Introduction: The Ten Commandments

"All that the Lord has spoken we will do"

Exodus 19:1-25

Goal: This lesson introduces the events surrounding the Lord giving the Ten Commandments. Three months after fleeing slavery in Egypt, the Lord led the children of Israel to Mount Sinai. There, He prepared them to receive the Ten Commandments in a miraculous way.

Process: Choose activities for the 4 parts of the lesson from the chart below. For multi-aged groups, teach the lesson to the entire group and select activities that suit your students. Online Extras provide additional activity choices.

Lesson Overview

Lesson Parts	Activities	Materials Given	Supplies Needed
1. Introduction (2-3 minutes)	All Ages *Introduction*	introduction p. 2	
2. Readings & Questions (5-7 minutes)	All Ages Select readings for your group	readings pp. 2-3 questions p. 4 talk-about picture p. 5	Bible for ages 11-14
3. Activities choose 1-2 activities (15-20 minutes) *Note*: Activity ages are approximate. Choose activities that will work for your group.	Ages 3-6 *Mount Sinai Collage* collage	directions p. 6 *Mt Sinai Template* p. 7 *Ten Commandments Templates* p. 8	scissors, glue, finger paint in a variety of colors, wipes for hands, cotton balls, glitter, black crayons or black paper for background
	Ages 7-10 *Ten Commandments in Hebrew* coloring project	directions p. 9 *The Ten Commandments in Hebrew* pp. 10-11	colored pens or pencils, way to listen to the Ten Commandments read in Hebrew online
	Ages 11-14 *Mount Sinai Maze* activity & discussion	directions p. 12 *Sinai Maze* p. 13 *Sinai Maze Solution* p. 14	pens or pencils
	Ages 3-10 picture to color	*Moses at Mount Sinai* p. 15	crayons or markers
	Ages 7-14 Ten Commandments Calligraphy	*Two Versions of Commandments Calligraphy* pp. 16-17	crayons or markers
4. Closing & Recitation (2-3 minutes)	All Ages wrap-up	*Recitation Slips* p. 18	scissors or paper cutter
Online Extras	All Ages additional activities	online links p. 18	various

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Introduction: The Ten Commandments

The Lord gave the Ten Commandments after the children of Israel miraculously escaped from the land of Egypt where they were slaves for hundreds of years. He took them through the wilderness to Mount Sinai, the mountain of the Lord, and guided them with a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. Before giving the commandments, the Lord made a covenant or a two-way agreement with the people. He said that if they obeyed Him, they would be a special treasure to Him. The people consented by saying,

"All that the Lord has spoken we will do." Exodus 19:8

After agreeing to the covenant, the Lord descended on Mount Sinai and gave the Ten Commandments in a dramatic way.

- Have you ever made a promise? What kind of promise did you make? Were you able to keep the promise?
- Some promises are very important—for example when one person promises to love and cherish another person for ever in a marriage! Husbands and wives wear rings as a sign of the promise they have made.
- Before giving the commandments, the Lord made a covenant with the people. What is a covenant? (a two-way promise) What did the people promise to do? (obey the Lord's commandments)

Our story today is about the children of Israel preparing to receive the Ten Commandments. It took days for the people to get ready to receive the commandments. As you listen to the story, pay attention to how the people prepared themselves, their clothes, and even Mount Sinai so the Lord could give the Ten Commandments.

Reading Ages 3-6: At Mount Sinai

This is a short retelling of the story for young children. To tell the story in your own words using a picture, see the talk-about picture on p. 5.

The children of Israel were slaves in Egypt for a long time. Their life was very hard, but the Lord sent Moses to help them. After many tries, finally the king of Egypt, called Pharaoh, let them go. Now, the Lord was going to lead them to the Promised Land. Their journey took a long time. Everyone walked with their families and their animals.

The Lord led them to a big mountain called Mount Sinai. They camped there for a long time. Moses went up the mountain to talk to the Lord. The Lord said the children of Israel would become His special people if they obeyed Him. When Moses told the people, they said, "All that the Lord has spoken we will do."

Then the people got ready for the Lord to give the Ten Commandments. They washed themselves. They washed their clothes. They said they were sorry for bad things they had done. They were not allowed to go up on to the mountain.

The Lord chose Moses to go up the mountain. He brought thunder, lightning and an earthquake. The people heard a loud trumpet. They saw smoke and fire on the mountain. These signs showed that the Ten Commandments were very special. They were from the Lord. The Lord wrote the commandments on two tables of stone.

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Reading Ages 7-10: At Mount Sinai

New Church Concept
Teacher Background

"The Ten Commandments were proclaimed in such a miraculous fashion, so that it should be known that those laws were not just civil and moral legislation, but also Divine laws, so that acting against them was not only wronging the neighbor, that is, one's fellow citizens and society, but also sinning against God." *True Christian Religion* 282

The Ten Commandments contain everything concerning doctrine and life, not only everything which concerns God, but also everything which concerns people. That is why the law was written on two tablets, one dealing with God, the other with people. See *True Christian Religion 287*

"Keeping the covenant" means to live according to the commandments. See *Arcana Coelestia* 8767

Sounds and blarings from trumpets, and sounds and peals from thunders signify Divine truths. See *Arcana Coelestia* 9926.8

A retelling of the story

For many years the children of Israel were slaves in Egypt. They longed to be free, and the Lord sent Moses to help them. Moses begged Pharaoh to let them go, and finally Pharaoh agreed. The Lord led them from Egypt to the promised land, giving them a pillar of cloud to guide them by day and a pillar of fire to guide them at night. The journey took a long time. They walked all the way with their children, their animals and their belongings.

