

Lesson 2: God Gives the Commandments

Bible passage: Exodus 19:18-20, Exodus 20:1-21

In our last story, we heard about Noah and his family. Many years later, God used another man who trusted and followed Him: Moses. God asked Moses to bring all the believers to the base of a mountain called Mount Sinai.

"Now Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke because the Lord had descended on it in fire. The smoke of it went up like the smoke of a kiln, and the whole mountain trembled greatly. And as the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him in the thunder. The Lord came down on Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain. And the Lord called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up" (Exodus 19:18-20).

While Moses was there, God gave him the Ten Commandments. These were ten rules for living, sort of like a map or directions about how to live a life that would please God. When God made the mountain shake, and the people saw all that fire and smoke, they were afraid. In fact, even the idea of ten rules for being perfect was scary to them! It can be a little scary for us, too. Moses reassured the people about why God was giving them the rules. God called them His people, His treasured possession. That means that He loves them. He loves us too! God was giving His people rules so they knew how to live as His loved people.

The first three commandments are these: "You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth... You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God" (Exodus 20:3-4, 7-10).

God wants us to love Him with all our heart, soul, and mind. That means we should love Him most.

The rest of the commandments are these: "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you. You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's" (Exodus 20:12-17).

God wants us to love everyone else, too. He wants us to love others as much as ourselves. We can love God by loving the other people He made.

Sometimes, we don't always love God most. Sometimes, we don't love other people. When we don't live according to God's direction, we sin. We break God's Commandments. We don't love.

When we sin, does God still love us? Yes! God loves us so much, He sent Jesus, His Son. Jesus never sinned. He never broke the Commandments. Jesus paid for our sin on the cross and rose again. Because of Jesus, we're forgiven! Now, Jesus helps us live in love with the help of the Holy Spirit. He makes our heart as good as new.

Lesson 2 Discussion Questions

Found in Exodus 19-20

- What happened on Mount Sinai?
 - Exodus 19:18-20; Exodus 20:1: The Lord came down
 - Moses went up on the mountain
 - God spoke to Moses and gave him the Ten Commandments
- Why did God give the Ten Commandments to His people?
 - Exodus 20:20: So they would fear—honor and respect—Him and not sin
- How many of the Commandments explain how we should treat God? What do they say?
 - Exodus 20:3-7: Three
 - You shall have no other gods
 - You shall not take the name of the Lord in vain
 - Keep the Sabbath holy
- What does it mean to covet? What does it mean to covet? Why do you think God doesn't want us to covet?
 - Exodus 20:17: Coveting is wanting something that belongs to others
 - God commands us not to covet our neighbor's house, wife, servants, animals, or anything
 - We should be grateful for God's gifts and find contentment in Him

Maps give us the information we need to get where we want to go. God's Word gives us the directions we need to find the way He wants us to live. Remember, because God loves us, He has given us directions for how to live a life that pleases Him. We are lost without His love and direction.

Can we always follow God's direction? No, we take wrong turns. That gets us into big messes! But Jesus is the Way. He follows the Law perfectly. He saves us from our sin when we go the wrong way. We can follow God's directions with joy because we know that He helps us and forgives us when we go the wrong way.

Pray

Loving God, thank You for the direction You give us in Your Ten Commandments. We are sorry for the times we sin against You and break Your rules. Thank You for forgiving us! We would be completely lost without Jesus, who leads us to You. Please help us to remember the Commandments, and give us power through the Holy Spirit to obey. In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen.