

The Ten Commandments

Overview

Materials You'll Need

- empty paper towel rolls
- large cotton balls or pom-poms
- construction paper
- markers, glitter
- scissors
- glue
- ribbon



Scriptures

Ex 19:1-20:17

Bible Truth Objective(s)

God wants us to listen and obey His commandments.

Behavioral Objective(s)

To know and understand the Ten Commandments; to list ways to be obedient to God.

Memory Verse

"I will hear what God the Lord will speak."
(Ps 85:8a)



Bible Knowledge

A Treaty With God

Moses received the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai. It is located in the southern part of the Sinai Peninsula, which is between the Gulf of Suez and Gulf of Aqaba, the two northern arms of the Red Sea.

Before receiving the Law, God first made a covenant with His people. This covenant is usually referred to as the Mosaic covenant. This covenant was a binding agreement in which God made certain promises to His people and the people would have to meet certain obligations.

First, God reminded the people how He had saved them from Egypt. Then He told them that if they obeyed Him and kept the covenant, the Israelites would become a "special treasure" and a "kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Ex 19:4-6).

When all the people agreed to this covenant, God then instructed the Israelites on how they should live. After the Law was given, the people reaffirmed the covenant with God, promising to

obey Him (Ex 24:7). They were now to be a nation with God as its king.

The Ten Commandments

The Ten Commandments, which Moses received from God, is vital to our belief. The first four deal with our attitude toward God and the last six with our attitude toward men.

1. You shall have no other gods before me.
2. You shall not make for yourself an idol.
3. You shall not take the name of the Lord in vain.
4. Remember the Sabbath day and 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 give false testimony.
10. You shall not covet.

The law was designed to lead Israel to a life of practical holiness. In it people could see the nature of God and His plan for how they should live. Its commands and guidelines were intended to direct the community to meet the needs of each individual in a loving and responsible manner.



Understanding Your Students

Because the children are so young, they may find the introduction of God's Ten Commandments a bit overwhelming. Even though these commandments are included in one single lesson, it may not be a good idea to spend just this one lesson on them, and then move directly into another concept the following week. Let your students reflect on these commandments over the course of the next several lessons, as God's commandments always apply. Therefore, it will help to have the Ten Commandments posted on the wall for easy reference.

When teaching the commandments, it may also help to use a visual display shortly after you've introduced each commandment. Some of your students may be poor auditory learners and will not likely be

able to read many words at such an early age. They often depend on their visual senses when it comes to picking up new information.

When introducing the commandments, briefly go over all ten of them first, so the students will know how many there are and how much information to expect. Afterwards, go into more detail on the commandments that are relevant to the young lives of your children.

The purpose of the lesson is not to overwhelm the children. The feeling they should be left with is the fact that God only wants two things from us. He wants us to love Him fully, and He also wants us to love one another just as we love ourselves. If we love God and others as much as possible, we will not break these commandments, and God will be pleased with us.



Vocabulary

Pure

clean and has nothing dirty

Jealous

to feel unhappy because of what other people have

Idol

a statue or something we worship like a god

Law

rules we have to follow

Honor

to show respect to someone



Before You Teach

Although Moses was the only one allowed on Mount Sinai, the Israelites were still witnesses to God's presence there. They saw the thunder, the lightning flashes, the mountain smoking, and heard the sound of the trumpet as Moses received the Ten Commandments. The Bible describes that the people trembled and stood afar as all this transpired. They were extremely afraid of God.

God's thunderous and mighty display of power at Mount Sinai was not to scare the people. He did not want them to think of Him as a violent and irrational God, lashing out at the people whenever He pleased. Rather, He wanted them to understand that He alone was the true and living God. Moses tried to comfort the people by saying, "Do not fear,

for God has come to test you, and that His fear may be before you, so that you may not sin" (Ex 20:20).

God did not want His people to be scared of Him. He wanted them to have an appropriate fear and respect for Him, as Moses tried to explain. This is exactly the purpose of the Ten Commandments. It was to help the people understand the consequences of sin. The right kind of fear of God would not make them afraid of God, but would help them become obedient, and thus lead them away from sin.

Today, how do we fear God? A true understanding of who God is makes us want to worship and please Him, not be scared of Him. We want to follow His commandments and teachings because we know He gave us His words to lead us to the heavenly kingdom. We fear God because He loves us.



Bible Story

God Takes Care of the Israelites

Now Moses had led all the Israelites across the Red Sea and out of Egypt. They were going to the promised land, Canaan. But this was a very, very long trip. They had walked for many, many weeks and were tired, thirsty and hungry.

They started to complain to Moses, "We're thirsty. We're hungry. We should never have come on this trip. We should have stayed in Egypt."

