can we learn from Jesus about obeying?”

Lead kids to discuss how Jesus is the perfect example of obedience. Jesus obeyed the Father to the point of death on the cross for the sin of the world. Emphasize that because of what Jesus faced on the cross, we should strive to obey with joy.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Phil. 2:8.)





THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

☐ **OPTION 1: ZWEMER REVIEW**



Guide the kids to sit in a circle, and give a ball to one kid. Explain that you will ask a review question to the person holding the ball. As soon as you ask the question, he will pass the ball to his right. If he can't answer the question by the time the ball makes it around the circle back to him, he has to sit in the middle.

Give the ball to different kids in the circle as you ask review questions. Any player who doesn't answer before the ball moves around the circle will replace the person in the middle.

SAY “Moses disobeyed God and was not allowed to enter the promised land. All of us are born in sin, and we all disobey God. We need to hear the gospel, turn from sin, and believe the gospel in order to be with God forever. Missionaries like Samuel Zwemer dedicate their lives to telling others the gospel so that people will have the chance to repent and be saved.”

☐ **OPTION 2: TRUST ROCKS**



Distribute permanent markers and smooth stones. Ask the kids if they've ever seen water come out of a rock.

Instruct the kids to write Trust Him on the stone. Encourage kids to take home these trust rocks and place them in an area they will see every day: on a nightstand, under their pillow, by the sink where they brush their teeth, and so on.

SAY “What is God like? God is holy, good, and loving. These trust rocks can serve as a reminder not only of our story, but also to trust and obey God no matter what we face. Place these rocks where you can see them every day so you will remember to trust Him in all things.”

2 JOURNAL AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Guide kids to think about and answer the questions listed on the page. As kids journal, invite them to share their ideas.

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?
- Are there promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission better?

Review the gospel and encourage kids to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions. Then pray, thanking God for His goodness and love for us. Praise Him for who He is. As time allows, lead kids to complete “Attributes of God” on the activity page.



JOURNAL PAGE

1. What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
2. What does this story teach me about myself?
3. Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?
4. Are there any promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
5. How does this story help me to live on mission better?



Unit 6 • Session 2

MOSES DISOBEYED GOD

Numbers 20

WHAT IS GOD LIKE? GOD IS HOLY, GOOD, AND LOVING.

The Israelites did not trust God to lead them into the promised land, so God made them wander in the wilderness for 40 years. God's people set up camp, but there was no water to drink. The people complained and argued with Moses.

"Why did you bring us here?" they asked. "We will die here, and so will our animals." The people wished they had never left Egypt. The wilderness had no grain, no fruit, and no water.

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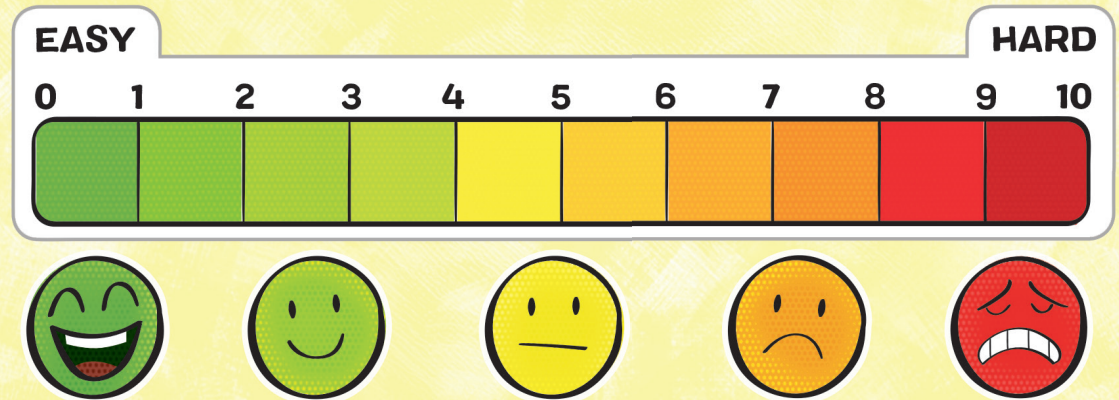
So Moses called the people together and stood in front of the rock. But instead of talking to the rock, he told the group, "Listen up! Do we have to bring water out of this rock for you?" Then Moses hit the rock twice with his staff. Water poured out, and the people and animals drank.

But God was angry that Moses and Aaron did not obey His instructions. They did not honor Him as holy by trusting in His power. So God said Moses and Aaron would not lead the Israelites into the promised land. Instead, God would give His people a new leader.

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Easy or Hard | Rate each command from 1 to 10 depending on how easy it is to obey (1) or how hard it is (10).

- _____ Finish your homework.
- _____ Do your chores.
- _____ Clean your room.
- _____ Eat your ice cream.
- _____ Love your sister.
- _____ Go play with your friends.



Attributes of God | Unscramble letters of the same color to fill in the three missing words.



V O O O I G
L N G Y L H D

We can obey God because He is _____, _____,
and _____.