In the beginning, God created all things good. With the making of humankind as male and female, He even declared His creation to be very good. Paradise was the location; abundant life was the experience, that is, until the taint of sin covered the world through the rebellion of Adam and Eve against their Creator.

As a result, humanity lost its paradise and was separated from the God who created all things good. Death was God’s warning for disobedience, and death became the reality—the death of living apart from God (sin), the death of life (physical death), and the death of eternal separation from God’s goodness (spiritual death).

But the God of all good things was not finished. He called a people to Himself to be a light to the world. He gave them His holy expectations that they should follow them. He made provision for sin through sacrifices. And even when His people continued to rebel against Him, He promised life from death.

In comes Jesus, the Son of God sent into the world to make all things new. “In him was life, and that life was the light of men” (John 1:4). “Full of grace and truth,” Jesus obeyed all of the Father’s holy expectations (1:14). He is “the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” (1:29). He laid down His life in death on a cross to secure life for those who follow Him (10:11), and He proved it in His resurrection when He took up His life again (10:18). A thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy; Jesus came so we might once again have life and have it in abundance (10:10).

So how should we respond to this good news? By turning from sin (repentance) and believing in Jesus (faith). The one who loves his life will lose it, but the one who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life (12:25). The treasures and pleasures of this world cannot compare to the eternal life found in Jesus.
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**Suggested for the week of**

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In these sessions of The Gospel Project, we experience some of the most exciting narratives in Scripture. There are accounts here of sin and judgment, of moral decline and merciful intervention, and of rescuers who need rescue. Through it all, one thing is clear: God is with His people and He is faithful to His promise.

It’s important to keep that central theme in mind because many people read these stories about the conquest of the land and try to find examples for emulation. To be clear, we can learn a lot from these Old Testament heroes (see 1 Cor. 10), but we cannot implement their virtues apart from our connection to the Vine—Jesus Christ Himself, the One who bears fruit in us and through us.

As we walk through our present wilderness, struggling against sin and encountering sorrow, we know that the God who has gone before us is faithful. He is the One who prepares the way for us to be His ambassadors. He is the One who breaks the chains of our idolatry and lifts our gaze to His unchanging glory.
About the Writers

Shaq Hardy  (unit 7, sessions 1-3) currently serves as the Associate Youth Student Pastor at Brainerd Baptist Church in Chattanooga, Tennessee. He is also working toward a degree in Pastoral Ministry as a student at Southeastern Seminary. He is passionate about seeing those who are far from God become committed followers of Jesus Christ.

Leslie Hudson  (unit 8, sessions 1-3; unit 9, sessions 1-3) is living her life calling to let others know the full riches of Jesus Christ (Col. 2:2-3) by teaching, speaking, and writing about God’s Word and its power. She and her husband, David, live with their children in White Bluff, Tennessee, where she works with Youth and Women’s ministries at First Baptist Church, Dickson.

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Jeff Medders  (Easter session; unit 9, sessions 4-5) is the lead pastor of Redeemer Church in Tomball, Texas, where he lives with his wife, Natalie, and their two kids, Ivy and Oliver. He received a Master of Arts from Southern Seminary. He is also the author of multiple books and writes at jamedders.com, The Gospel Coalition, Desiring God, and more.
THE GOSPEL PROJECT
A Journey Through the Storyline of Scripture

Fall 2018  
**In the Beginning**
Creation and the Fall (Genesis; Job)  
God Establishes a Covenant People (Genesis)  
God Grows His Covenant People (Genesis)

Winter 2018-19  
**Out of Egypt**
God Redeems His People (Genesis; Exodus)  
God Provides for His People (Exodus)  
God Receives Worship from His People (Ex.; Lev.)

Spring 2019  
**Into the Promised Land**
God Guides His People (Num.; Deut.)  
God Gives His People a Home (Joshua)  
God Delivers His People (Judges; Ruth)

Summer 2019  
**A Kingdom Provided**
God Provides a King (1 Samuel)  
God Provides a Godly King (1–2 Sam.; Psalms)  
God Provides a Wise King (1 Kings; Eccl.)

Fall 2019  
**A Nation Divided**
God Speaks to His People (1–2 Kings)  
God Judges the Sin of His People (2 Kings; Prophets)  
God Shows Mercy to His People (2 Chron.; Prophets)

Winter 2019-20  
**A People Restored**
God Sustains His People (Daniel)  
God Restores His People (Ezra; Prophets)  
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Spring 2020  
**Jesus the Messiah**  
Jesus Comes into the World (Luke)  
Jesus Begins His Ministry (Gospels)  
Jesus Among the People (Gospels)  

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Summer 2020  
**Jesus the Servant**  
Jesus the Healer (Gospels)  
Jesus the Teacher (Gospels)  
Jesus the Miracle-Worker (Gospels)  

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Fall 2020  
**Jesus the Savior**  
Jesus and the Kingdom (Gospels)  
Jesus the Savior (Gospels)  
Jesus the Risen King (Gospels)  

———  

Winter 2020-21  
**The Mission Begins**  
The Holy Spirit Comes (Acts; Epistles)  
Fundamentals of the Faith (Acts; Epistles)  
New Life in Christ (Acts; Epistles)  

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Spring 2021  
**The Church United**  
Living Like Jesus (Acts; Hebrews)  
The Sent Church (Acts; Epistles)  
Don’t Forget (Acts; Epistles)  

———  

Summer 2021  
**All Things New**  
Paul in Prison (Acts; Epistles)  
Facing Adversity (Acts; Epistles)  
Jesus Will Come Again (Revelation)  

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Gather with your group for Bible study and fellowship. Use the **Group Time** in your *Daily Discipleship Guide* to follow along and participate in the session. Mark up the Scripture passages, answer the questions, fill in the blanks, do the activities, write out questions and thoughts—Make this guide yours!

At the conclusion of the session, use **My Mission** to respond to the truths from God's Word. Choose at least one of the questions on the page to drive your response in faith, in community, and in mission for Jesus Christ, the center of God's Word and our purpose in life.
Finally, **Encourage One Another** provides a brief guide for small groups of 2-4 people to meet sometime during the week to reflect on the session and to share how God is working and they are responding. Meet up with a group once a week for fellowship, encouragement in the faith, and mutual accountability.
Memory Verses

“Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.”

—John 3:14-15
The Rebellion of God’s People

SESSION IN A SENTENCE: Rebellion against God is rooted in failing to trust God and always has consequences.

MAIN PASSAGES: Numbers 13:1-2,30-33; 14:1-4,30-35

Firefighters responded to the call of a building on fire. Upon arrival, they noticed a girl on the tenth floor, but they could not reach her with their ladder truck because the street was too narrow. So the firefighters set up a net for the girl to jump into. They pleaded with her to jump into the net, doing their best to assure her that she would be safe. But there was a problem: the girl was blind. The girl could not see the net and could not bring herself to trust the pleas and assurances of the firefighters.

Then the girl’s father arrived on the scene, grabbed the bullhorn, and called out to his daughter for her to jump into the net. The girl leapt from the window and landed safely. Throughout the girl’s life, she had trusted the sound of her father’s voice to guide her where she could not see. The girl heard her father’s voice and knew she could trust him because he had faithfully guided her so many times in the past. Because of her trust in the faithfulness of her father, she walked away from the burning building unscathed.

What is the difference between trusting someone you know and trusting someone you do not know?
GROUP TIME

Point 1: Rebellion against God begins by ignoring His provision and promises (Num. 13:1-2, 30-33).

1 The Lord spoke to Moses: 2 “Send men to scout out the land of Canaan I am giving to the Israelites. Send one man who is a leader among them from each of their ancestral tribes.”

30 Then Caleb quieted the people in the presence of Moses and said, “Let’s go up now and take possession of the land because we can certainly conquer it!”

31 But the men who had gone up with him responded, “We can’t attack the people because they are stronger than we are!” 32 So they gave a negative report to the Israelites about the land they had scouted: “The land we passed through to explore is one that devours its inhabitants, and all the people we saw in it are men of great size. 33 We even saw the Nephilim there—the descendants of Anak come from the Nephilim! To ourselves we seemed like grasshoppers, and we must have seemed the same to them.”