Then Moses cried out to God for help. Do you remember what God sent to the Israelites so that they would not be hungry? God sent them birds called quail to eat. He also gave them manna that they could pick in the morning. God helped the thirsty people by giving them water that came out of a rock. God performed many miracles to take really good care of the Israelites.

The Israelites Are at Mount Sinai

After three months of walking, the Israelites reached a mountain called Mount Sinai. God told Moses that if the people of Israel obeyed God and followed His rules, they would be God's special people.

The people said, "Yes! We will follow God's rules."

God then told Moses that He would show Himself at Mount Sinai in three days.

He said to Moses, "Get the people ready today and tomorrow so that they will be clean and pure when they meet Me. When I come upon Mount Sinai, the people cannot touch the mountain. They need to stand back."

So Moses talked to the Israelites and told them to clean themselves, wash their clothes and get ready to meet God.

On the third day, in the morning, the people were wondering how God would show Himself on Mount Sinai. Can anyone guess? Well, early in the morning, the people heard thunder and lightning. Could that be God coming? Yes! And then they saw a thick and big cloud on the mountain. God was telling the people that He was at Mount Sinai. Then there was a loud trumpet sound. It was so loud that the people were scared by it. That was how God told everyone He was with them. Then the people looked

up and saw that the mountain was covered in smoke because God had come in a fire. God did all these things to show the people His glory and His presence. He was with them. Then God told Moses to go up the mountain so that He could tell him what His special laws were. The people would stay at the bottom of the mountain and wait.

The Ten Commandments

Moses stayed on the mountain for 40 days and 40 nights. When he was there, God told him many things that the Israelites needed to do to be His special people. One of the most important things He talked about is called the Ten Commandments. They are special laws that God wants everyone to follow.

What are the Ten Commandments?

1. You shall have no other gods before me.
2. You shall not make for yourself an idol.
3. You shall not take the name of the Lord in vain.
4. Remember the Sabbath day and 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 give false testimony.
10. You shall not covet.

Wow! It's hard to remember all of these rules but they all help us obey God. The first four commandments help the people know that they should love and worship God. The first one says there is only one true God. We cannot follow other gods. God gets jealous and angry if we worship other gods. The second says we cannot make an idol. Do you know what idols are? (Allow students to brainstorm.) Idols are anything that we think is more important than God. Some people think other gods are more important. Some think money is more important. Others think a famous person is more important. But nothing is more important than God. We should not worship anything or anyone besides God because only God is the true God.

Do you think God would be happy if we used His name in a bad way? Of course not! God made a rule that told people not to use God's name in a bad way. This is the third commandment. This helps people know that they should use God's name only in a good way. We should only call on God's name

when we need help or when we want to thank and praise God.

God's fourth commandment is that we should worship Him on the seventh day of the week, which is Saturday, the Sabbath. When God created the world, He made it in six days and rested on the seventh day. In the same way, we should also rest on the seventh day. So on Saturday, we come to church and worship God to have rest.

These are the first four commandments of God. There are ten altogether. So there are six more to talk about. The next six of God's commandments help people know how to get along with each other.

God tells us to honor our father and mother in the fifth commandment. This commandment is an important one for children. It tells children to love and obey their parents. We can show our love to our parents by helping keep our room neat, looking after our little brother or sister, and saying thank you to our mom and dad. We should also listen to our mom and dad. They know more than we do and know what is good for us. When our dad tells us that this is not the right place to run around and shout, we need to quiet down. When our mom won't buy us a new toy, we shouldn't cry and argue. We probably have a lot of toys at home. When our mom and dad need our help, we should try to help them. What are some things we can help our parents with?

God also tells us not to hurt anyone in the sixth and seventh commandments. God wants us to treat everyone in a nice way. No one wants to be hit or have their feelings hurt. The eighth commandment tells us not to take something that does not belong

to us. That is called stealing. If we take something from a store without paying for it, that is stealing. When we take a toy from someone's house without telling that person, that is stealing. God does not want us to steal. Another rule is that we should not lie or say bad things about other people. That is the ninth commandment. We need to be honest and tell the truth. If we really did something wrong, we should tell the truth. Our parents will forgive us.

Lastly, we should not wish for something in a bad way. For example, if our friend has the newest and best bicycle and we want that bicycle so much that we wished our friend got hurt so that we can have the bicycle, that is wrong! We should wish good things for other people and be happy for other people when nice things happen to them. We need to remember that we have nice things too and we should be happy with what we have.

We Need to Obey

We just learned the Ten Commandments. God gave the Israelites the Ten Commandments to let them know what was right and what was wrong. If the Israelites followed God's ten rules, they would make God very happy and would get along with one another.

Even though there are many laws to remember, they all help us love one another. The first four help us to love God and the last six help us to love other people around us.



