

Kids' Chronicle

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God shows the Hebrews how to live

Three months after the Hebrews left Egypt, they reached Mount Sinai in the middle of the desert. Throughout the journey, the Lord had been leading them toward the new home He had promised.

In the daytime, God guided the Hebrews' way with a huge cloud that went before them. At night, a pillar of fire illuminated their path in the desert. All that was required of the people was to keep following the cloud or the pillar of fire whenever they moved. When they reached Mount Sinai, the cloud stopped.

"Gather the people into groups and prepare to make camp here at the foot of the mountain," Moses told Aaron. As they were setting up the camp, everyone could see Moses walking up the mountain.

There the Lord had first told Moses that he wanted him to be the leader of his people. When Moses had gone nearly halfway up the mountain, he sat down on a rock and sighed with weariness. Soon he heard the Lord speaking to him.

"Moses, the people have all seen now that I have freed them from their slavery," the Lord began. "I brought down the plagues in Egypt so that Pharaoh would be persuaded to release them. Now I am guiding them to the Promised land."

"Yes, Lord," Moses replied. "And even though these people grumble and complain, they know that you are the one true God."

"I want you to go and ask them if they would like to be my special people," the Lord continued. "If they agree, there will be a covenant between us. I will provide for all of their needs; but, they must promise to obey me."



When Moses returned to the camp, he called a meeting of the elders of the people. "God has left it up to you to decide whether you want to enter into this agreement with him," Moses explained. "What answer should I give Him?"

"Tell God that we are willing to do everything that he asks of us," the elders said.

Three days later, Moses gathered the people at the foot of the mountain. "Now you shall witness the glory and power of God," he told them.

First, the people heard a great roll of thunder and saw lightning cut through the sky over Mount Sinai.

Then a huge cloud came down over the highest peak, and the people heard a loud trumpet blast.

The trumpet became so loud that it shook the ground where they were standing. Fire and smoke billowed from the cloud. As everyone stood and watched, Moses began walking alone back up Mount Sinai.

"The people have sent me to tell you that they want to enter into this special covenant," Moses told God. "What must we do now?"

That day, God gave Moses the laws that would help them lead good lives. These Ten Commandments were written on stone tablets so that the people would never forget their promise to obey God as their part of the agreement.

These are the laws God gave to Moses:

"I am the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt, and released you from your slavery.

"You shall have no other gods but Me.

"You shall not make any false gods in the form of anything to bow down and worship.

"You shall not misuse My Name.

"Keep the Sabbath holy and as a day of rest.

"Honor your father and mother.

"Do not kill anyone.

"Do not commit adultery.

"Do not steal.

"Do not tell lies.

"Be happy with what you have. Do not be jealous of other people's possessions."

Moses remained with God on Mount Sinai for 40 days and 40 nights while the people waited for him below.

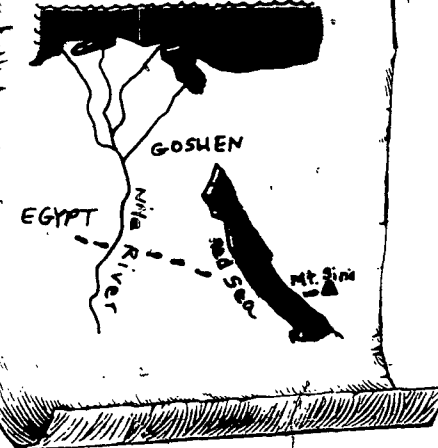
The Book of Exodus was written by Moses. This story is in Chapters 19 & 20.

The Bible Times

1445 B.C.
SINAI PENINSULA — A strangely violent thunderstorm struck today in the desert around Mount Sinai. A large fire was also seen blazing around the highest peak as an earthquake shook the ground below.

None of the people camped at the foot of the mountain were injured. Some of these witnesses said they heard loud trumpet blasts during the storm. Unconfirmed reports indicated that a man ascended the mountain during the storm.

Earlier, Mount Sinai was the site of another unusual event. A large bush reportedly burned for several days, but the fire never consumed it.



King Solomon's Wisdom

King Solomon was known as one of the wisest kings who ever ruled. He wrote many of the Proverbs found in the Old Testament.

"Ill-gotten gain brings no lasting happiness; right living does." **Proverbs 10:2.**

Q & A

1. If the Hebrews wanted to be God's special people, they had to promise to obey the Ten Commandments. What did God promise in return for their obedience?

2. How does God guide you today?

Contract

Contracts are two-way agreements. People on both sides make promises. Some contracts are written into laws that are signed, while others are simple "handshake agreements." God gave the Hebrews an everlasting contract called a covenant.

Use the clues below to fill out the "terms" of this contract. (The answers appear on page 14.)

- When people borrow money to buy a house, they go to a bank and sign this kind of contract, promising to pay the money back.
- When you are old enough, you can promise to obey all the traffic laws and get this card allowing you to drive a car.
- If people in a country break their agreement to obey the laws, this is the state of affairs.
- When a man and woman get engaged, they make a promise to sign this type of contract on a certain day.
- In 1789, representatives from different U.S. states signed this agreement between the citizens and the government.

Talking to God

"God's laws are perfect. They protect us, make us wise and give us joy. God's laws are pure and more desirable than gold. They keep us from harm and give success to those who obey them."

Psalm 19:7-11

Kids' Club

Your answer could win a \$50 Savings Bond!
Would you have greater freedom if there were no laws?

Write your answer in 100 words or less. Include your name, home address, telephone number, school and grade. The winning essay will earn a \$50 U.S. Savings Bond (winner will be notified by phone) and be printed in an upcoming edition of Kids' Chronicle. Send your entry to: Cindy Bassett, c/o Catholic Courier, 1150 Buffalo Rd., Roch., NY 14624
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