

wash their clothes **11** and be ready the day after tomorrow. On that day I will come down on Mount Sinai, where all the people can see me. **12** Mark a boundary around the mountain that the people must not cross, and tell them not to go up the mountain or even get near it. If any of you set foot on it, you are to be put to death; **13** you must either be stoned or shot with arrows, without anyone touching you. This applies to both people and animals; they must be put to death. But when the trumpet is blown, then the people are to go up to the mountain."

14 Then Moses came down the mountain and told the people to get ready for worship. So they washed their clothes, **15** and Moses told them, "Be ready by the day after tomorrow and don't sleep with a woman in the meantime."

16 On the morning of the third day there was thunder and lightning, a thick cloud appeared on the mountain, and a very loud trumpet blast was heard. All the people in the camp trembled with fear. **17** Moses led them out of the camp to meet God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. **18** All of Mount Sinai was covered with smoke, because the LORD had come down on it in fire. The smoke went up like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain trembled violently. **19** The sound of the trumpet became louder and louder. Moses spoke, and God answered him with thunder. **20** The LORD came down on the top of Mount Sinai and called Moses to the top of the mountain. Moses went up **21** and the LORD said to him, "Go down and warn the people not to cross the boundary to come and look at me; if they do, many of them will die. **22** Even the

priests who come near me must purify themselves, or I will punish them."

23 Moses said to the LORD, "The people cannot come up, because you commanded us to consider the mountain sacred and to mark a boundary around it."

24 The LORD replied, "Go down and bring Aaron back with you. But the priests and the people must not cross the boundary to come up to me, or I will punish them." **25** Moses then went down to the people and told them what the LORD had said.

The Ten Commandments

20 **1** God spoke, and these were his words: **2** "I am the LORD your God who brought you out of Egypt, where you were slaves.

3 "Worship no god but me.

4 "Do not make for yourselves images of anything in heaven or on earth or in the water under the earth. **5** Do not bow down to any idol or worship it, because I am the LORD your God and I tolerate no rivals. I bring punishment on those who hate me and on their descendants down to the third and fourth generation. **6** But I show my love to thousands of generations of those who love me and obey my laws.

7 "Do not use my name for evil purposes, for I, the LORD your God, will punish anyone who misuses my name.

8 "Observe the Sabbath and keep it holy. **9** You have six days in which to do your work, **10** but the seventh day is a day of rest dedicated to me. On that day no one is to work—neither you, your children, your slaves, your animals, nor the foreigners who live in your country. **11** In six days I, the LORD, made the earth, the sky, the seas, and everything in them, but on the seventh



day I rested. That is why I, the LORD, blessed the Sabbath and made it holy.

12 "Respect your father and your mother, so that you may live a long time in the land that I am giving you.

13 "Do not commit murder.

14 "Do not commit adultery.

15 "Do not steal.

16 "Do not accuse anyone falsely.

17 "Do not desire another man's house; do not desire his wife, his slaves, his cattle, his donkeys, or anything else that he owns."

The People's Fear

18 When the people heard the thunder and the trumpet blast and saw the lightning and the smoking mountain, they trembled with fear and stood a long way off. **19** They said to Moses, "If you speak to us, we will listen; but we are afraid that if God speaks to us, we will die."

20 Moses replied, "Don't be afraid; God has only come to test you and make you keep on obeying him, so that you will not sin." **21** But the people continued to stand a long way off, and only Moses went near the dark cloud where God was.

Laws about Altars

22 The LORD commanded Moses to tell the Israelites: "You have seen how I, the LORD, have spoken to you from heaven. **23** Do not make for yourselves gods of silver or gold to be worshiped in addition to me. **24** Make an altar of earth for me, and on it sacrifice your sheep and your cattle as offerings to be completely burned and as fellowship offerings. In every place that I set aside for you to worship me, I will come to you and bless you. **25** If you make an altar of stone for me, do not

build it out of cut stones, because when you use a chisel on stones, you make them unfit for my use. **26** Do not build an altar for me with steps leading up to it; if you do, you will expose yourselves as you go up the steps.

The Treatment of Slaves

21 ¹ "Give the Israelites the following laws: **2** If you buy a Hebrew slave, he shall serve you for six years. In the seventh year he is to be set free without having to pay anything. **3** If he was unmarried when he became your slave, he is not to take a wife with him when he leaves; but if he was married when he became your slave, he may take his wife with him. **4** If his master gave him a wife and she bore him sons or daughters, the woman and her children belong to the master, and the man is to leave by himself. **5** But if the slave declares that he loves his master, his wife, and his children and does not want to be set free, **6** then his master shall take him to the place of worship. There he is to make him stand against the door or the doorpost and put a hole through his ear. Then he will be his slave for life.

