

## Grade 2—Unit 3

# The Sinai Experience

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The Exodus experience led the Israelites to Mt. Sinai, where God had first called Moses saying, “When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain” (Exodus 3:12). God’s grace was evident in bringing the Israelites out of their oppression as slaves and into freedom as God’s nation. The people responded by committing themselves to faithful obedience. Students can continue to retell the Wilderness Box stories.

### LESSONS

1. Manna, Cloud, and Fire
2. The Ten Words
3. The Golden Calf
4. Broken Tablets
5. The Ark of the Covenant

# Unit 3: The Sinai Experience

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## Unit Information

### SUMMARY

God provided for the Israelites during their journey in the desert. Children will see the importance of the events at Mt. Sinai and God's love in giving the Ten Commandments. The covenant made between God and the Israelites was an agreement that promised faithfulness and obedience. When things didn't go their way, however, the Israelites doubted God and returned to their old ways, asking Aaron to make them an idol to worship. The tablets that Moses broke in anger at the Israelites' disobedience are a symbol of the broken covenant. But God is forgiving, and God renewed the covenant with the children of Israel.

### KEY BIBLE TEXTS

Exodus 13:20-22

Exodus 15:22-17:7

Exodus 19-20:17

Exodus 25:10-22

Exodus 32:1-6

Exodus 32:7-34:35

Leviticus 26:11-12

### BIBLICAL BACKGROUND

#### Mount Sinai

The Exodus was a time when God taught the children of Israel to believe in the one true God and to put their trust in him. God reminded the Israelites that God had brought them out of Egypt; they were chosen to be God's special people. Moses brought the Israelites to Mt. Sinai and camped at the foot of the mountain where God had first called him. It was here that God made a covenant with the children of Israel. The covenant was an agreement or promise. God promised to make them a holy nation and bless them; the Israelites promised to obey the one true God and to be faithful and obedient.

At Mt. Sinai, God gave the Ten Commandments—or, from the literal Hebrew translation, the Ten Words—to the Israelites. These Ten Words were a guide to help the people to live together in peace. These guidelines were not given to be restrictive but rather to free people to live in community with one another. The first four commandments told the Israelites how to live in right relationship with God. The next six told them how to live in right relationship with others.

#### Forgetting

It is difficult to imagine how the Israelites could return to idol worship after having promised to obey God and having experienced God's faithfulness. From our perspective, forty days doesn't seem to be a long span of time. There is little doubt that the Israelites had been greatly influenced by the many gods and idols worshiped by the Egyptians. With Moses still up on the mountain and absent from them for

so many days, the people began to doubt. They wondered if something had happened to Moses. Maybe he had been eaten by an animal! They felt that God had left them. But how would they know? They wanted a god they could see, so Aaron made them a golden calf to worship. Moses pleaded with God to forgive their sin and wickedness and to take them as children. God renewed the covenant and continued to lead the children of Israel. They fell into a cycle of obedience followed by disobedience, repentance, and then obedience again.



### The Ark

God gave Moses detailed directions for building a tabernacle or tent of meeting (*this will be studied in detail in fifth grade*). Each item that was placed in the holy tent was important and had a certain meaning. God knew the children of Israel needed a symbol of God's presence. The Ark of the Covenant symbolized the bond made between God and God's people.

## ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS

- God called the children of Israel to be his special people.
- God wants us to trust and recognize the one true God.
- God is displeased when we break promises to God. Yet God is loving and patient, forgiving us over and over again.
- The Israelites followed a cycle of: a call to faithfulness (*covenant-making*) → faithful response → falling from faithfulness (*covenant-breaking*) → repentance → call back to faithfulness
- In Egyptian culture, people worshiped many different gods. They built idols for these gods.
- The Ark of the Covenant was a symbol of God's presence with the Israelites and of the bond between God and God's people.

## WORSHIP

*Focus:* Covenant

*Worship Table Symbols:*

- **Loaf of bread** to symbolize the manna that God provided in the desert (Lesson 1)
- **List of rules** to represent the Ten Commandments (Lesson 2)
- **Calf figure** (plastic or wood) to represent the golden calf idol, *OR* the **Storytelling Rope** used in the lesson (Lesson 3)
- **Model Ark of the Covenant** (students will make in Lesson 4)

*Suggested Songs:* "Obey My Voice" (*Hymnal: A Worship Book* #163), "Song of Forgiveness" (*Jubilee Songbook*, p. 55), "Angels Watchin' Over Me" (*Jubilee Songbook*, p. 63)

Sometime during worship you could also lead the class in a **liturgy of forgiveness**, since this unit focuses on how God forgave the Israelites over and over again. Pass out slips of paper, and invite students to write on them one thing for

which they would like to ask God to forgive them. *(They do not need to sign their names.)* Have the children come to the front of the room and tear up their slips of paper and drop them in a trashcan, as a way to symbolize that God forgives us completely. Sing the “Song of Forgiveness” from *Jubilee Songbook*, p. 55.

## **ASSESSING TEACHING / LEARNING**

You will have opportunities throughout this unit to assess your students’ understanding of the material: their written descriptions of the Israelites’ plight in Lesson 1 *(which would be good for portfolios)*, their knowledge of the Bible memory verse in Lesson 3 and elsewhere, and any informal re-enactments of the biblical text when they use the Wilderness Box. A Unit 3 assessment sheet is also available.

## **MEMORY VERSE**

*I will put my dwelling place among you, and I will not abhor you. I will walk among you and be your God, and you will be my people. (Leviticus 26:11-12)*

### **Suggested Motions:**

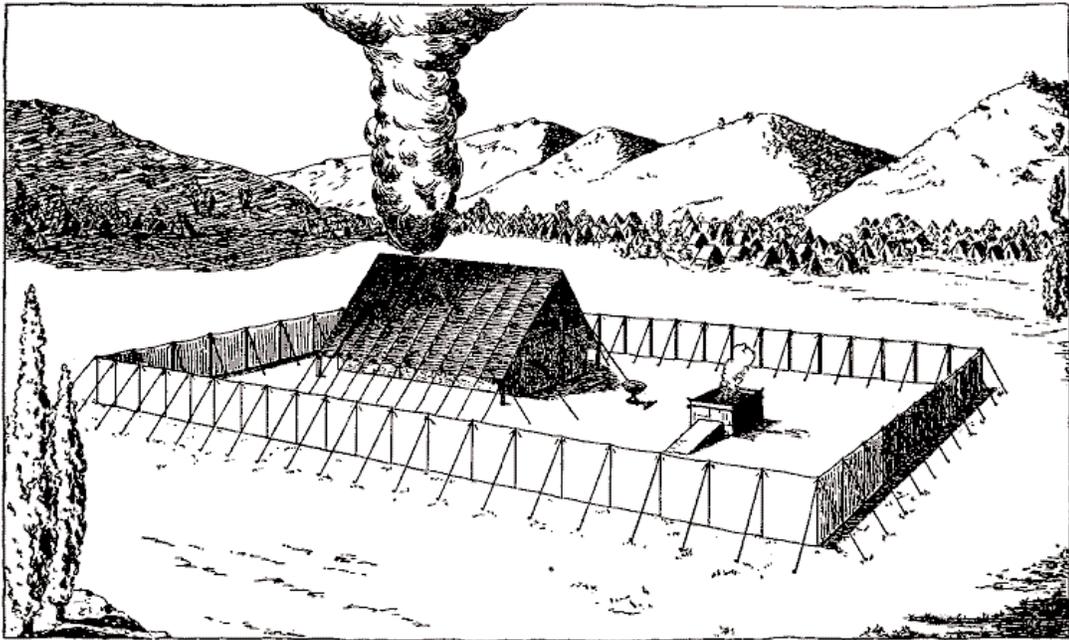
I will put my dwelling place among you *(make shape of tent with fingertips together)*  
and I will not abhor you *(put hand over eyes)*

