**The Ten Commandments**

**A Bible Story From**

**Exodus 19:1–20:21**

**Bible Story Number: 1010600**

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**The Ten Commandments**

**Bible Story**

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**Background**

God made a profound promise to Abraham (called a covenant):

I will bless you and make you the father of a great nation.

I will make you famous throughout history.

I will protect your allies and punish your enemies.

I will bless the entire world through your descendants.

This promise (covenant) was passed on to Isaac and Jacob. God reconfirmed His promise to the descendents of Abraham. The nation of Israel continued to be God’s chosen people.

The Israelites (descendents of Jacob) moved to Egypt as a part of God’s plan. God used what Joseph’s brothers intended as evil as a way to bless Joseph and rescue the entire family.

After the tenth plague that God sent on the Egyptian people, Pharaoh finally let the Israelites leave. They had been in Egypt 430 years. The day they left, there were approximately 600,000 foot soldiers in the Israelites army. The total number of people was much larger because this did not include their families.

The event in this story occurs during the time Moses was leading the Israelite people out of Egypt and to the land God had promised. After two months they came to the Desert of Sinai and camped there in front of the mountain (Mt. Sinai) for a long time.

Note:

More detailed Bible stories on each of these Ten Commandments, along with companion Bible stories from the New Testament, are provided in the book *Obey God’s Word* by Ronnie Fox (a Fox Ministries, Inc. publication available on Amazon).

**Story from the Bible**

**Exodus 19:1–20:21**

This is what the Bible says.

God told Moses what to say to the people. He gave clear instructions to Moses and to the Israelites.

God began by reminding the Israelites of all that He had done in leading them out of slavery in Egypt. He told them He had carried them out “on eagles’ wings.”

He also made it very clear that He wanted them to obey Him fully and keep His covenant. God told them that if they did obey Him fully and keep His covenant, then they would be His treasured possession out of all the peoples on the earth. He told them that although the whole earth is His, they would be set apart by Him and for Him as a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (a holy people).

The Israelites followed Moses’ instructions and prepared themselves. They followed Moses out to the foot of the mountain. The mountain was covered with smoke, and the whole mountain trembled violently. The Israelites heard Moses speak to God and heard God answer Moses.

God called Moses to the top of the mountain. So Moses went up. The people had been warned not to set foot on the mountain. God sent Moses back down to the people to get Aaron and bring him up too. He was to warn the people that they were not to come up.

God spoke the Ten Commandments to Moses on the mountain:

1. There is only one God; you shall have no other gods.
2. Do not make idols in any form, nor shall you worship or serve them.
3. Do not misuse or dishonor the name of God.
4. Keep one day of the week as a holy day to honor God.
5. Honor your father and mother.
6. Do not murder.
7. Do not commit adultery.
8. Do not steal.
9. Do not lie.
10. Do not covet other people or their things.

That concludes this story from the Bible.

**Retelling the Story**

Let’s review this story by retelling it as a group. We want to retell it as faithfully as we can to the story from the Bible. We do not want to add to it or leave out anything important. Who will get us started?

**Questions**

Note: The questions and discussion about the Ten Commandments should be focused beyond the events that tell the story of how God gave them to Moses and should address the fact that they were given by God for His people to follow. Exodus 19:5 states this purpose in the first part of this verse: “Now if you will listen to Me and carefully keep My covenant, you will be My own possession out of all the peoples.”

* Can you list the Ten Commandments? (Note: The first four address our relationship with God and the other six address our relationship with other people.)
* Why did God give the Ten Commandments?
* What did God want the Israelite people to do?
* What did God mean when he told the Israelites that they would become God’s treasured possession?
* What did God mean when he said they were to become a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (a holy people)?
* What did you like about this story?
* What did you not like about this story?
* What did you learn about God from this story?

**Prayer**

Prayer is more than a way to end the session. It is time to talk to God. Public prayer is a model for others. Boldly ask God to guide participants to use the Bible story with others. Ask God to give you and the participant’s insight and understanding as you think about this biblical event.