**JOURNEYING TOGETHER:** FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Session 4 of 4

# The promised land

### MEETING AIM

To explore the trustworthiness of God and his promises.

### BIBLE PASSAGE

Numbers 13-14; Joshua 3

### BACKGROUND

This session plan is intended for use either in person or online, depending on how you’re meeting. Adapt the activities to fit your particular situation.

Sometimes, God promises us things and we can expect them to be delivered to us on a plate. At this point in the Israelites’ story, they have reached the land God promised them, but are scared off by the people already living there. They let their fear get the better of their faith in God. Fear can be a huge obstacle to putting your trust in God. Help the young people think about what they’re worried about in their lives and how that might be standing in the way of their growing with God.

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### STARTING OUT – 5 mins

As the young people arrive, break the ice by asking the group what their dream place to live would be!

### INTRO ACTIVITY – 10 mins

Play a few rounds of wink murder. Choose a spy (call them a spy rather than detective for this game!). Send the spy out of the room, and then choose one of the other children to be the murderer. The murderer has to kill people off by winking at them, without the spy seeing. The spy has to catch the murderer before they’ve killed everyone. Have enough rounds for everyone to have a turn.

### BIBLE EXPLORATION – 10 mins

**You will need:** Bibles; *The Message* paraphrase

Remind the group of the Israelites’ journey that you have followed so far. God had taken them out of Egypt with Moses leading them and given them the Ten Commandments.

Explain that you’re using two Bible passages from different books in the Bible, but that they fit together to be part one and two of the story. Split the group into three. Give one group Numbers 13, one Numbers 14 and the other Joshua 3 to work with. It might be easier for them to work from *The Message*. Give both groups time to read the passage each and then come up with a small skit that they can act out to the other group. Encourage them to keep it simple, and they can use the passage to read from as they act in it. Although they can get as creative as they can in ten minutes too!

Depending on how the skits go, it might be helpful to summarise the two stories as one together, drawing out the main points about what’s happened in all the passages.

### CHATTING TOGETHER – 5 mins

Continue chatting about the story using these questions and others:

* How do you think the Israelites would be feeling about the promised land after 40 years?
* What do you think taking over from Moses would have been like for Joshua?
* What do you think it would have been like getting to the promised land, only to find out there were huge people living in it already?
* What part did fear play in the reaction of the Israelites?

### CREATIVE RESPONSE – 10 mins

**You will need:** paper; art materials

Ask for a couple of volunteers to role-play being the spies. Encourage the rest of the group to ask them questions about their experience of finding the promised land, what they were hoping for, and how they felt! If many people want to have a go at being the spies, let a few have turns.

Now do the same with Joshua. Prompt the group to ask all kinds of questions, such as how he felt about taking over from Moses or what was good about being a leader. Let the group reflect together on their ideas using this role play, and gently encourage them to stay on topic if there are too many tangents (though some will be good fun!).

Ask the group to take some time to think about what it would have been like after 40 years in the desert for the Israelites to finally know that they were going to have their own place called home. Allow some space to process this idea. If you have time, invite the group to make a creative response, using any art materials you have been able to provide.

### PRAYER – 5 mins

**You will need:** world map

The story of the Israelites is very reminiscent of the many refugees we have in our world today. For a visual aid, show a map, and show the group the area that the Israelites wandered between Egypt and Canaan (now in Israel). Show them where Syria, Israel and Palestine are, and explain that many Syrians are refugees; many Palestinians are now displaced in the separation between Palestine and Israel, and many Jewish people were refugees in Israel after the second world war. Encourage the group to pray for these groups, and others who are refugees and homeless in the world.

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