I will walk among you *(“walk” fingers in air)*  
and be your God, and you will be my people *(hold out arms in embracing motion)*

## **BONUS MEMORY VERSES**

*And God spoke all these words: “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them.” (Exodus 20:1-5a)*

*When Moses went and told the people all the Lord’s words and laws, they responded with one voice, “Everything the Lord has said we will do.” Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it to the people. They responded, “We will do everything the Lord has said; we will obey.” (Exodus 24:3,7)*



I will put my dwelling  
place among you, and  
I will not abhor you.  
I will walk among you  
and be your God, and you  
will be my people.

Leviticus 26:11-12

## ***Dear Parents,***

*During this unit, entitled “The Sinai Experience,” your child will learn to see God’s love in giving the Ten Commandments.*

### **Unit Overview**

The covenant made between God and the Israelites was an agreement which promised faithfulness and obedience. When things didn’t go their way, however, the Israelites doubted God and returned to their old ways and turned to idol worship. The tablets that Moses broke in anger at the Israelites’ sin are a symbol of the broken covenant. But we are thankful that God is forgiving, and that God renews the covenant over and over again, even when we fail to keep our end.

### **Memory Verse**

The memory verse for this unit comes from Leviticus 26:11-12: *I will put my dwelling place among you, and I will not abhor you. I will walk among you and be your God, and you will be my people.*

### **Suggested Motions:**

I will put my dwelling place among you (*make shape of tent with fingertips together*)

and I will not abhor you (*put hand over eyes*)

I will walk among you (*“walk” fingers in air*)

and be your God, and you will be my people (*hold out arms in embracing motion*)

### **Ideas**

- ✓ Appropriate songs for this unit include “Obey My Voice” and “Angels Watchin’ Over Me.”
- ✓ Worship Table: The worship in this unit focuses on the covenant between God and God’s people. Suggestions for symbols to put on a worship table are: **a loaf of bread** to symbolize the manna that God provided in the desert; **a list of rules** to represent the Ten Commandments; **a calf figure** (*plastic or wood*) to represent the Golden Calf; and **a model Ark of the Covenant or small model of a church** to represent God’s presence with God’s people.
- ✓ As your child talks about God’s covenant at school, you could draw up a family covenant at home. The covenant might begin by recalling past events when your family felt God was a real presence. You could write, for example: “We remember that God was with Sarah when she was locked in the van,” or “We remember that God helped Eli to be brave when he cut his foot.” You could then move on to making several family promises to God and to each other, such as, “We will love the Lord God,” and “We will try to help each other.” It’s important that covenant-making not be forced on a child as a method of discipline or a reminder of bad behavior, but rather that it grows out of a joyful and willing commitment to the family and to God.
- ✓ Make “manna” with your child for a special snack: Sift together 2 cups flour, 3 tsp. baking powder, and ½ tsp. salt. Cut in ¼ cup shortening to the dry ingredients. Then stir in 1/3 cup honey and ⅔ cup milk (*if sticky, add more flour*). Roll out on a cookie sheet and cut into 1-inch squares. Bake at 350 degrees for about 8 minutes, or until golden brown.
- ✓ Since children will be learning about how God provided manna for the Israelites, this would be a good time for them to learn how God uses us to help provide for others who are in need. You could do a family service project together at a local soup kitchen or food bank, or give a special family offering to Mennonite Central Committee, Bread for the World, or another organization that provides food relief. Talk about the ways that we can help to provide “manna” for others in our community or around the world.

# The Sinai Experience

## LESSON 1: MANNA, CLOUD, AND FIRE

### Objective

Students will identify the feelings of the Israelites before and after receiving God's gifts of food (*manna*) and leading (*pillars of cloud and fire*).

### Key Concepts

- God guided the Israelites with a cloud by day and a pillar of fire at night.
- God cares for God's children by providing food and water for them.
- God wants us to trust God.
- God wants us to give God our thanks.

**Text:** Exodus 13:20-22, 15:22-17:7

**Estimated Lesson Time:** 35-40 minutes

### Materials

- Flashlight
- Children's Bible storybook (*optional*)
- Wilderness Box, circle of blue cloth; small rocks; short, thick stick; crackers
- Manna worksheet (p. 111)
- Student Bibles
- Basket for an offering
- For Extend the Lesson, option one: ingredients for "manna" (*see p. 108*)
- For Extend the Lesson, option two: salt water, fresh water, paper cups
- For Extend the Lesson, option three: "Bread! In God's Name, Bread!" (p. 112)

### Teacher Preparation

1. Prepare to tell or read the story from Exodus or from a children's Bible storybook. You could also use the Wilderness Box script on p. 110.
2. Prepare a Wilderness Box if you have not already done so (*see previous lessons and pages 39-40 for more details*). For this lesson you will also need: a circle of blue cloth to represent water; a number of small rocks for the desert; a short, thick stick to represent a log; crackers to represent manna.
3. Choose an organization (*such as Mennonite Central Committee or Bread for the World*) that provides food relief to people as an offering project for the students.
4. Ask students ahead of time to bring an offering for this lesson.
5. Make copies of the manna worksheet, one for each student.

## INTRODUCING THE LESSON

**Experience the dark.** Pull down the blinds, turn off the lights, and have the children try to follow you around the room in the dark. (*If it's not dark enough, have them cover their eyes or just imagine that it's completely dark.*) Turn on the flashlight and see what a difference it makes. Have children imagine trying to find their way somewhere in complete darkness, without even a flashlight to help them. How would they feel?

## LESSON STEPS

**1. Read Exodus 13:20-22** from the Bible. Children should listen find out what God provided to help lead the Israelites through the night. Talk about the pillar of fire and the cloud.