Three months after leaving Egypt, they arrived at large bare rocky mountain called Mount Sinai. They made a camp at the foot of the mountain. During the next year they received laws to become a nation and learned how to worship the Lord.

Mount Sinai had a special, holy purpose. The children of Israel called it the Mount of God. The Lord had appeared to Moses in the burning bush there. Now He planned to come down upon the mountain to speak to the children of Israel. He wanted to give them His Ten Laws, the Ten Commandments.

One day Moses went up the mountain to talk to the Lord. The Lord instructed him to tell the people that if they obeyed His Commandments, they would be a special treasure to Him. When Moses came down and told the people what the Lord had made known, they promised, "All that the Lord has spoken we will do."

Everyone was to prepare to hear the Lord. The people were to wash themselves. They were to wash their clothes. And they were to be sorry for the wrong they had done. Mount Sinai was holy, and no one except those the Lord allowed were to go up it. The Lord told them to set boundaries around the mountain. No one, not even an animal, was to go past them.

On the morning of the third day, the people heard thunder and saw lightning. They could not see the top of the mountain because there were thick clouds on it. They heard a trumpet sounding so loudly that everyone shook. The Lord used these awesome signs because He wanted the people to know that the Ten Commandments were His laws, not man-made laws. As everyone gathered around the bottom of the mountain the Lord came down on the mountain and spoke to Moses.

Then the Lord wrote the Ten Commandments in Hebrew on two tablets of stone. Stone is very hard and lasts for a long time. By writing the Ten Commandments on stone, the Lord taught that they are truths of the Word which last forever. They are to be written on each person's heart and used in everyone's lives. There were two tables of stone. The first table teaches how we are to worship and obey the Lord. The second table teaches us how the Lord wants us to treat other people.

Reading Ages 11-14: At Mount Sinai

Read Exodus 19:1-25 or use the retelling above.

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Questions Ages 3-6

1. The children of Israel were on a long journey. Where were they going? (the Promised Land or Canaan)
2. Who went up the mountain to talk to the Lord? (Moses, the leader)
3. What promise did the people make? (They promised, "All that the Lord has spoken we will do.")
4. How did the people get ready for the Ten Commandments? (They washed themselves and their clothes. They said they were sorry for wrong things they had done.)
5. How did the Lord write the Ten Commandments? (The Lord wrote on two tables of stone.)