God promised the Israelites the land of Canaan, and He had also showed them, quite clearly, that He had the power to make good on that promise because He had made good on another promise—deliverance from Egypt. But Israel’s ability to take residence in the promised land was contingent on their faithfulness to the God who had always been faithful to them.

What are some things in your life you can remember to help you remain faithful to God?

The spies Moses sent saw that the land was flowing with milk and honey, confirming the truth of what God had said about the land, and they acknowledged this before the people (Num. 13:27). But when they spoke about the cities and the people in the land, their report turned negative (vv. 28–29, 31–33). Ten of the spies saw their own weakness and stopped there, but Caleb and Joshua looked through their weakness and looked upon God. The spies may have felt like grasshoppers compared to the people in the land, but the people of the land were not even ants compared to the God of Israel. All the Israelites had to do was trust in God’s power and faithfulness. Sadly, they did not.
Point 2: Rebellion against God impacts others (Num. 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.”

The Israelites failed to trust that God is faithful, which led to disobedience as they refused to enter the land He promised them. The Israelites’ response was not a surprise to God. Their rebellion against Him only revealed the sinfulness that was already deep in their hearts, of which God was fully aware (1 Sam. 16:7). Because of their unbelieving hearts, the Israelites complained like a people who were without hope, though God had made it plain to them that He would provide for them and protect them from their enemies.

Voices from Church History

“Conduct, is what we do; character, is what we are … Character is the state of the heart, conduct its outward expression. Character is the root of the tree, conduct, the fruit it bears.”

—E. M. Bounds (1835-1913)

What are some things that our actions reveal about our hearts?

Sin as Rebellion: The Bible often portrays sin in terms of defiance and rebellion toward ______________. Sin is personal and willful disobedience, the raising of a ______________ toward the One who made us.

The Israelites, swayed by the negative report of the ten spies, decided it would be best for them to choose a new leader for themselves and return to Egypt, to the place of their captivity. Therefore, they threatened to kill the leaders God had placed over them (Num. 14:10). Furthermore, their rebellion deserved immediate judgment from God, but Moses interceded for them once again on account of God’s glory before the nations, and He relented (vv. 11-19). The sin of the Israelites affected the way they viewed the leaders God had given them, and it had the potential of affecting how the nations around them viewed God.
Point 3: Rebellion against God has consequences (Num. 14:30-35).

30 I swear that none of you will enter the land I promised to settle you in, except Caleb son of Jephunneh and Joshua son of Nun. 31 I will bring your children whom you said would become plunder into the land you rejected, and they will enjoy it. 32 But as for you, your corpses will fall in this wilderness. 33 Your children will be shepherds in the wilderness for forty years and bear the penalty for your acts of unfaithfulness until all your corpses lie scattered in the wilderness. 34 You will bear the consequences of your iniquities forty years based on the number of the forty days that you scouted the land, a year for each day. You will know my displeasure. 35 I, the LORD, have spoken. I swear that I will do this to the entire evil community that has conspired against me. They will come to an end in the wilderness, and there they will die.”

God’s glory is paramount to Him, and by extension, it should be for us as well. That’s why He created us—to glorify Him (Isa. 43:7). That is why He formed a nation through Abraham and his descendants, so that He might be glorified through His great and glorious acts of redemption. Yes, God has a faithful love for His people; He is great in His compassion and mercy. But these are not all that drive Him. His glory does too. The wondrous beauty of it all is that the salvation of people is one of the greatest ways God makes His glory known. The Israelites missed this and suffered the consequences.

How can we glorify God and make His glory known through our lives?

In Numbers 14:30-35 we see the chilling reality of the consequences of sin. The Israelites had disobeyed God time and time again, and time and time again, God had been patient with them (v. 11). But now their rebellion had earned their eventual death in the wilderness because “the wages of sin is death” (Rom. 6:23). God had been patient with these people, but God’s patience does not mean He will spare sinners from the consequences of their sin forever.

What should it look like to share the gospel with urgency?
My Mission

Because we have experienced God’s forgiveness of our rebellion through Christ, we trust God as we obey His calling to share His kingdom with the nations.

• How will you respond in faith to God’s patience toward rebellion?
• What are some ways your group can remind one another of God’s faithfulness and encourage each other toward obedience?
• How will you share the gospel of Jesus Christ with urgency in the coming days?