**2. Tell the story.** Explain that God provided for the Israelites in other ways, too. Read or tell the story from Exodus 5:22-17:7, from a children's Bible storybook, or from the script on p. 110. Use the figures in the Wilderness Box to act out the story (*see p. 110 for ideas, even if you read the story from the Bible or from another book*).

If you have time, invite several students to act out the story with the Wilderness Box, or else provide that chance during free time at another point during the day.

**3. Complete the manna worksheet.** Ask the children to pretend they are some of the Israelites. Hand out copies of p. 111 and have them write words and draw pictures of how they felt before receiving the manna and after receiving the manna.

**4. Explain the offering project.** Tell the students that we can help to provide "manna" for people who don't have enough to eat. Ask them to get out their offering money. Then describe the organization you have chosen to receive the money.

As you collect the offering, sing the following two verses of "I Am Thankful" (*to the tune of "Frere Jacques"*):

I am thankful, I am thankful,  
for my food, for my food.  
I am thankful, I am thankful,  
for my food, for my food.

If you have time (*or during another period*), you could invite several students to write a letter to the organization that would be sent along with the offering money.

## EXTEND THE LESSON

*(These activities will take longer than the regular lesson time.)*

• **Make "manna"** for—or with—your students. Here is the recipe:

Sift together 2 cups flour, 3 tsp. baking powder, and ½ tsp. salt.

Cut in ¼ cup shortening to the dry ingredients.

Then stir in ⅓ cup honey and ⅔ cup milk (*if sticky, add more flour*).

Roll out on a cookie sheet and cut into 1-inch squares.

Bake at 350 degrees for about 8 minutes or until golden brown.

You could then dramatize the story by having children "sleep" on the floor while you walk around and place bags of "manna" at different places on the floor. Then, when they wake up, they can have a snack.

- **Act out the story of the Israelites at Marah.** Pour salt water into one set of cups labeled “1,” and fresh water into another set labeled “2.” Tell the story from Exodus 15:22-27, in which Moses throws the piece of wood into the salt water and it becomes sweet. Have students taste the salt water first, and after you’ve touched the cups with a stick, have them drink the fresh water from the number 2 cups. Alternately, you could act out the section of the story from Exodus 17:1-7, where Moses strikes the rock and it gives water.

- **Read “Bread! In God’s Name, Bread!”** by Peter Dyck (p. 112). Read it yourself or invite a parent or school staff member to come in and read the story.

# Wilderness Box Script: Manna, Cloud, and Fire

For this lesson, the box should include:

- Tan bath towel, sand, or brown butcher paper (wilderness)
- Figures: Moses, Aaron, Miriam, and five Israelites
- Small rocks placed in the sand (or on towel or brown paper)
- Short, thick stick (log)
- Circle of blue cloth (water)
- Crackers broken into pieces (manna)



After crossing the Red Sea, God led the children of Israel into the wilderness. God sent a cloud to lead them by day and a pillar of fire to lead them at night. The Lord, their God, was with them.

The wilderness was rough desert land. It was dry and rocky. (*Move Moses and people across rocks, closer to water.*) The Israelites walked for three days, looking for water. At last they came to an oasis called Marah. (*Move people to edge of water.*) But the water was bitter and the people could not drink it. They cried to Moses, “What are we to drink?”

Moses asked God for help. (*Move Moses a step forward.*) God told Moses to take a log and throw it into the water. (*Place log in water.*) Moses did just as God said, and the water became good to drink.

Moses continued to lead the people through the desert. (*Move Moses and people to another place in box.*) At Elim, the people began to complain and grumble to Moses, saying that at least in Egypt they had food to eat. In the desert, they had no food and were starving.

Again, God heard the people. God told Moses that in the morning, bread would rain down from heaven for the people to eat. The people went to sleep (*lay figures down and put pieces of crackers around them*). When they woke up in the morning, they found manna lying around them on the grass (*make Israelites “pick up” and “eat” crackers*). It was white, and tasted like wafers made with honey. They collected the manna and ate it, and their hunger was gone.

God provided manna for the Israelites for forty years. In this way, God taught the Israelites to trust and obey God’s words.

**Optional extension:** The Israelites were only to collect enough for one day and not try to keep it until the next morning. Those who hoarded some found that it was full of bugs and smelly. But on the sixth day, when God said that they were to gather enough for the Sabbath, the manna remained good to eat. Those who went out and tried to collect manna on the seventh day found that there was none.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Before God Gave Us Manna

Imagine you are an Israelite. You have not eaten for days. How do you feel? Write two sentences and draw a picture of yourself before you ate manna.

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## After God Gave Us Manna

Now imagine that you have eaten the manna that God sent. Write a story about how you woke up and found the manna, and how you feel now that you've eaten again. Draw a picture, too.

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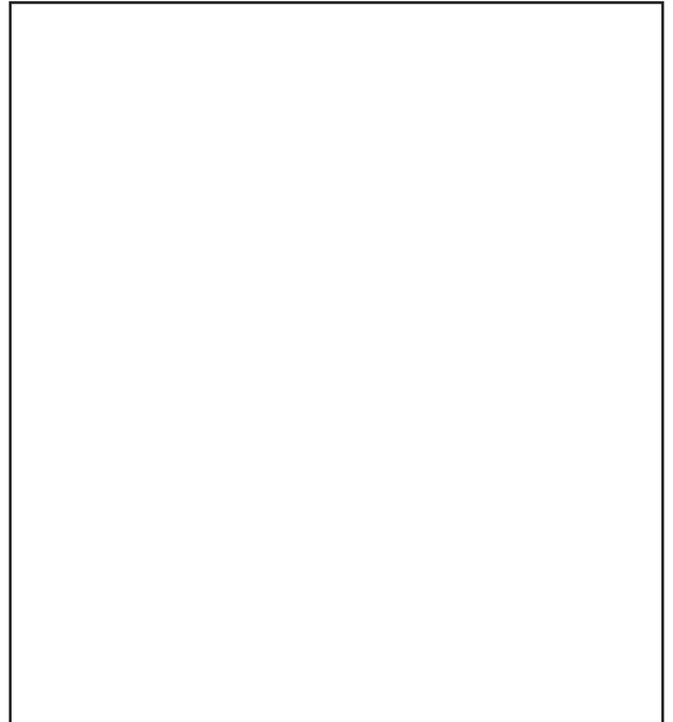
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# Bread! In God's Name, Bread!

by Peter Dyck

The potato soup was mostly water. We had eaten only an hour ago, but I was hungry again. It would be another long night. I would be tossing on my bed, waiting for breakfast, but knowing all the time that the one piece of bread I'd get would still leave me hungry. I wondered whether I would ever again be able to eat all I wanted and not be hungry.