Questions Ages 7-10

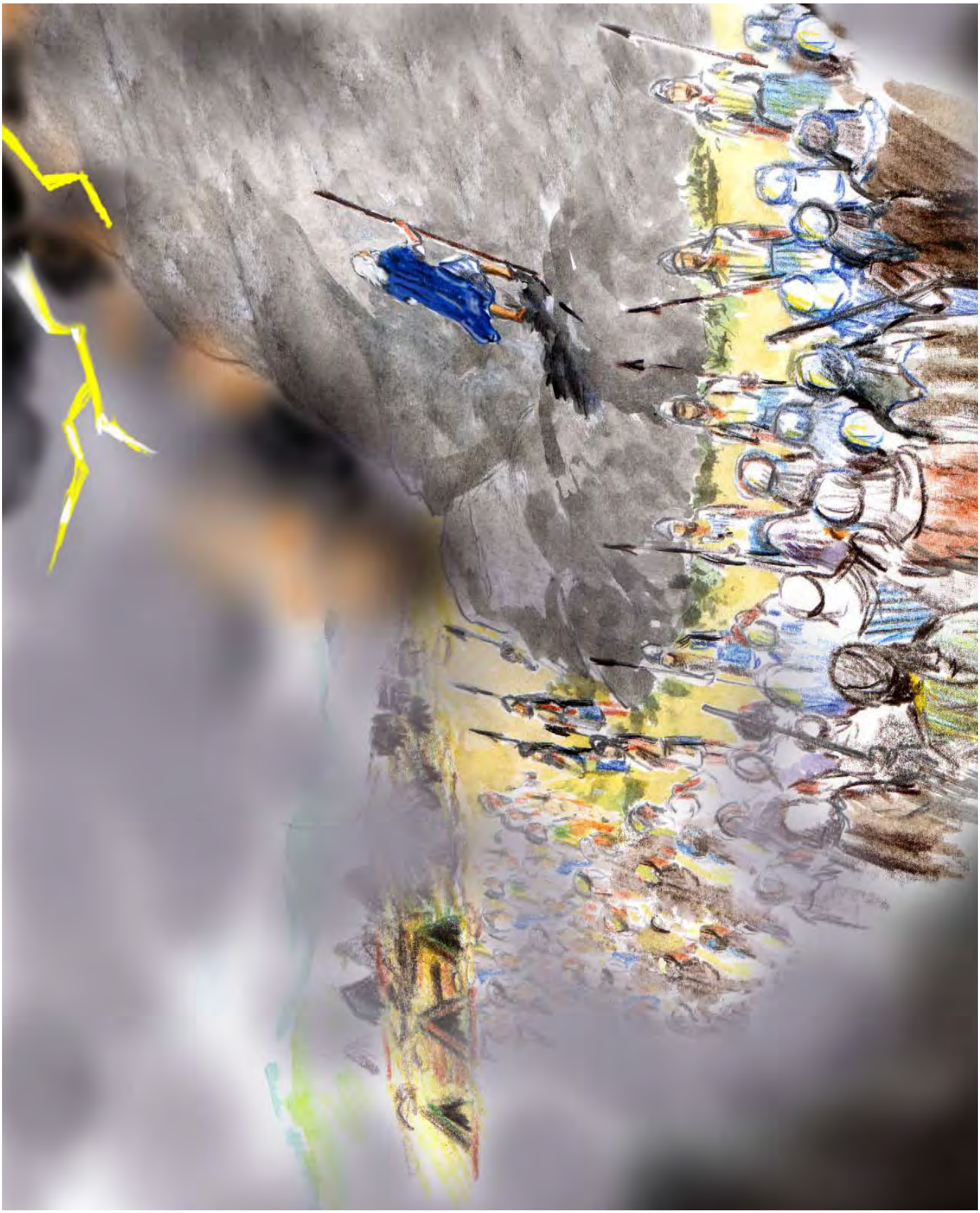
1. Why did the children of Israel call Mount Sinai the "mountain of God"? (Their leader, Moses, saw the Lord in the burning bush on the mountain. There, the Lord called him to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt.)
2. What covenant or two-way promise did the Lord make with the children of Israel? (If they obeyed the Lord, they would become a special treasure to Him.)
3. If you were one of the children of Israel, how would you have prepared to receive the Ten Commandments? (washed yourself, washed your clothes, said you were sorry for wrong things you had done, set up boundaries)
4. What dramatic miracles did the Lord do so the people would know the Ten Commandments were His laws? (The Lord made thunder and lightning, an earthquake, the sound of trumpets, and fire and smoke on the mountain.)
5. Why did the Lord write the Ten Commandments on stone? (To show they are truths that will last for ever.)

Questions Ages 11-14

1. The Lord appeared to Moses on Mount Sinai, the "mountain of God". Where does the Lord appear to us? (He is in His Word.) Mount Sinai means heaven. By raising our minds to heaven we can see the Lord in His Word.
2. The children of Israel washed themselves and their clothing as preparation for receiving the commandments. In what ways does this suggest we should prepare to receive the Lord's laws in our lives? (clean ourselves spiritually) Our minds are "clothed" by ideas. If we are to hear the Lord's voice, we must "clothe" our minds with true ideas from the Word and clean them of selfish thoughts and feelings.
3. The Lord told the people to set up boundaries on the mountain. What boundaries should we set up to keep the Lord holy in our lives? (Answers may include obey the Ten Commandments, not take the Lord's name in vain, etc.)
4. What impact might the miracles at Mount Sinai have had on the people there? Or on you?
5. The Ten Commandments are part of every religion. Why was it important for the Lord to give them on Mount Sinai in such a dramatic way? (To show they are spiritual laws, as well as civil laws.)

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Talk About It Picture



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Ages 3-6: Mount Sinai Collage

Materials Needed

Mt Sinai Template, *Ten Commandments Templates*, cotton balls or cotton wool, scissors, glue, glitter, finger paints, wipes to clean hands, black crayon or black paper for background

Prepare in Advance

Print a copy of the *Mount Sinai Template* for each child. Print a copy of *The Ten Commandments Template* and cut them apart. Gather other supplies.



The Lord gave the Ten Commandments dramatically on Mount Sinai, a prominent mountain in the wilderness. Emphasize the spectacular way in which the Lord delivered these laws by creating a collage that shows the children of Israel at the foot of the mountain enveloped in cloud, with thunder and lightning.

1. We are going to make a picture showing the special way the Lord gave the Ten Commandments.
2. Give each child a *Mount Sinai Template* and a black crayons. Invite the children to create a dark sky around the mountain with a black crayon. Or, have them cut out Mount Sinai and glue it to a piece of black paper.
3. Add streaks of lightning by drawing them with glue and sprinkling them with glitter. Shake off any excess.
4. Give each child 4-5 cotton balls. Invite them to gently pull them apart to form clouds. Glue the clouds around the top of the mountain.
5. Distribute copies of the Ten Commandments in Hebrew. Glue them above the mountain to show how the Lord wrote them in Hebrew on two tablets of stone.
6. To show the people gathered around the mountain, invite children to dip their finger tips in paint. Use two or more colors of paint to give the feel of a crowd of people. (See picture above.)
7. Wipe or wash children's hands.