7 "If a man sells his daughter as a slave, she is not to be set free, as male slaves are. **8** If she is sold to someone who intends to make her his wife, but he doesn't like her, then she is to be sold back to her father; her master cannot sell her to foreigners, because he has treated her unfairly. **9** If a man buys a female slave to give to his son, he is to treat her like a daughter. **10** If a man takes a second wife, he must continue to give his first wife the same amount of food and clothing and the same rights that she had before. **11** If he does not fulfill these duties to her,

God Gives His People the Ten Commandments



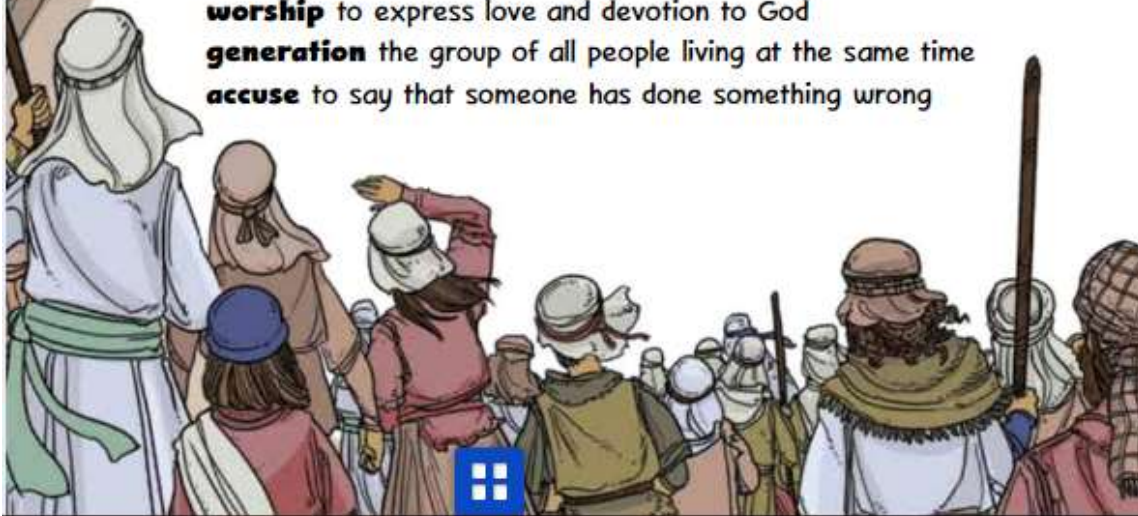
Exodus 20:2-3, 6-8, 12-17 (For the full story, read Exodus 19:16-20:17.)

2 "I am the LORD your God who brought you out of Egypt, where you were slaves. **3** **Worship** no god but me. **6** I show my love to thousands of **generations** of those who love me and obey my laws. **7** Do not use my name for evil purposes. . . . **8** Observe the Sabbath and keep it holy. **12** Respect your father and your mother. . . . **13** Do not commit murder. **14** Do not commit adultery. **15** Do not steal. **16** Do not **accuse** anyone falsely. **17** Do not desire another man's house; . . . his wife, his slaves, his cattle, his donkeys, or anything else that he owns."

worship to express love and devotion to God

generation the group of all people living at the same time

accuse to say that someone has done something wrong



Understand It!

Your parents have rules like "Don't play in the street" and "Wash your hands before you eat." These rules keep you safe and happy. Like a loving Father, God gave Moses ten rules that are called the Ten Commandments. God did this to keep his people safe and happy.

The first three commandments teach us how to love God. They tell us to believe in God and to treat his name with respect. They teach us to love God by keeping one day a week holy. This means going to Mass on Sunday. The next seven commandments teach us how to love other people. They tell us to obey our parents, to tell the truth, to never take other people's things, and to never hurt someone else. Following the Ten Commandments will prepare us to live with God forever in Heaven.

STORY
Exodus 20

Live It!

Children follow God's commandments in many ways.

For example:

- They pray and use God's name in the right way.
- They go to Mass, obey their parents, and treat others kindly.
- They tell the truth and don't take what belongs to others.

Ask God to help you follow his commandments today and every day.

Tell It!



1



2



3

Using the pictures above, retell the reading in your own words.