Notes
Day 1: Read Numbers 12:1-16

It was bad enough when the Israelites rebelled against Moses, but the rebellion of Miriam and Aaron surely hit him harder. Like we see happen in many confrontations, Aaron and Miriam hid the true motivation of their criticism behind a different excuse: Moses’ marriage to a Cushite woman. But their main complaint was Moses being God’s primary spokesperson.

When Miriam and Aaron confronted the man God had chosen to speak for Him, He chose to speak for Himself. God pronounced judgment on them for their sin, and in His anger, He gave Miriam a skin disease. Aaron was immediately repentant and asked Moses to do something about Miriam’s disease. God’s servant responded by lifting His voice in intercession to God, and Miriam was healed.

This account offers a picture of how we are to respond to God when He reveals Himself to us. God’s self-revelation shows us two things: who He is and who we are. When we see God for who He is and what He has done, we then can properly see ourselves for who we are. All pretense is stripped away. All false comparisons crumble around us. We look upon the holiness of God, which forces us to face our sinfulness, drawing us toward repentance. And because of the intercession of Jesus, the One who made atonement for our sin, we are able to experience forgiveness, cleansing, and the joy of our salvation.

In what ways does seeing the truth of who God is humble you?

Voices from the Church

“God is the rescuer. Jesus is the hero. You don’t have to carry the burden for all your people, you just have to trust that Jesus does.”

—Annie Downs
**Day 2: Read Numbers 13:1-33**

The way God told Moses to send the Israelite spies into the land was a reminder to him and the Israelites of God’s promise to give them the land: “Send men to scout out the land of Canaan I am giving to the Israelites” (Num. 13:2, emphasis added). The land of Canaan was a good land, flowing with milk and honey, which made it a land worth fighting for, and God would drive the people out of the land so His people could take possession of it. Yet they rebelled against Him and refused to go into the land where they would have had rest and all of their needs provided for.

Later in Scripture, the land of Canaan is used as a picture of heaven—our place of rest (see Heb. 3—4). The Israelites had left slavery in Egypt and endured a trek through the wilderness to make it to the promised land, but their sin prevented them from entering. Through Jesus, we are freed from the slavery to sin, yet we continue to live in the wilderness—a fallen and broken world. However, in light of eternity, our journey to our promised land is short. We are called to trust God in faithfulness as we journey on, placing our hope in His promise to bring us home to the place of our rest.

> How might the hope of what God has in store for you in heaven change the way you approach each day now?

**Day 3: Read Numbers 14:1-25**

Faith in God leads to obedience to His commands. God has revealed Himself to us so that we would turn to Him in faith and love Him and then, through that faith and love, obey Him. But our obedience is short-circuited immediately when our faith erodes. After the Israelites’ rebellion, when God pronounced judgment on them, God first declared how patient He had been with His people. He then threatened to do away with them completely. But Moses interceded on behalf of the people, appealing to the glory and promises of God.

Each day, we encounter people who have not trusted in Jesus for salvation. They too stand under the righteous judgment of a patient God (2 Pet. 3:9). God invites us to join Him on His mission of making His presence known. We do this by proclaiming the gospel but also by praying earnestly for those who don’t know Him that they might repent of their sin, turn to Jesus, and experience life.

> Whom will you pray for who doesn’t know Jesus? How will you tell them about Jesus this week?
Day 4: Read Numbers 14:26-45

After God pronounced judgment on the Israelites for their disobedience, the people responded by grieving. However, there is a difference between grieving sin and grieving the consequences of sin.

When we grieve the consequences of sin, we are distraught by being disciplined or because we missed out on something that we wanted. The focus is on us. But when we grieve sin itself, we are distraught because our fellowship with God has been disrupted and we are failing to glorify God as He deserves. The focus is on God.

The Israelites’ willingness to go into the promised land without the presence of God shows that they hadn’t repented of their sin. They didn’t want God’s presence; they wanted God’s presents. The worst place for us to be is in sin because it disrupts our fellowship with God. Having anything without God is far worse than having nothing with God. We need to remember this, let God drive it into our hearts, and be quick to grieve over our sin, not just its consequences.