Check For Understanding

1. **Where did the Israelites wait for God?** (At Mount Sinai.)
2. **How did God show that He was at Mount Sinai?** (There was thunder and lightning. There was a thick cloud, trumpet sounds, smoke and fire.)
3. **Who was the only person allowed to go up the mountain?** (Moses.)
4. **How long was Moses on the mountain?** (He

was there for forty days and nights.)

5. **What did God give Moses when he was on the mountain?** (The Ten Commandments.)
6. **What is the first commandment?** (You shall have no other gods before me.)
7. **How can we obey God's commandments at home?** (Allow students to answer; obey our parents, share things with our brothers and sisters, take care of the house.)
8. **How can we obey God's commandments at church?** (Allow students to answer; listen to the teacher, help our friends in class.)



Life Application Story

Following the Rules

One Sunday morning, Mrs. Marsh was in the kitchen, getting ready to do some baking. John walked in just as she was getting the ingredients ready.

"What are you making today?" he asked.

"Well, Grandma gave us some apples a few days ago so I am going to bake a nice hot apple pie. Plus, I will be making your favorite chocolate chip cookies," replied Mrs. Marsh.

"Yum," said John as he ran off to play.

An hour later, John was in his room doing a puzzle. As he put in the last piece, he began to smell something in the air.

"I know that smell anywhere," he said to himself excitedly. He got up off the floor and ran towards the kitchen. When he got there, he saw a huge plate of cookies cooling off on a rack. His mouth began to water.

"I don't think Mom will mind if I take just two cookies. She baked so many that she wouldn't even know they were gone," he thought to himself as he grabbed them. He bit into the warm cookies and chewed them with great delight. He was almost done when his mom walked into the kitchen to check on the apple pie.

Right away, Mrs. Marsh noticed that the plate of cookies looked different, like someone had touched it.

"Hmm ... I wonder who ate some of the cookies I baked," Mrs. Marsh asked John, pretending she didn't know that John had taken the cookies.

"I ... I ... I don't know, Mom, maybe a Daddy ate them," John said with a shaky voice.

"John, Daddy is not even at home and you have crumbs all over your mouth," Mrs. Marsh said.

John knew that he had to tell the truth.

"I'm sorry, Mom, I shouldn't have eaten the cookies without asking you first. I broke your rule and didn't ask for your permission to eat those cookies."

"And you also lied to me about it when I asked you," said Mrs. Marsh. "Did you know that lying is breaking one of the Ten Commandments?"

"Yes, Mom," came John's reply. "I am really

sorry," John said again.

"I forgive you, dear. I know you like those cookies a lot but remember to ask me first before you take anything next time, okay?" Mrs. Marsh comforted John.

"I will remember, Mom." John said.

"You see, God gave the Israelites the Ten Commandments because He wanted to help them obey Him. We have rules in the house because it helps everyone do the right things," Mrs. Marsh agreed.

"Mom, thanks for not getting mad at me. I promise that I will try to not make you sad," said John to his mother.

Mrs. Marsh hugged John and nodded her head.

Questions to Think About

1. **What was Mrs. Marsh baking?** (She baked some cookies and an apple pie.)
2. **What did John do when he saw the big plate of warm cookies in the kitchen?** (He took some without asking his mom first.)
3. **When Mrs. Marsh asked him about the cookies, what did John say?** (He did not tell the truth at first. He was scared and said that Daddy ate them.)
4. **When John finally told the truth, did his mom get mad at him?** (No, she wasn't mad. She just wanted him to remember to always ask her first before taking anything.)
5. **Why do we have rules to follow?** (Let students answer. They help us know what is right and wrong. Rules help us learn to obey.)



Activity 1

The Ten Commandments Poster

Look at the Ten Commandments. Write the numbers from one to ten in each box. Read the Ten Commandments together. The students can cut out the words and paste the paper onto a piece of construction paper to make the poster more sturdy. The paper can also be hole-punched near the top and a piece of yarn can be strung through the holes to make it a hanging poster. The students can take the poster home and hang it somewhere visible.



Activity 2

Who is Obeying?

Look at each set of pictures. Who is obeying God? Circle the one who is doing what pleases God.



