

Lesson # 34

1.

Exodus 32

Do you remember our last lesson when Moses and Aaron and the Israelite people had come to a tall mountain called Mt. Sinai? The top of the mountain was covered with clouds and thunder and lightning were heard and seen. Moses climbed the mountain and God told him some important commandments to tell the people. When Moses came down the mountain and told these commandments to the people they said "we will obey all God told us." Now Moses went back up the mountain to get more laws from God. Then God told Moses to build a "tent church" - this was to be called a "Tabernacle" and it was to have some very beautiful gold furniture inside it. Aaron was to be a priest to go into the Tabernacle and take the peoples prayers to God. When people go camping what do they do with the tent?

They set it up and put sleeping bags inside, don't they? When they get ready to leave, what happens with the tent? They take it down, fold it up and carry it home in their car, don't they? Well, the Israelites would do the same thing with the Tabernacle.

They would take it down and fold it up and put it on a cart to take to the next place they stopped, then they would set it up again



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2.

God told Moses all about building the Tabernacle and God also gave Moses many good rules for the Israelites. He told Moses how to keep the children of Israel healthy and what special sacrifices they could make when they had troubles.

Then God did something very special. Suddenly with a loud crack two big slabs of smooth stone were cut off of the cliff that Moses was standing by. Then Moses saw writing appear on the stone. God was writing the 10 Commandments on the stone so Moses could take them down the mountain and keep them in the Tabernacle that was to be built.

Wow! That would have been very scary but also a very special thing to see, wouldn't it?

All of this took a long, long time. Moses was gone for 40 days and 40 nights talking with God on top of Mt. Sinai. Meanwhile the children of Israel were waiting and waiting for Moses to return. All they could see was thunder, lightning and flashes of fire from the top of the mountain. They couldn't see Moses at all.



Do you think it is hard to wait for someone? Maybe your grandmother will say, "I'll come visit you in two weeks." You really want to see your grandmother but days and days go by and she doesn't come. After awhile you might worry that she will NEVER come.

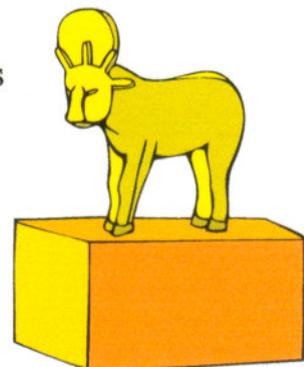
Well, this is what happened to the Israelites. They waited and waited for Moses to return, but day after day went by and he didn't show up. They began to worry and then to grumble. Finally they went to Moses' brother Aaron. First one person and then another angrily shouted to Aaron. "Moses won't ever come back, we don't know what's happened to him. Maybe he was bitten by a snake and died, maybe he fell off a cliff. He won't come back and lead us into the promised land. We need a god to pray to, this god of the mountain isn't really there, we haven't heard from him for weeks and weeks." Aaron was afraid of the angry people when they began to demand a god to lead them. What do you think Aaron did? Instead of praying to God for help, Aaron told the people to go get all their gold jewelry. Gold necklaces, gold bracelets and rings and bring them to him. What do you think he was going to do with all that gold jewelry?



Aaron took the gold jewelry and made a big fire, he put the jewelry in the fire and the gold melted, then Aaron took the melted gold out of the fire and shaped it into the shape of a golden calf. He put the gold calf on a stand and then told the people to gather together so they could fall down and worship this gold calf and pray to it just like it was God.

Do you think that was right? No, it was a very wrong thing to do. God had just told these people that they were to pray to him and not make images to pray to. The real God can't be seen, he doesn't look like a pig or a bird or a cow. God lives in heaven and had shown the Israelites over and over how powerful and kind and wonderful he was by the things he had done for them. God had led them all through the desert and had taken care of them. It was very wrong to make an idol of a calf and say it was God. The people bowed down to this golden calf and said "this is our god that led us out of Egypt. The calf will take us to the promised land.