New Church Concept
Teacher Background

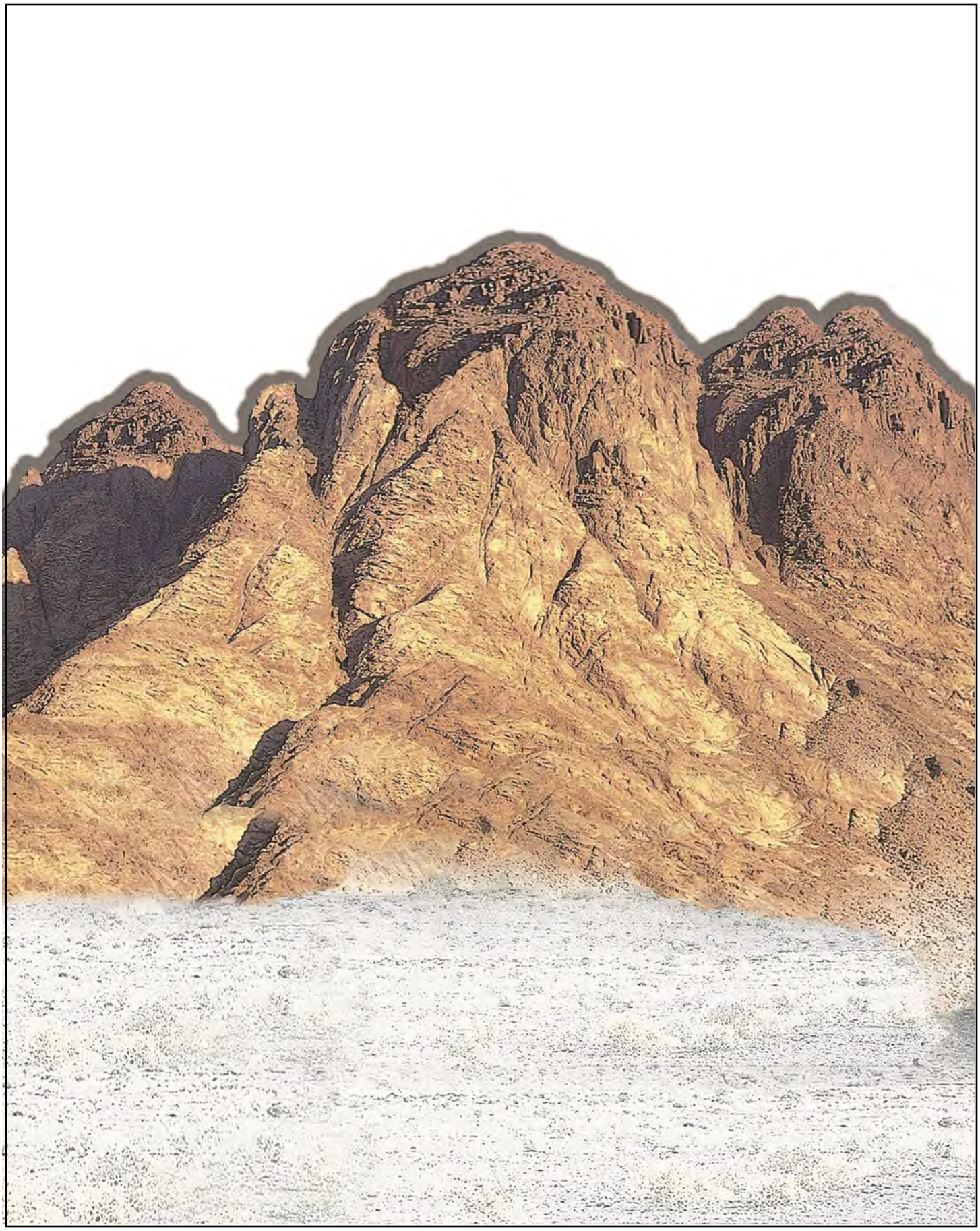
"Heaven exists wherever the Divine is present. This being so, it exists with and within everyone possessing charity and faith, since charity and faith are what constitute heaven, because they are what come from the Divine. There also angels live. The truth that heaven is where the Divine, that is, the Lord, is present is evident from the fact that Mount Sinai, from which the Lord spoke, is called 'heaven' here. This also is the reason why 'Mount Sinai' means heaven, from which Divine Truth flows." *Arcana Coelestia* 8931

New Church Concept
Teacher Background

"As regards 'Mount Sinai', in the highest sense it means Divine Truth emanating from Divine Good, Divine Good being meant by 'mountain' and Divine Truth by 'Sinai'. In the internal sense it means the truth of faith springing from good, in this instance the truth of faith that is to be implanted in good since the Law had not as yet been declared from there. The reason why 'Mount Sinai' has these meanings is that the Law was declared from there by the Lord, and the Law is Divine Truth emanating from Divine Good, and also is the truth of faith springing from good." *Arcana Coelestia* 8753