World War I and the Revolution that followed had left Russia weak and cold and hungry. No one had enough to eat. Many people were dying of starvation.

My father went through a nearby Russian village and saw an old man sitting on a bench in the front of his house. "How are you, Grandpa?" he asked.

The old man feebly replied, "It won't be long now." Later, when my father passed there again, he saw that the old man had fallen off the bench. He stopped his wagon, got off, and discovered that the man was dead.

Women scraped bark off trees, dried it, crushed it to a powder and cooked it as a food for their children. There was not much nourishment in it, but they stopped crying for a little while when their tummies were filled with the warm mush.

Our Mennonite people in Russia have always been very sociable. We love to visit, share meals together, and take a deep interest in each other's affairs. But during the famine years of 1920-21, no one visited anyone during mealtime. It was too embarrassing not to be able to invite your company to sit down to the table with you.

One time, company did arrive from some distance at my grandparents' house across the street during the lunch hour. My sister was quickly sent over with a little bucket of thin pumpkin soup to help Grandma out.

Every morning when Mother opened the door, the beggars who had waited outside for that moment rushed forward with outstretched skinny arms, crying, "Bread, in God's name, a piece of bread!"

Mother counted more than fifty and even seventy beggars at our door in one day. They were in rags, pitifully skinny, often sick, and sometimes could hardly walk anymore.

We all wondered how long the famine would last and who would be the next one to die of hunger. I was a boy of six then. I was in bed with typhus and was not expected to live.

Everyone prayed for bread. Food was all we could think about. When we prayed the Lord's Prayer and came to the words "give us this our daily bread," some started to cry; others just stopped there. But there was no food. It seemed as if God had forgotten us.

One day, my father read in the paper that a Mr. Alvin Miller, a Mennonite from America, had arrived in the big city of Moscow, the capital of Russia. He had come to help the starving people. Immediately our community asked Father to go to Moscow and investigate. He did and came back saying that what the papers said was true. Alvin Miller had arrived and made an agreement with the Russian government to receive food from the North American Mennonites and to distribute it through an organization called American Mennonite Relief.

On Christmas Day, our pastor, Peter Wiens, announced in church that the first shipment of food had arrived from our brothers and sisters in North America. It was all brought to our farm and subdivided for the different villages. We received flour, rice, cocoa, condensed milk, and vegetable oil. In his autobiography my father writes, "After years of extreme hardship, all these supplies seemed like luxury to us. Many, many people's lives were saved by this food."

God had not forgotten us. He had led us into a deep valley, but through faithful people in faraway America, he lifted us up again. He gave us a new song to sing, a song of praise and thanksgiving.

# The Sinai Experience

## LESSON 2: THE TEN WORDS

### Objective

Students will recognize summaries of the Ten Commandments and discuss the reasons that rules exist.

### Key Concepts

- God gave the Ten Commandments to the Israelites as guidelines for living together happily and peacefully.
- God gave us rules because God loves us and knows what is best for us.

**Text:** Exodus 19, Exodus 20:1-17

**Estimated Lesson Time:** 30 minutes

### Materials

- Sheet of newsprint, markers
- Children’s Bible storybook (*optional*)
- Wilderness Box, including large rock
- Wilderness Box script (p. 115, *optional*)
- “The Ten Commandments” (p. 116)
- Student Bibles
- For Extend the Lesson, option one: “Ten Commandments Rhythm Rhyme” (p. 118)
- For Extend the Lesson, option two: cardstock paper, hole punch, shoestring or metal binder rings
- For Extend the Lesson, option three: lined chart paper

### Teacher Preparation

1. Prepare the Wilderness Box, if you have not yet done so (*see previous lessons and pages 39-40 for details*). For this lesson, you will also need a large rock to represent Mount Sinai.
2. Make two columns on the sheet of newsprint, the left one labeled “Rules” and the right one labeled “Reasons.”
3. Make copies of “The Ten Commandments” handout, one for each student.

### INTRODUCING THE LESSON

**Thinking about rules.** Invite students to tell you some of the rules of your classroom or of their homes. Use the sheet of newsprint you prepared, with two columns. List the rules in the “Rules” column. Then talk about each rule, and have children brainstorm reasons you or their parents might have for making that rule. List these ideas in the “Reasons” column.

## LESSON STEPS

**1. Tell or read the story of the Ten Commandments** from Exodus 19 and 20:1-17 or from a children's Bible storybook. (*You could also use the script on page 115.*) Use the figures in the Wilderness Box to act out the story.

**2. "The Ten Commandments."** Distribute the handouts and student Bibles. Help children find Exodus 20:1-17 in their Bibles. If they haven't had much practice looking things up in the Bible, you may need to explain how chapters are divided into numbered verses. Have students help each other to find chapter 20, verses 1-17.

**3. Read the first commandment** and see if the students can find it in the Bible. What number verse is it in? Have students put that number on the blank for commandment number one. Work together on the rest of the handout. You may need to briefly explain words such as: covet, murder, false testimony, adultery. These could be added to the Word Wall.

**4. Teach the song "Obey My Voice"** (#163, *Hymnal: A Worship Book*), and sing it together.

**5. Memory verse.** If you have time, work at memorizing Leviticus 26:11-12.

## EXTEND THE LESSON

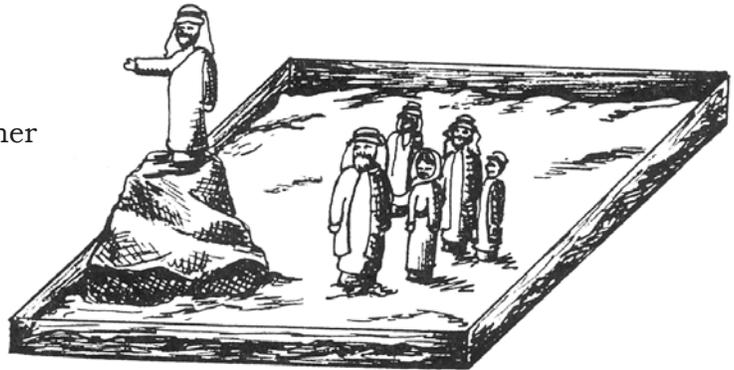
*(These activities will take longer than the regular lesson time.)*

- **Ten Commandments Rhythm Rhyme.** Teach your students this rhyme from page 118.
- **Make a big book** called "The Ten Words." Assign children to work in pairs or trios, writing one of the Ten Commandments on a cardstock "tablet," then drawing a picture to illustrate that commandment. Choose one pair of students to design the cover and another pair to design the title page. Punch holes on the left-hand side of the sheets, assemble the pages, and bind with a shoestring or three metal rings.
- **Write a class covenant** (*see sample on page 119*). Begin by having your students recall past events when God seemed like a real presence in their lives. Record these statements on lined chart paper. (*Ideas for this section could come from the daily examen section of your class worship. See pages 43-44 for a description of the daily examen.*) Then, as a class, decide what you want to promise. It works best if the ideas for the covenant come from the class, so that they feel ownership. If too many ideas come from the teacher, it might be perceived as just another set of rules. Type up the class covenant and hand one out to each child. You might want to post a large copy on your classroom wall.