That was silly, wasn't it? The only place a calf could lead anyone is to some green grass, so it can eat.



Soon the people were getting drunk with wine, laughing and dancing and singing and falling down in front of the golden calf to worship it.

Up on top of the mountain God said to Moses, "You need to go down the mountain for your people are sinning. They are falling down to worship a calf idol and saying it is the God that led them out of Egypt." Moses picked up the tablets of stone that God had written on and he began to climb down the mountain. When he got in site of the camp he could see the people doing all kinds of bad things as they worshipped the golden calf. Moses became so angry that he lifted up the stone tablets in his hands and threw them down. The beautiful stone tablets that God had written on broke all to pieces. Moses shouted at the people and at Aaron, telling them how wicked they had been. Then Moses tipped over the golden calf and hammered it into little pieces of gold dust. He threw the dust into a nearby stream and he made the wicked people drink the yucky tasting water.



Then Moses cried out, "Those who are on the Lord's side, come to me." Some of the people had stayed in their tents and hadn't worshipped the golden calf. These people went to stand by Moses but the wicked people were punished and many died that day. Then Moses bowed down before God and prayed that God would forgive them and wouldn't be angry anymore. God told Moses he would forgive the people but Moses must come back up the mountain and make new tablets of stone. Only this time God would not write on them, Moses would have to do it.

This is a sad story, but a good lesson about waiting. The story shows that we must be patient and wait for things to happen that are promised. God has promised that his son Jesus will be coming to bring a wonderful kingdom. God promised that there would be no more hurts or crying or feeling sad when this happens and all the animals and people would happily live together forever. We want this to happen **RIGHT NOW**, but we must be patient and not get in trouble while waiting for Jesus to come. We can't see God but we know he is close to us all the time and one day Jesus **WILL** come and bring peace and goodness to us. We can wait for that, can't we?



