

MOSES AND THE 10 COMMANDMENTS

At Mount Sinai, the people of Israel were finally about to meet with God. God was going to give them His good and helpful law, the 10 Commandments.

by Shelby Faith

In the third month after Israel left Egypt, the Israelites came to the Wilderness of Sinai. They camped there before the mountain. God told Moses to come up to the mountain.

So Moses went up to God. God said, “Tell the people of Israel: ‘You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I brought you out of Egypt. Now, if you will obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be special to Me above all people.’”

Moses returned and called for the elders of the people. He told them God would make an agreement with Israel and take care of them if they obeyed His words. The people said, “We will do all that the LORD wants us to do.” Moses went back to God and told Him what the people had said.

Then God said to Moses, “Tell the people to wash their clothes and be ready for the third day. On the third day I will come down on Mount Sinai. Tell them not to go up to the mountain or touch it. Anyone who touches the mountain will die. When the trumpet sounds long, they shall come near the mountain.”

Again Moses went down from the mountain and got the people ready.

GOD SPEAKS FROM MOUNT SINAI

Now on the third day there was great thunder and lightning. A thick cloud of smoke covered the mountain. The sound of a very loud trumpet caused the people to shake with fear.

Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. God told Moses to come back up the mountain. He didn’t want the people to come too close to the mountain.

Then God spoke all the words of the 10 Commandments (Exodus 20:2-17).

The people were scared! They told Moses, “You speak with us, and we will hear. But we are afraid if God speaks to us again, we will die!”

So Moses relayed more of God’s laws to Israel, and they again said, “All the words which the LORD has said, we will do” (Exodus 24:3).

Then God called Moses to come up the mountain again. God told him all the commandments and judgments that He wanted His people to live by. God gave

QUIZ TIME

Who wrote the 10 Commandments on the tablets of stone?

QUIZ TIME

Who created the golden calf?

Moses two tablets of stone on which He had written the 10 Commandments with His own finger. Moses stayed with God for 40 days!

THE GOLDEN CALF

Moses stayed so long on the mountain, the people thought he wasn't going to return. They decided to build an idol, a golden calf. They had seen the pagan idols that Egypt worshipped. Aaron took gold earrings from all the people and molded them into a golden calf for the people to worship (Exodus 32). This was a great sin against God.

When Moses came down from the mountain, he was carrying the tablets. Then he saw the golden calf and the people dancing around it. He became so angry he threw the two tablets down! They broke into pieces.

He shouted, "All those who are on God's side, come near to me!"

All the men of the tribe of Levi came to him. On Moses' order, they went forward and killed those who had committed this sin.

WRITING THE COMMANDMENTS AGAIN

Then God told Moses to come back up the mountain and bring two stone tablets. God wrote the commandments down again with His finger. Moses was on the mountain with God for another 40 days and 40 nights.

Moses returned to the people carrying the two tablets of stone with the 10 Commandments written on them.

Read in Exodus 20:2-17 what God wrote on the two tablets of stone with His own finger. These are the 10 Commandments God wants us to obey and live by.

THE 10 COMMANDMENTS (SHORT FORM)

1. You shall have no other gods before Me.
2. You shall not make idols.
3. You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain.
4. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.
5. Honor your father and your mother.
6. You shall not murder.
7. You shall not commit adultery.
8. You shall not steal.
9. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
10. You shall not covet.

QUESTIONS

Here are some questions to think about or talk about as a family:

1. The mountain was covered in smoke. There was thunder and lightning and the sound of a loud trumpet. The people of Israel were afraid. Would you be afraid?
2. What did the people do when Moses stayed so long on the mountain?
3. When they made an idol, what was it made of and what animal did it look like?
4. What did Moses do when he saw the idol?
5. How many times did God write His commandments on two tablets of stone?
6. Are we to obey the 10 Commandments today?
7. Can you memorize the short form of the 10 Commandments?

Read more about the 10 Commandments in Exodus 19-20 and 31-34. Also see our article [“The 10 Commandments for Today.”](#)



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