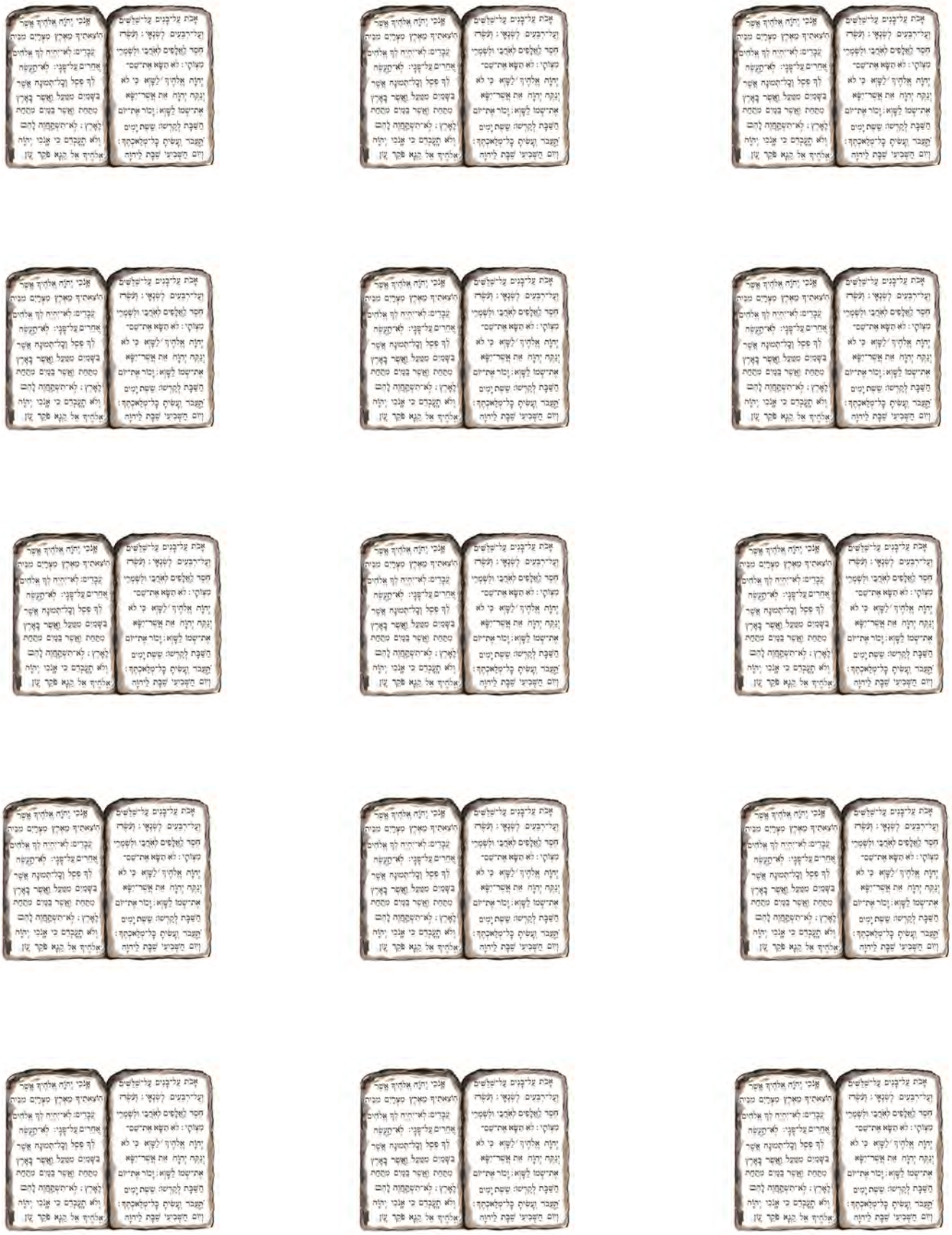
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Mt Sinai Template



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Ten Commandments Templates



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Ages 7-10: Ten Commandments in Hebrew

Materials Needed

Copies of *Ten Commandments in Hebrew Table 1 & 2*, sharp colored pencils or pens with fine tips

Prepare in Advance

Print pages and gather supplies. Prepare to play the Commandments in Hebrew: www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/video-the-ten-commandments-in-hebrew.



The Lord wrote the Ten Commandments on two tablets of stone in Hebrew, the language of the children of Israel. The children of Israel were sometimes called the "Hebrews" because, like Abraham, they descended from Eber (see Genesis 10-11). The Writings for the New Church tell us that the first language on earth was like the Hebrew language. This activity guides children through the experience of writing the Ten Commandments in the beautiful curved letters of the Hebrew alphabet on two tablets of "stone".

1. What language do we speak? Have you ever made up a special language to talk to a baby, or a pet? Where do languages come from?
2. Long ago, when the Ten Commandments were written, the children of Israel spoke Hebrew. The Writings for the New Church tell us that the Hebrew language is like the first language people spoke on earth and that it is similar to the language of heaven. Let's listen to the Commandments in Hebrew. (Play www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/video-the-ten-commandments-in-hebrew.)
3. Distribute copies of the two tables of *Ten Commandments in Hebrew* and sharp colored pencils or fine-tipped pens to color the lettering.
4. Hebrew is written from right to left. As you color the letters, start on the top right of the page and color towards the left side, moving down.
5. When you have finished, carefully tear the edges of your pages to look like stone (see picture above). To display, place Table 1 to the right of Table 2.