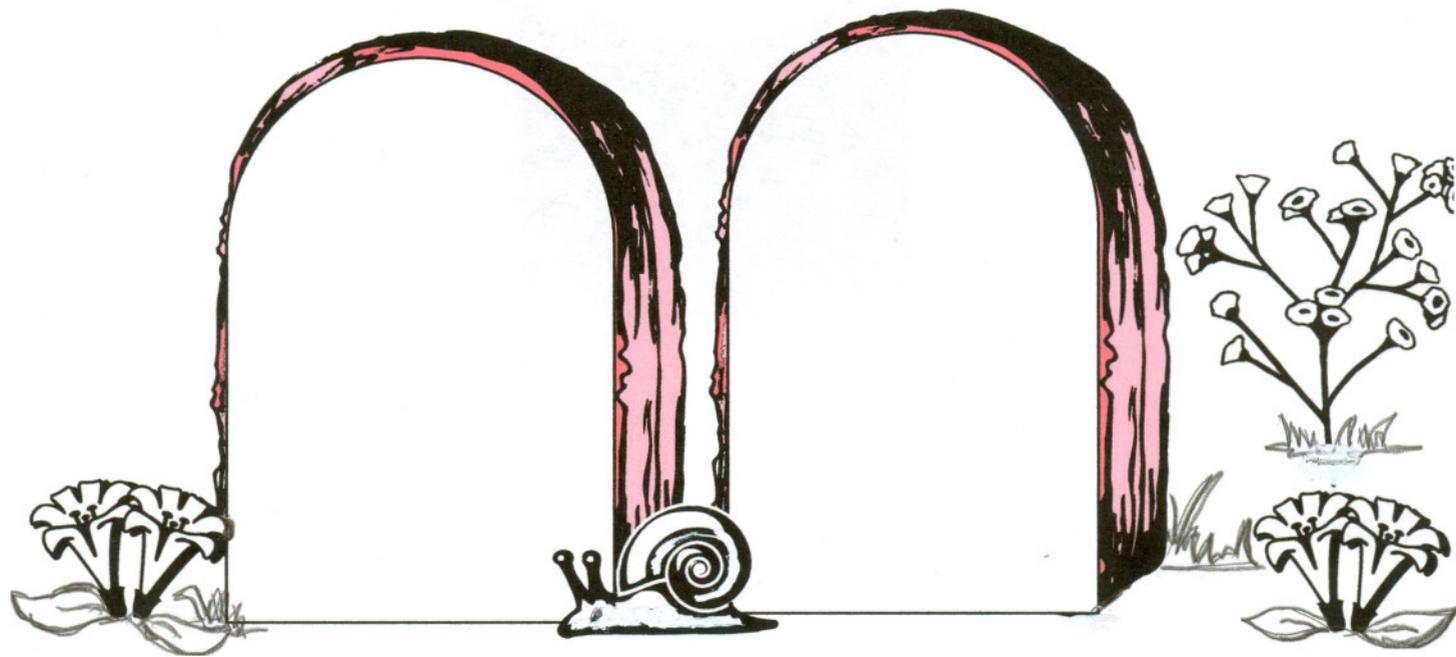
Question Page

1. Where did Moses spend 40 days and 40 nights? (on mountain, on river, in a house)?
2. Who did Moses talk to on Mt. Sinai? (Aaron, Joshua, God)
3. What kind of tablets did God write on? (paper, wood, stone)
4. Do you like to wait for things if it takes a long time?
5. When the Israelites got tired of waiting for Moses were they happy or sad or angry?
6. What did the people want Aaron to make for them to worship and pray to?
7. What kind of animal idol did Aaron make? (cat, bird, calf)
8. Where did Aaron get the gold to make the golden idol?
9. Who led the children of Israel through the wilderness and took care of them, a golden idol or God who lives in heaven?
10. When Moses came down from the mountain what did he see that made him angry?
11. What did Moses do with the tables of stone that had the 10 commandments on them?
12. What did Moses do with the golden calf and what did the people have to drink?
13. When Moses went back up the mountain the 2nd time, who made the tables of stone and wrote on them this time, God or Moses?

See if you can copy the letters below on the two tables of stone and color them

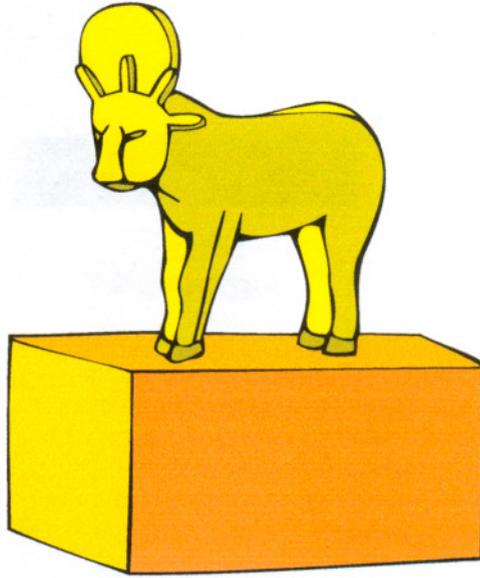
Can you write your name on the stone tablets?

LOVE GOD



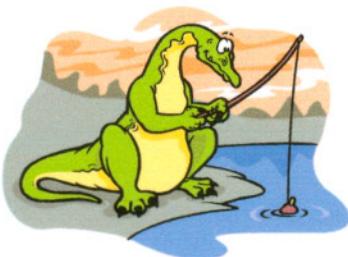
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Draw some people dancing around the golden calf and bowing and praying to it.



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Circle the things you sometimes have to wait for. Put an X by the things you can get right away



The kingdom will be a wonderful place where the earth is full of beautiful flowers and trees. Lions will be tame and children can play with snakes or bears and not be afraid. Below are some animals that will be in the kingdom...but part of them is missing! Draw the missing parts and color them. (hint - no tail, no foot, no ears, no eyes, etc)