# Wilderness Box Script: The Ten Words

*For this lesson, the box should include:*

- Tan bath towel, sand, or brown butcher paper (wilderness)
- Figures: Moses, Aaron, Miriam, and five Israelites
- Large rock (Mount Sinai)



The children of Israel were learning to live as God’s people. *(Place figures of Israelites in upper right-hand corner.)* The wilderness was their home. In the wilderness, it was easy to feel alone. It was a desert, a desolate place with miles and miles of sand, but God was with them.

God had sent Moses to be their leader. *(Place Moses between rock and the people.)*

God showed Moses the way, and God led the children of Israel to Mt. Sinai. *(Place Moses at foot of Mount Sinai. Move the people along behind Moses.)* This was the same place where Moses had listened to the voice of God from the burning bush.

Moses climbed Mount Sinai, and God spoke to Moses. *(Place Moses on top of Mount Sinai.)*

God wanted the children of Israel to be God’s chosen people. Moses took this message of God to the people. *(Move Moses back down from mountain, facing the people.)*

The Israelites remembered all that the Lord God had done for them. The people answered, “Everything that the Lord spoke, we will do, and we will obey.”

God made a covenant with the children of Israel. The people promised to follow and obey God, and God promised to bless the Israelites.

God loved the children of Israel and wanted them to be happy and live together in peace, so God spoke to the people and gave them the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments, which are called “The Ten Words” in Hebrew, were laws to help God’s people live together with God and with one another. The first four words told the people how to love God, and the last six words told the people how to love each other.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## The Ten Commandments

*Find Exodus 20 in your Bible. Read the commandments below, and write the number of the verse where each commandment is found. The first one is done for you.*

- |  |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| 1. Worship only God.                   | Verse <u>  3  </u> |
| 2. Don't take the name of God in vain. | Verse _____        |
| 3. Obey your mom and dad.              | Verse _____        |
| 4. Do not steal anything.              | Verse _____        |
| 5. Tell the truth.                     | Verse _____        |
| 6. Don't work on the Sabbath.          | Verse _____        |
| 7. Be happy with your husband or wife. | Verse _____        |
| 8. Don't kill anyone.                  | Verse _____        |
| 9. Be happy with the things you have.  | Verse _____        |
| 10. Don't worship idols.               | Verse _____        |



## The Ten Commandments

*Find Exodus 20 in your Bible. Read the commandments below, and write the number of the verse where each commandment is found. The first one is done for you.*

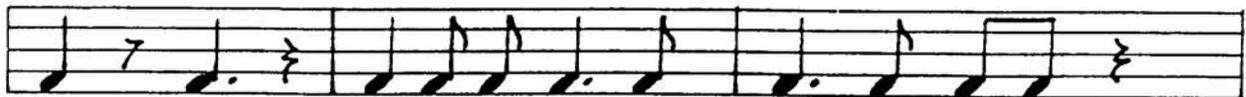
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|--|-------------------|
| 1. Worship only God.                   | Verse <u>3</u>    |
| 2. Don't take the name of God in vain. | Verse <u>7</u>    |
| 3. Obey your mom and dad.              | Verse <u>12</u>   |
| 4. Do not steal anything.              | Verse <u>15</u>   |
| 5. Tell the truth.                     | Verse <u>16</u>   |
| 6. Don't work on the Sabbath.          | Verse <u>8-11</u> |
| 7. Be happy with your husband or wife. | Verse <u>14</u>   |
| 8. Don't kill anyone.                  | Verse <u>13</u>   |
| 9. Be happy with the things you have.  | Verse <u>17</u>   |
| 10. Don't worship idols.               | Verse <u>4</u>    |



# Ten Commandments Rhythm Rhyme



We will love Yah-weh on-ly . We will wor-ship Yah-weh on-ly



too - ooh . We will re-spect the name of Yah-weh .



We will ho-nor the Sab-bath . All the words which the



Lord spoke we will do , we will o-bey , hey !



We will love fa-ther and mo-ther . We will not



Kill, no way ! We will be hap-py withour hus-band or wife .



We will not steal . We will tell the truth , yeah . We will be



hap-py with what we have . All the words which the



Lord spoke we will do , we will obey , hey !

## Sample Class Covenant

**We, the second-graders of \_\_\_\_\_ School, make these promises:**

1. We will remember all that God has done for our classmates:
  - God was with Stuart when he fell off his bike.
  - God helped Aliyah be kind to her little sister when she didn't feel like being kind.
  - God helped Laura's friend's parents get back together.
  - God is with Lenisha's grandma who is sick.
2. We will love the Lord God.
3. We will try to help each other.
4. Other ideas that your students have . . .

*You could have all the students sign their names at the bottom of the covenant.*

# The Sinai Experience

## LESSON 3: THE GOLDEN CALF

### Objective

Students will recognize that God loves and forgives us even when we break our promises, like the Israelites did.

### Key Concepts

- It is difficult to remember our promises when we are afraid.
- It is easy to disobey if no one reminds you of God's way.
- Obedience is a choice that we have to make.

**Text:** Exodus 32:1-6

**Estimated Lesson Time:** 35 minutes

### Materials

- Children's Bible storybook (*optional*)
- Wilderness Box, including cow figure or cutout and large rock
- Wilderness Box script (p. 122, *optional*)
- Long section of rope or string for "Storytelling Rope"
- "God's Promises" (p. 123)
- For Extend the Lesson, option one: mural paper, paints
- For Extend the Lesson, option two: comic strips from newspaper

### Teacher Preparation

1. Prepare to read or tell the story of the golden calf from Exodus 32:1-6, a children's Bible storybook, or from the Wilderness Box script on page 122.
2. Prepare the Wilderness Box (*see previous lessons and pages 39-40 for details*). For this lesson, bring a figure of a cow from a toy barn set or a Christmas nativity set. You could even spray-paint it gold. You could also simply cut out the shape of a cow from construction paper and color it gold.
3. Make copies of "God's Promises," one for each student.

### INTRODUCING THE LESSON

**Invite children to think of a time** when they forgot something. What did they forget? Then have them come up with examples of how people try to remember things: turning a watch upside down, setting a stove timer, writing notes to themselves, etc. Explain that the Israelites forgot something really big: a promise they had made to God. (*You could take this time to review the promises in the Ten Commandments.*) Ask the children to listen carefully to the story to hear which promises the Israelites forgot (*to worship God only and to not make any idols*).