New Church Concept

Teacher Background

"I was once sent a little piece of paper from heaven with Hebrew letters on it, but letters written as they were among the ancient people. Today the letters are to some extent formed with straight lines, but among the most ancient peoples they were then rounded and had little hornlike strokes projecting upward. Angels who were with me then said they knew whole meanings from the letters alone, and that they knew the meanings chiefly from the curves of the lines and points of a letter. They then explained what some letters signified separately, and what in combination, saying that *he* (h), which was added to the names of Abram and Sarai, symbolized infinity and eternity." *Sacred Scripture* 90

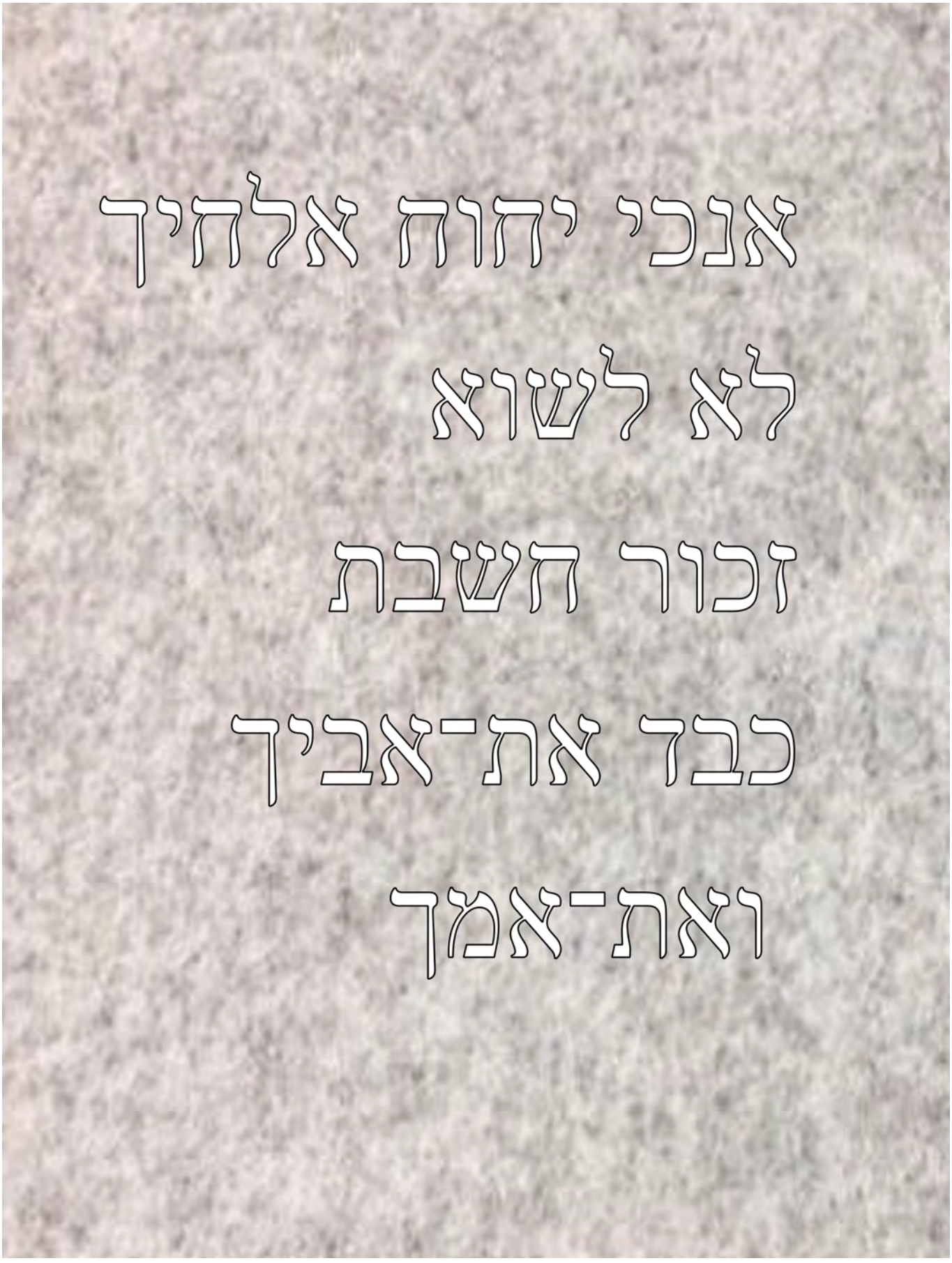
New Church Concept

Teacher Background

"The Word in heaven is written in a spiritual style which is quite different from the natural style. The spiritual style is composed simply of letters, each one of which denotes a particular meaning; and there are dashes, curves and points above, between and within the letters, which heighten the meaning. The letters used by the angels of the spiritual kingdom resemble printed type in our world; the letters used by the angels of the celestial kingdom are in some cases like Arabic letters, in others like ancient Hebrew letters, but with curves above and below, and pointing above, between and inside them. Even a single one of these points conveys a complete meaning." *True Christian Religion* 241

