

KS2 Unit 6, Lesson 2: God gives the Torah to Moses: The Ten Commandments. Godly Play

The Giving of the Law (Exodus chapters 19 &20)

You will need: Some play sand in a strong, square cloth, some small figures to represent Moses and the Israelites (you could use wooden dolly pegs or similar), a small cardboard heart shape (two tablets and a base piece) One tablet reads "Love God", the second tablet reads "Love people" and the base piece reads "God loves you", 5 smaller heart shapes cut in half with one of the laws written on each half, a large rock. Apart from the sand, which is carried separately, all the items you need can be placed in an open basket. *(place the sand in its cloth in front of you and the basket to one side of you)*

At this point, you face the story and must remain engaged in it, without giving any more eye contact to the children, until the storytelling is complete.

The Script (actions are shown in italics):

This is a Jewish story so powerful that it has changed how people think ... what people do ... all over the world today.

This is the desert, it's a dangerous place. *(open the cloth up and as you begin to speak, use your hands to move the sand around. Your intention is to spread it out roughly and without pushing any off the cloth. Leave it deep enough for your wooden people to be able to stand up when placed in it).* People don't go into the desert unless they have to. There is no water and very little food there, and without water or food we die. When the wind blows it changes the shape of the desert and people can get lost ... some never come back. In the daytime the desert is very hot and at night it is so cold, people need plenty of clothes to keep warm. When the wind blows the sand will sting your skin. The desert is a dangerous place ... no-one goes there unless they have to. *(continue to focus on moving the sand around all the while you are speaking)*

This is Moses, he is the leader of God's people. *(take a figure and place it in the sand towards the front edge of the cloth furthest away from you)*

This is a mountain called Mount Sinai. A mountain in the desert. *(place the rock towards the back edge of the sand and to one side of you)*

These are God's people, *(start to place the other wooden figures next to Moses in the sand)* they travelled through the desert with Moses. God helped Moses to find food and water for the people. *(slowly move Moses and the other figures towards the base of the rock, take your time.)*

The people came close to Mount Sinai, but they were afraid...the mountain was covered in fire and smoke. Only Moses had courage enough to climb into the fire and smoke to meet with God. *(as you move Moses to the top of the rock, hide him with your other hand to suggest him disappearing in the smoke)* When Moses was on top of the mountain, he came so close to God, and God came so close to Moses that he knew what God wanted him to do. God wanted Moses to show the people how he wanted them to live. In time Moses wrote all these things down in five books Jewish people call the Torah. God started with the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments were written on tablets of stone. God gave the Ten Commandments to Moses. *(move Moses back down the rock to stand*

next to the other figures) Moses gave them to his people and they gave them to their children, who gave them to their children and so on...

Today all kinds of people all over the world think about these wise words and listen to what they say. *(start to lay out the cardboard tablets, beginning with the three that form a heart shape. Lay them flat onto the sand and read them aloud)* Love God. Love people. God loves us. *(then begin to lay out the other laws. These can be placed upright, like tombstones. Read them aloud as you do this. At this point the children may begin to comment on the laws. This is excellent wondering, don't worry!)*

1. Put God first.
2. Don't worship anything that isn't God.
3. Be serious when you say God's name.
4. Have a special day for rest every week.
5. Respect your parents.
6. Do not murder.
7. Keep your promises.
8. Don't steal.
9. Don't lie.
10. Do not long for other people's things.

These are all hard. But they mark the best way, like stones show the right path. **Now it's time to look up from the story and engage in the verbal wondering. Be patient, sometimes it takes the children a while to feel happy to speak. Sometimes the quietest children are doing the deepest wondering!**

I wonder which of the Ten Commandments you like the best?

I wonder which one is the most important?

I wonder which one is especially for you?

I wonder if there are any we can leave out and still have all we need?

(at this point, turn back to the story to focus on God and his love for his people)

Now, let's get back to the story. I wonder which part of the whole story you like best?

I wonder which part of the story is about you?

I wonder which part of the story is the most important?

I wonder if there is any part of the story we could leave out and still have everything we need?

Once the verbal wondering is over, begin to return all the objects carefully into the box. Don't hurry, naming each piece as you return it.

I wonder what work you would like to do now to continue your wondering?

Don't feel obliged to ask all the wondering questions and feel free to be lead to make more, depending upon where the wondering goes. Each time you deliver the story new questions and answers will emerge. Ensure you try not to close down the wondering with a prescriptive answer.

Try to allow as much choice as possible during the individual response time. If possible this work should be evidenced with photographs or small group discussion. The children's work during the individual response time is personal and should not be shared unless the child requests it. Children will gain the most from individual response time if they are fully relaxed and the pace is slow.