## LESSON STEPS

**1. Read or tell the story** of the Israelites and the golden calf from Exodus 32:1-6, from a children's Bible storybook, or from the Wilderness Box script on page 122. Use the Wilderness Box to act out the scene.

**2. Discuss why the Israelites made the idol:** because they had forgotten their promises to God and God's faithfulness to them. Explain to the students that God always keeps promises. Show them the Storytelling Rope, which can help them remember God's promises. Ask them to think back to the stories of Abraham. Do they remember any of the promises that God made to Abraham and Sarah? See if the class can remember three of the promises:

- a. Abraham would have many descendants (children and grandchildren)
- b. God would give the Promised Land to Abraham and to Abraham and Sarah's descendants.
- c. Sarah and Abraham would have a son, even though they were so old.

Each time you mention a promise, make a knot in the rope. Hang the Storytelling Rope somewhere in your classroom as a reminder of God's promises.

**3. "God's Promises."** Distribute the handout and have children complete it. If you have not yet worked on the memory verse, you might need to do so before the students answer the questions.

**4. Reenact the story.** If you have time, have children retell the story using the Wilderness Box, or else work on the memory verse.

## EXTEND THE LESSON

*(These activities will take longer than the regular lesson time.)*

- **Paint a mural.** Have students cooperatively paint a large mural of Mount Sinai, with the Israelites' camp at the bottom of the mountain. Include as much or as little detail as desired: goat-hair tents, animals like sheep and cattle and goats, the cloud around the mountain, the Israelites, etc.
- **Make a comic strip** of the golden calf incident. Bring in samples of comic strips from the newspaper. Talk about how action happens in each frame and how speech is shown in speech bubbles.

# Wilderness Box Script: The Ten Words

*For this lesson, the box should include:*

- Tan bath towel, sand, or brown butcher paper (wilderness)
- Figures: Moses, Aaron, Miriam, and five Israelites
- Golden calf (cow figure, perhaps sprayed gold)
- Large rock (Mount Sinai)



The children of Israel were learning to live as God’s people. *(Place figures of Israelites in upper right-hand corner.)* The wilderness was their home. It was a desert, a desolate place with miles and miles of sand. It was easy to feel alone, but God was with them.

God had sent Moses to be their leader. *(Place Moses between rock and people.)*

God showed Moses the way, and he led the Israelites to Mount Sinai. *(Place Moses at foot of Mount Sinai. Move people along behind Moses.)* This is the place where Moses had listened to God from the burning bush, and where God had given them the Ten Commandments to help them know how to live together peacefully.

Then God told Moses to come up the mountain so God could give Moses the Ten Commandments on tablets of stone. *(Move Moses up mountain and place him on top of rock.)* Moses did as God said and went up the mountain. There Moses waited and listened. A cloud settled over the mountain, and God was with Moses. *(Place your hands over mountain to cover Moses.)* For forty days and forty nights, Moses was on the mountain. God gave many laws to Moses.

The people became afraid. They asked Aaron, “What has happened to Moses? Surely he must have left us. Who will be our leader? Let’s build an idol, so that we have a god.” *(You could ask different children to say these phrases when you point to them.)*

So Aaron had them bring all their gold, and they melted it down and made a golden calf for an idol. *(Place golden calf between Israelites and Mount Sinai.)* The people began to sing and dance. They were so happy to have an idol—a god they could see!

When Moses came down from the mountain and into the camp, he saw the idol. He was furious! In his anger, Moses broke the tablets where the Ten Commandments were written. Moses was filled with sadness and wept for the sins of the people.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## God's Promises

*Even though the Israelites forgot their promise to God, God didn't forget God's promise to always love and forgive them. Unscramble the letters of the words of the memory verse, which reminds us of God's promises to us.*

I

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26:11-12

eviitsuL

ANSWER KEY

# God's Promises

*Even though the Israelites forgot their promise to God, God didn't forget God's promise to always love and forgive them. Unscramble the letters of the words of the memory verse, which reminds us of God's promises to us.*

I  
I

will  
lilw

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ym

dwelling  
ingdwell

place  
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Leviticus 26:11-12  
eviitsuL

# The Sinai Experience

## LESSON 4: BROKEN TABLETS

### Objective

Students will indicate an understanding of the cycle of forgiveness and promises that marked the Israelites' journey and of the way that God forgives us over and over again.

### Key Concepts

- Moses became angry when the children of Israel sinned against God.
- Broken promises can hurt others.
- God forgives us when we make mistakes and always gives us another chance.
- God promised to go with the Israelites on their journey.
- God wants us to forgive one another.

**Text:** Exodus 32:7–34:35

**Estimated Lesson Time:** 35 minutes

### Materials

- Student Bibles
- Children's Bible storybook (*optional*)
- Wilderness Box (*optional*)
- Large sheet of newsprint, markers, tape
- "Broken Promise" (p. 127)
- For Extend the Lesson, option one: "Teach Us, O Lord!" reader's theater (p. 128)
- For Extend the Lesson, option two: heavy paper, drawing materials, scissors, envelopes (one per student)

### Teacher Preparation

1. Prepare to read or tell the story of Moses' anger with the Israelites from Exodus 32:7–34:35 or from a children's Bible storybook. (*If you tell the story straight from the biblical text, be prepared to shorten or revise it, as it is a long passage.*)
2. Make copies of "Broken Promise," one for each student.
3. If using Extend the Lesson, option one, make copies of the reader's theater, one for each student.

### INTRODUCING THE LESSON

**Invite children to reflect** on how they've felt when someone has broken a promise to them. Have one or two children volunteer to tell about situations in which someone promised them something and then didn't do it. After hearing a story or two of broken promises, you could have a few student volunteers act out the scenes that their classmates told them about.

## LESSON STEPS

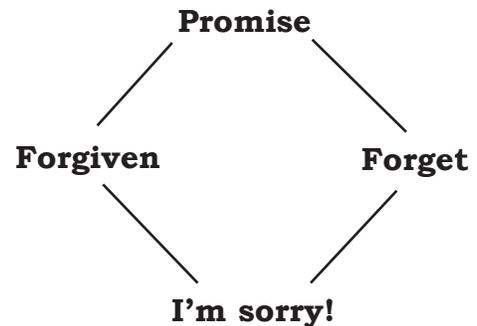
**1. Read Exodus 32:19** from the Bible, as students listen carefully to find out how Moses reacted when he discovered the children of Israel had broken their promise to God. You could have them pantomime Moses' response: throwing the tablets on the ground, maybe stomping his feet, maybe yelling.

