

ENCOUNTERS 2012



24-7 PRAYER

PRAYER, MISSION AND JUSTICE

DEEPER GUIDE

WEEK TWO



ENCOUNTER [EN-KOUN-TER]: TO COME UPON OR MEET WITH, ESPECIALLY UNEXPECTEDLY



This week the 24-7 Prayer podcast focuses on encounters between God, Moses and Jacob.

Use this deeper guide alone, with family and friends, or with your church small group to look at little deeper at the themes raised and how they apply to our lives.

CONTENTS

1. **Reflect**: considering the themes raised
2. **React**: journaling or discussion questions
3. **Respond**: responding practically



MATERIALS NEEDED

- Bible
- Pen/pencil



REFLECT



Spend time considering the following Bible verses and quotes for reflection.

Read Exodus 3:1-6, Exodus 33:1-3, 15-17, Deuteronomy 34:1-5, Exodus 33: 7-11, Joshua 1:1-6

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;

in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight."

Proverbs 3:5-6

"Think of an absent-minded professor who can find a cure for cancer but not his glasses in the mess on his desk. These are the inventors, creators, poets -- the people who think creative thoughts because they don't think like everyone else." Martha Denckla, M.D., Director of the Department of Developmental Cognitive Neurology at the Kennedy-Krieger Institute at John Hopkins.

"I will trust Him. Whatever, wherever I am, I can never be thrown away. If I am in sickness, my sickness may serve Him; in perplexity, my perplexity may serve Him; if I am in sorrow, my sorrow may serve Him. My sickness, or perplexity, or sorrow may be necessary causes of some great end, which is quite beyond us. He does nothing in vain." John Henry Newman

"It is not necessary for being with God to be always at church. We may make an oratory of our heart wherein to retire from time to time to converse with Him in meekness, humility, and love. Every one is capable of such familiar conversation with God, some more, some less. He knows what we can do."