Activity 3

Scepters

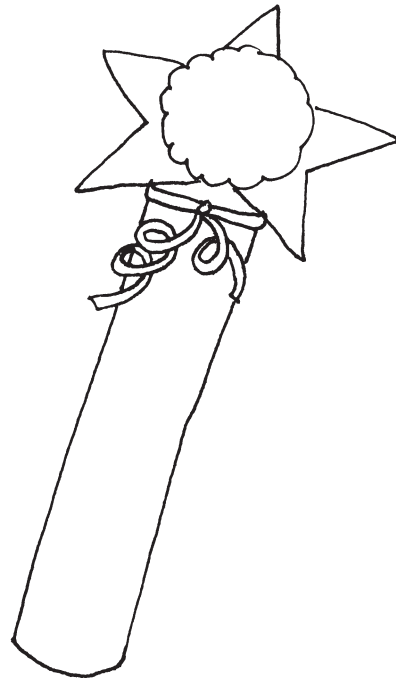
Materials:

1. empty paper towel rolls
2. large cotton balls or pompoms
3. construction paper (to make large stars)
4. markers, glitter
5. scissors
6. glue
7. ribbon

Directions:

1. Give each student an empty paper towel roll. They can decorate it with markers or glitter.
2. Have each student draw a large star on the construction paper (large enough to cover the hole on one end of the roll). Cut out the star and glue it to one end of the roll.
3. Glue a large cotton ball or pompom on top of the star to create the look of a king's scepter.
4. Tie a ribbon near the top of the scepter. You may wish to glue down parts of the ribbon to make sure it stays in place.
5. As the children are making the scepters, talk

about who would hold a scepter (a king or queen). We know that God is our King. As we hold the scepter in our hands, let us remember who our King is and how we need to obey Him (review the Ten Commandments as time permits).

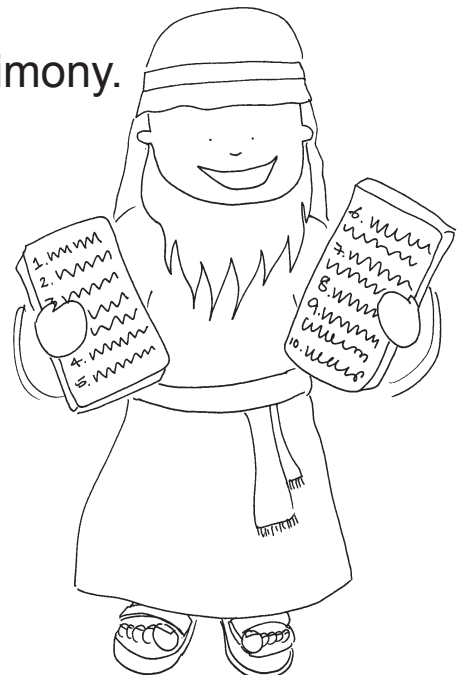


Activity 9:1

The Ten Commandments

Look at the Ten Commandments that God gave to Moses and His people.
Write down the numbers from 1 to 10 next to each commandment.

- You shall have no other gods before me.
- You shall not make for yourself an idol.
- You shall not take the name of the Lord in vain.
- Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy.
- Honor your father and your mother.
- You shall not murder.
- You shall not commit adultery.
- You shall not steal.
- You shall not give false testimony.
- You shall not covet.

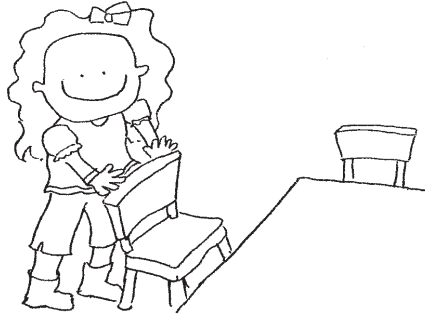


Activity 9.2

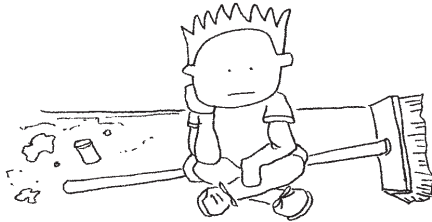
Who is Obeying?

Look at each set of pictures. Who is obeying God?
Circle the one who is doing what pleases God.

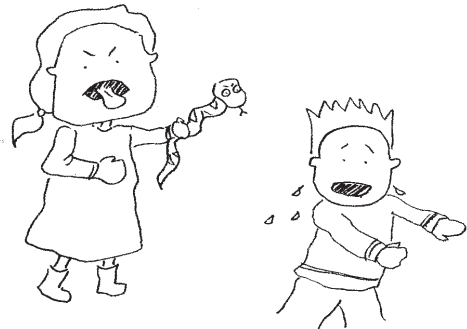
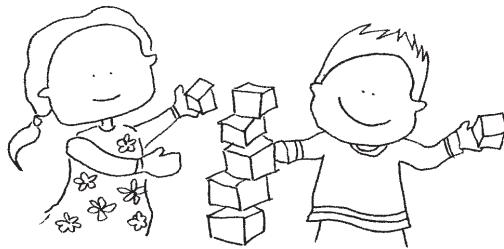
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2.



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