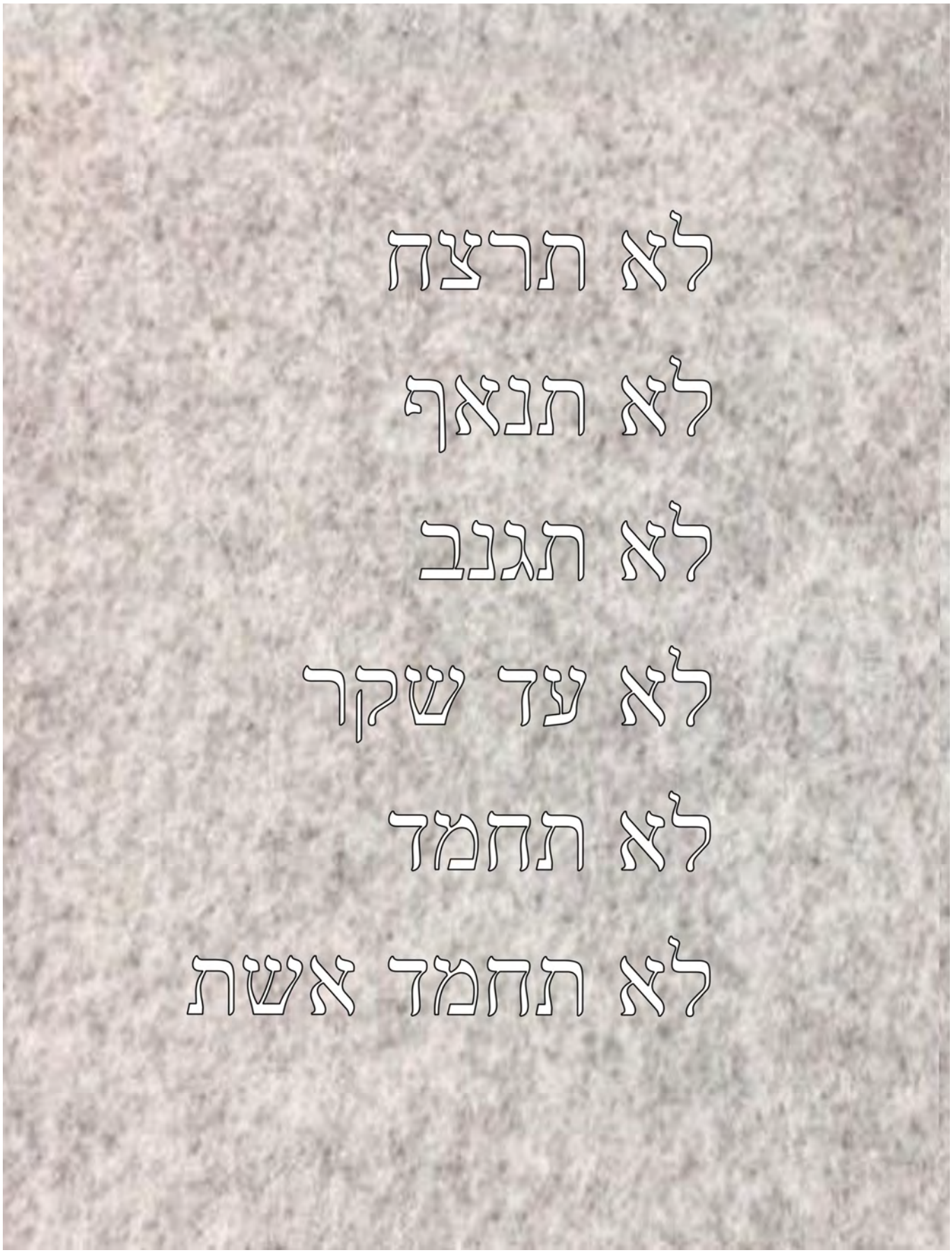
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Ten Commandments in Hebrew Table 1



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Ten Commandments in Hebrew Table 2



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Ages 11-14: Mount Sinai Maze

Materials Needed

Copies of *Sinai Maze,* pens or pencils

Prepare in Advance

Print a copy of the *Sinai Maze* for each student.

New Church Concept

Teacher Background

A person is regenerated by means of truth and good. When people have been regenerated, the Lord manifests Himself to them, for they have by now risen up from the lowest step, as if by a stairway, to the one where the Lord is. Coming down is subsequent to this, for no one is able to come down before they have gone up. Coming down however is nothing else than surveying truth from good, as when one climbs a mountain and then regards the things that lie below. From that position one can take in an incalculably greater number of things than people standing below or in the valley, as is evident to anyone. It is exactly the same with those who are governed by good, that is, by love to the Lord and charity towards the neighbor. These can see incalculably more than those governed merely by truth, that is, by faith alone. See *Arcana Coelestia* 3882

The psalmist sang, "You will show me the path of life" (Psalm 16:11). The Lord laid out that path, the path that leads to heaven, in the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai. Like the children of Israel, we know nothing to begin with. As we grow, we experience opportunities to learn about the Lord and His laws. However, learning—or ascending Mount Sinai—is not enough. We must make the ideas we learn part of our daily walk, our path, by living them. This activity invites students to trace a path to the summit of Mount Sinai and then descend again, passing each commandment along the way to represent the process of learning them and then bringing them into our lives.