Brother Lawrence, The Practice of the Presence of God





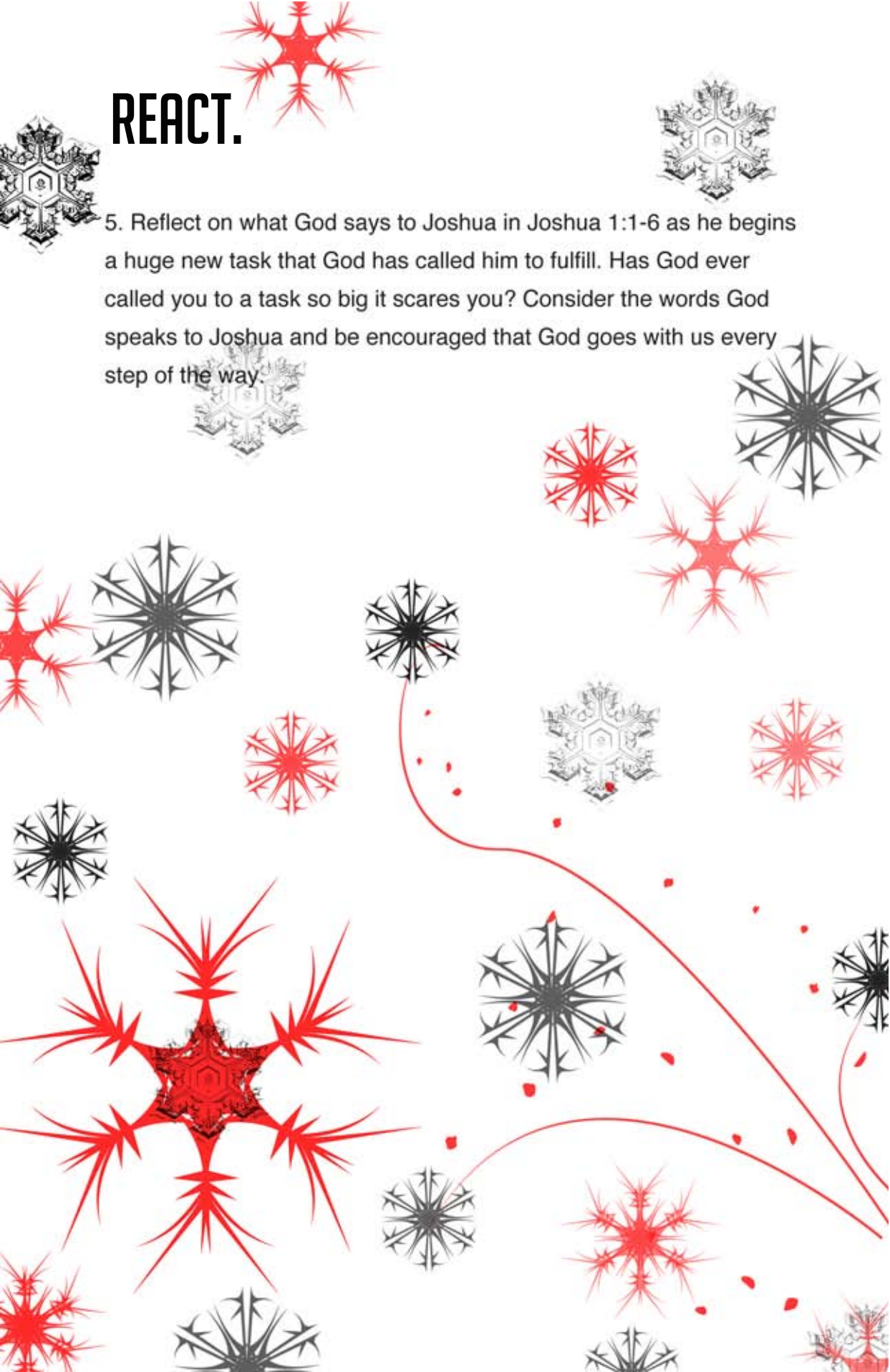
REACT

1. Read Exodus 3:1-6. God only spoke when he got Moses' attention and Moses got close enough to investigate. As Moses drew near to God, God drew near to him. How often do you think we miss encounters with God because we simply weren't paying attention? Is God trying to get your attention now?

2. The number of people being diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) is rapidly on the rise. Read the quote by Martha Denckla who explains a common positive character trait of someone with ADD. Could this person sometimes sound like you or someone you know? Distraction and busyness are common in modern culture. It can become easy to lose God in the chaos, like we lose our glasses in the mess of our desk. Consider ways you can de-clutter your life this Christmas (even of some of the great work and ministry you're doing) so that you can leave room for God to get your attention.

3. Consider the second encounter between Moses and God in Exodus 33:1-3, 15-17, where God tells him to leave and go up to the land flowing with milk and honey but that He wouldn't go with them. God was angry, after saving the Israelites they quickly went back to what their old ways and what they were most comfortable with, idol worship. Understanding that being in God's presence is most important, Moses tells God that he wouldn't go unless God went with them. What are some of the comforts or wisdom of our culture today? Are you, like Moses, fighting for God's presence in your life? Where are the areas you find it difficult to trust God and not depend on the ways of the culture around you?

4. Read Exodus 33: 7-11. At this point Joshua has no idea about the plans God has for his future BUT he still spends much time in the 'tent of meeting' in God's presence. *"But his young assistant Joshua son of Nun did not leave the tent"*. How can you, like Joshua, make some space to encounter God? What holds you back from creating the space?



REACT.

5. Reflect on what God says to Joshua in Joshua 1:1-6 as he begins a huge new task that God has called him to fulfill. Has God ever called you to a task so big it scares you? Consider the words God speaks to Joshua and be encouraged that God goes with us every step of the way.

RESPOND

PERSONALLY:

Has God been working on getting your attention in any area of your life lately? Is there an area of your life that you're struggling to trust God in? Write it down and take the next week to pray through what God might be trying to teach you through this season. Read the quote by John Henry Newman and remember that God will work through every circumstance of your life, both good and bad.

PRACTICALLY:

This week, decide on where your 'tent of meeting' will be this Christmas season (and perhaps even into the new year). Find a spot where you can regularly go to meet with God and go there as often as you can.

Pray for someone this week that you hope will encounter God this Christmas.

PRAYERFULLY:

Read the quote by Brother Lawrence from the book *The Practice of the Presence of God*. Brother Lawrence came to a place in his life where he felt he was constantly in dialogue and in the presence of God, no matter where he was. This week, try encountering God EVERYWHERE you go, making your life a constant prayer. Whether you're at work, school, with friends or family, work at knowing that God's presence is with you.

Use these lyrics from the song, *oh little town of Bethlehem*, as you pray.

"O holy Child of Bethlehem
Descend to us, we pray
Cast out our sin and enter in
Be born to us today
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell
O come to us, abide with us
Our Lord Emmanuel"

NEXT WEEK: GOD'S ENCOUNTERS WITH DAVID AND JOHN THE BAPTIST.

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