**2. Read or tell the rest of the story** of Moses' anger with the Israelites, and his pleas before God for forgiveness, either from Exodus 32:7–34:35 or from a children's Bible storybook. (*If you tell the story from the biblical text, shorten and revise as necessary.*)

**3. On newsprint, draw the cycle of forgiveness and forgetting** that the children of Israel went through many times: 1) making a promise → 2) forgetting → 3) asking for forgiveness → 4) being forgiven.

As you draw the cycle on the paper, give an example to help children understand. *For instance:*

1) I told Dad I'd clean up my room. → 2) I started playing with my toys and forgot. → 3) I told Mom I was sorry. → 4) She forgave me, and then I cleaned up my room.



**4. “Broken Promise.”** Hand out this sheet for students to draw and write their own examples of a promise forgotten, broken, and forgiven. (*Their examples can be from the Bible, from their own lives, or from their imaginations.*) Then have them cut apart the four blocks, mix them up, and give them to a friend, who will then try to put the blocks in order of the four events: making a promise, forgetting, asking for forgiveness, being forgiven. They could simply draw pictures, label the action in the pictures, or else write speech bubbles for the characters in their scenes.

**5. Share stories.** Invite several students to share their partner's four-part story by bringing the blocks up to the large sheet of newsprint with the “promise cycle” that you drew and taping the pictures underneath the correct label in the cycle.

**6. Reenact the story.** If you have time, students could use the Wilderness Box to act out the scene from today's story.

## EXTEND THE LESSON

*(These activities will take longer than the regular lesson time.)*

- **Reader's theater.** Divide the class into groups of three to perform “Teach Us, O Lord!” from page 128.

- **“Promise Puzzles.”** Have students draw scenes from the story (*Moses breaking the tablets, Moses hiding in the rock while God passes by, Moses chiseling out the new tablets*). Have them cut apart their pictures into eight or ten pieces, and place the pieces in envelopes. Pass the “Promise Puzzles” around the classroom, so students can put together each others' puzzles and see the pictures.

# Broken Promise

*Directions: Think of a promise you or someone else made and then forgot to keep. In the first block, draw and write about the promise. In the second block, tell about when the promise was forgotten. In the third block, write or draw about asking for forgiveness. In the fourth block, show how the person was forgiven for breaking the promise.*


# Teach Us, O Lord!

## Reader's Theater

**Narrator:** The day after Moses discovered the golden calf, Moses said to the people,

**Moses:** What you have done is a great sin. But I will go and ask God to forgive you for your sin.

**Narrator:** So Moses went back to the Lord and said,

**Moses:** What a terrible thing these people have done! They have made an idol of gold. But now, please forgive their sin.

**Narrator:** The Lord replied to Moses,

**God:** Now go, lead the people to the land I promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But I will not go with you, because you are a stubborn people who broke my laws by worshipping idols.

**Narrator:** When the people heard this, they were saddened and took off all of their jewelry to show God how sorry they were. Then Moses went back to God and said,

**Moses:** You wanted me to lead these people. If you are pleased with me, teach me your ways so I may know you. Forgive us for the sins and wicked ways of these people. Take us as your children.

**Narrator:** And the Lord said to Moses,

**God:** I will forgive the people for their sins and make a new covenant. But your people must obey my commands. They are not to make any idols, and they are not to worship any other gods.

**Narrator:** Then the Lord told Moses to bring two stone tablets up to Mount Sinai, and on the tablets Moses wrote the Ten Commandments.

# The Sinai Experience

## LESSON 5: THE ARK OF THE COVENANT

### Objective

Students will build an ark of the covenant to help them remember God's presence with the Israelites and with us today.

### Key Concepts

- God wanted the Israelites to remember that God was with them, so God gave them specific instructions for building the tabernacle and the ark of the covenant.
- God led the Israelites on their wilderness journey, just as God leads us through our life journeys.

**Text:** Exodus 25:10-22

**Estimated Lesson Time:** 35-40 minutes *(or more, depending on time given to students to construct their arks)*

### Materials

- Sample Ark of the Covenant
- Mementos from your life for sample Ark
- Children's Bible storybook *(optional)*
- Shoe box and lid for each student
- Four dowel rods for each student
- Ark of the Covenant instructions (p. 131)
- Cherubim pattern (p. 132)
- Gold spray paint
- Glue
- Pencils
- For Extend the Lesson, option one: *Wilfred Gordon MacDonald Partridge* by Mem Fox, illustrated by Julie Vivas

### Teacher Preparation

1. Prepare to tell or read the story of God's commandment to make the tabernacle and Ark of the Covenant, from Exodus 25:1-22 or a children's Bible storybook.
2. Make a sample Ark of the Covenant *(see instructions on p. 131)* that the children can use as a model for their own.
3. Find several small mementos from your own life to place in the ark—reminders of good times or of God's presence and grace. *(Ideas: a seashell from a special trip to the beach, a piece of lace sewn by a grandmother who prayed for you, a craft that a child made for you.)*
4. Ask students to bring in materials (shoe box with lid and 4 dowel rods) to make an Ark of the Covenant, unless you want to provide them yourself.
5. Make copies of cherubim pattern, two for each student.

## INTRODUCING THE LESSON

**Show the model of the Ark of the Covenant** you made. Open it and talk about each of the special mementos inside and the special times and people they remind you of. Explain that sometimes we need symbols to remind us of God’s presence, too.

## LESSON STEPS

- 1. Read or tell the story** of the Ark of the Covenant from Exodus 25:1-22. Tell the children briefly about the tabernacle, but explain that in this lesson you will focus on the Ark of the Covenant. *(They will learn more about the tabernacle and its furnishings in fifth grade.)*
- 2. Make a model Ark of the Covenant.** Show the children how to make a model of the Ark of the Covenant, using the instructions on page 131.
- 3. Reminders of God’s presence.** Allow the children to take their arks home, or else keep them in your classroom. In either case, invite them to place special objects in their arks as reminders of God’s presence in their lives up to this point. Encourage them to ask their parents to help them find a special place at home to keep their arks, so that when they’re older they can go back to them and remember the special gifts of God during the second grade.
- 4. Sing together** “Angels Watchin’ Over Me” *(see Jubilee Songbook, p. 63).*