How have you grieved over sin recently? Have you focused on the sin itself or on the consequences of sin?

Day 5: Read Numbers 16:1-50

Once again, we encounter a rebellion against Moses. But we have to see Israel’s repeated lack of trust in Moses for what it really was—a lack of trust in God. This was their root problem. This was what had to be addressed over and over. Rebelling against Moses was merely the symptom. Rebelling against God was the disease needing to be cured.

While most of us may never be in charge of leading a massive group of hardhearted people through the wilderness, we are all called to take the message of the gospel to a world that wants nothing to do with it. Our job is simple: live the gospel; preach the gospel. But because the gospel is offensive, people will despise us. Like Moses, we must remember that it is not really us whom they despise and reject; it is Christ. And so, like Moses, but even more so like Christ, we must show compassion to the people we have been called to love and serve, and we must pray that through our kindness and perseverance they might be reached with the gospel we proclaim.

How does praying for people change the way you see them?
Encourage One Another

Join together with 2-4 people from your group, or with your family, sometime during the week to reflect on the session and to share how God is working and you are responding.

Share your thoughts and reflections on the truths from Scripture in this session:

- Rebellion against God begins by ignoring His provision and promises (Num. 13:1-2,30-33).
- Rebellion against God impacts others (Num. 14:1-4).
- Rebellion against God has consequences (Num. 14:30-35).

How have you responded to these truths from Scripture?

What are some ways you need others to encourage you to obey the commands and instructions of the Lord?

How are you being wise with your time, in light of the patience of God, to help others see the glory of God in Jesus Christ?

Notes
UNIT 7
SESSION 1
1. Tony Evans, Tony Evans’ Book of Illustrations (Chicago, IL: Moody, 2009) [eBook].

SESSION 2

SESSION 3

SESSION 4
1. Amy Carmichael, Thou Givest … They Gather (Fort Washington, PA: CLC Publications, 1958) [eBook].

UNIT 8
SESSION 1
1. Noël Piper, Treasuring God in our Traditions (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2003), 64.

SESSION 2

SESSION 3
1. Betsie ten Boom, quoted in The Hiding Place, by Corrie ten Boom with Elizabeth and John Sherrill (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, 2006), 84.

EASTER SESSION

UNIT 9
SESSION 1
1. Andrew Murray, Abide in Christ, in The Essential Works of Andrew Murray, ed. Tracy M. Sumner (Barbour, 2008) [eBook].

SESSION 2

SESSION 3

SESSION 4

SESSION 5
Want to go even deeper in your study?
Pick up this resource at your local LifeWay store

Because you are studying several Old Testament books in this resource, we recommend the book *Moments ‘til Midnight*. This book is about journeying well on our way to the true Promised Land—heaven—and reminds us of the journey to the Promised Land we read about in the Old Testament.

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Into the Promised Land

In His compassionate timing, the Lord delivered His people from slavery in Egypt by means of Moses and great signs and wonders. Then He guided them to the edge of the promised land. But all of His provision and protection was rejected there as the people rebelled against Him in fear, and they paid the consequences of their unbelief and disobedience. Yet God was faithful.

The next generation of Israelites returned to the edge of the promised land forty years later, and this time they marched in faith behind their new leader, Joshua. True to His word, the Lord fought for His people and settled them in their new home, a good land, a fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham.

The Israelites had peace in the land, but they still had work to do to drive out their enemies. Rather than obey in faith, they rebelled once again, causing God to discipline them with other nations. Still, the Lord is always faithful and compassionate, and He raised up deliverers for His people. But their shortcomings revealed the need for the ultimate Deliverer from the curse of sin, Jesus Christ.

What's Next?

SUMMER 2019
Volume 4: A Kingdom Provided
God Provides a King (1 Samuel)
God Provides a Godly King (1–2 Samuel; Psalms)
God Provides a Wise King (1 Kings; Ecclesiastes)

FALL 2019
Volume 5: A Nation Divided
God Speaks to His People (1–2 Kings)
God Judges the Sin of His People (2 Kings; Prophets)
God Shows Mercy to His People (2 Chron; Prophets)

SOME OF OUR UPCOMING WRITERS
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