## EXTEND THE LESSON

*(These activities will take longer than the regular lesson time.)*

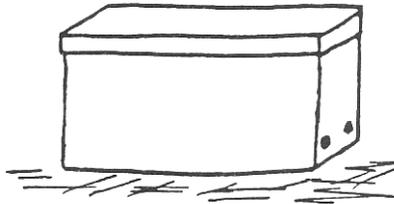
- **Read a storybook.** *Wilfred Gordon MacDonald Partridge* tells the story of a little boy’s friendship with an elderly woman. He gives her several gifts—shells, a puppet, a football, a warm egg—each of which helps her to remember things from her own past. You can relate this story to the story of the Ark of the Covenant, in which God instructs the Israelites to keep the Ten Commandments in the ark to help them remember God’s words from their past.
- **March with the ark.** Have the students carry their models of the Ark of the Covenant around the room, or even around the school, as if they are the Israelites walking through the desert. Have them sing some of the songs you’ve sung so far this year, or chant the Bible verse, or part of the verse, in time to their marching. *Example: Put emphasis on capitalized syllables, and repeat the following over and over: “I will WALK a-MONG you, and BE your GOD, and YOU will BE my PE-ople.”*

## Making a Model Ark of the Covenant

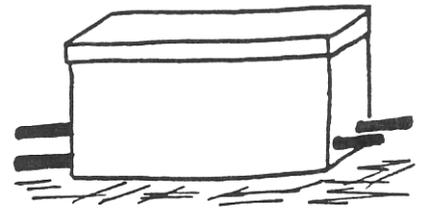
1. Use gold spray paint to paint the outside of the shoe box and lid. Allow to dry.



2. With a sharpened pencil, make holes at the lower corners on each end of the box.



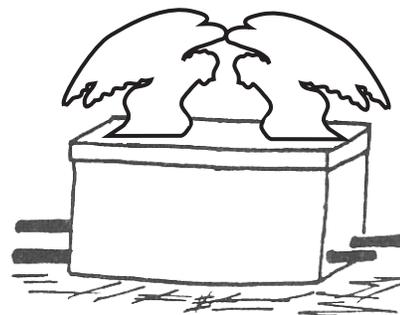
3. Insert dowel rods through the holes.



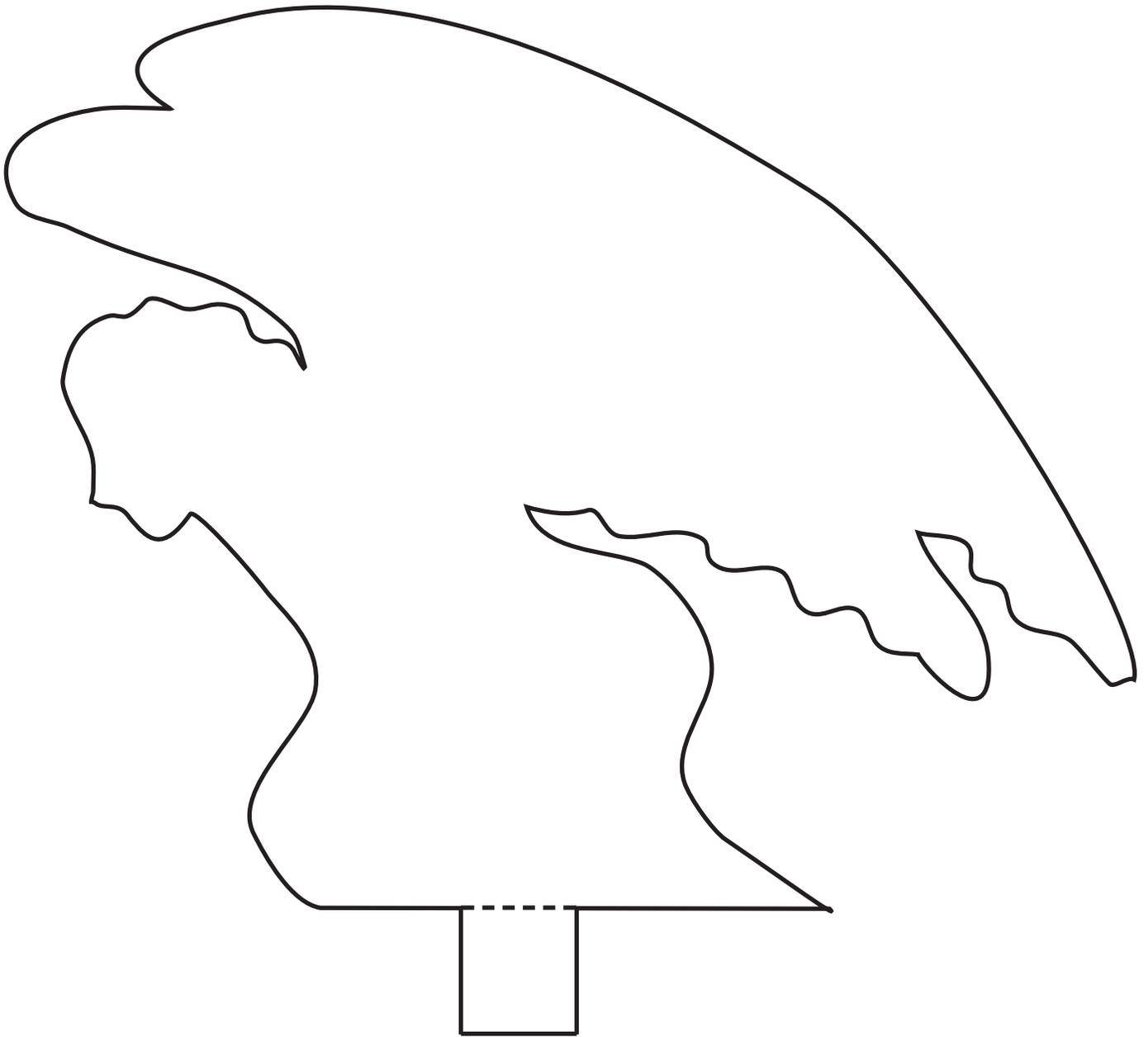
4. Distribute the cherubim patterns (p. 132). Children can cut and color their cherubim figures with gold crayons, or draw their own figures. Glue the tabs onto the top of the lid so the cherubim figures face one another.



5. Children might enjoy taking their Arks of the Covenant home, to share with their families and to use as a storage place for items that remind them of God's faithfulness. You might plan a special Ark Day in several weeks, so students can bring their Arks back and share about the items they have stored in them.



# Cherubim Pattern



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Unit 3 Assessment

*In your own words, write three of the Ten Commandments that God gave to the Israelites:*

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. Why did Moses break the stone tablets with the Ten Commandments?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Fill in the blanks with the words at the bottom:*

5. God sent \_\_\_\_\_ to feed the Israelites in the desert.

6. God led the Israelites with a pillar of \_\_\_\_\_ at night.

7. During the day, God led them with a pillar of \_\_\_\_\_.

8. God told the Israelites to build an \_\_\_\_\_ to carry with them to remind them of God's presence.

9. The Israelites asked \_\_\_\_\_ to make them a golden calf to worship.

10. The Israelites broke their \_\_\_\_\_ to God many times.

Aaron  
fire

cloud  
promises

Ark  
manna