1. You are about to embark on a journey, the journey of the Ten Commandments. However, as with any journey, we will look at a map before we set off. Distribute copies of the *Sinai Maze.* What do you notice about this map? (the maze is over an image of Mount Sinai; each commandment is on the path.)
2. Why do you think the map is a maze, with potential wrong turns, and not a labyrinth, or a single path? Do you think the Lord sees our spiritual progress as a single path or a maze?
3. Our journey of life involves many choices. We could not go to heaven if this were not the case. Seeing evil and rejecting it is the first step on the Lord's path. Sometimes we will make choices we regret. However, no matter what choices we have made in the past, the Lord forgives us and welcomes us back on His true path.
4. Why do you think the maze goes up Mt Sinai and comes back down? (We must bring the commandments down into our daily lives by acting on them.) Think about bringing the commandments into your life as you work to solve the maze. (A solution page is given for the teacher if students need help.)
5. Distribute pencils or pens. Invite students to complete the maze. Be sure to pass through each commandment along the way.

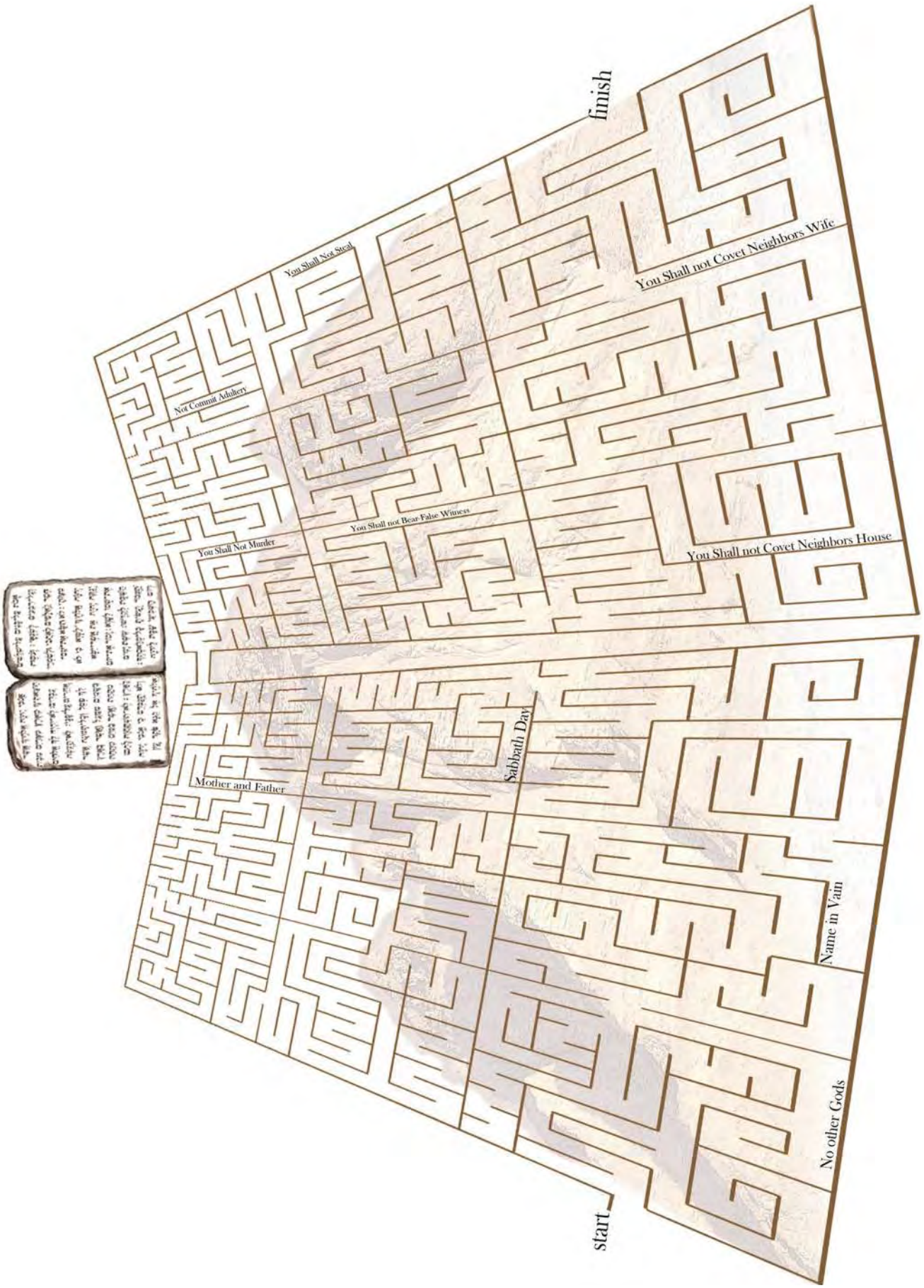
New Church Concept

Teacher Background

Every least thing with a person is foreseen by the Lord and is provided by Him for the person's future state which continues for ever. This is done for their own good, to the extent that this is in any way possible and the person allows themself to be led by the Lord." See *Arcana Coelestia* 2679

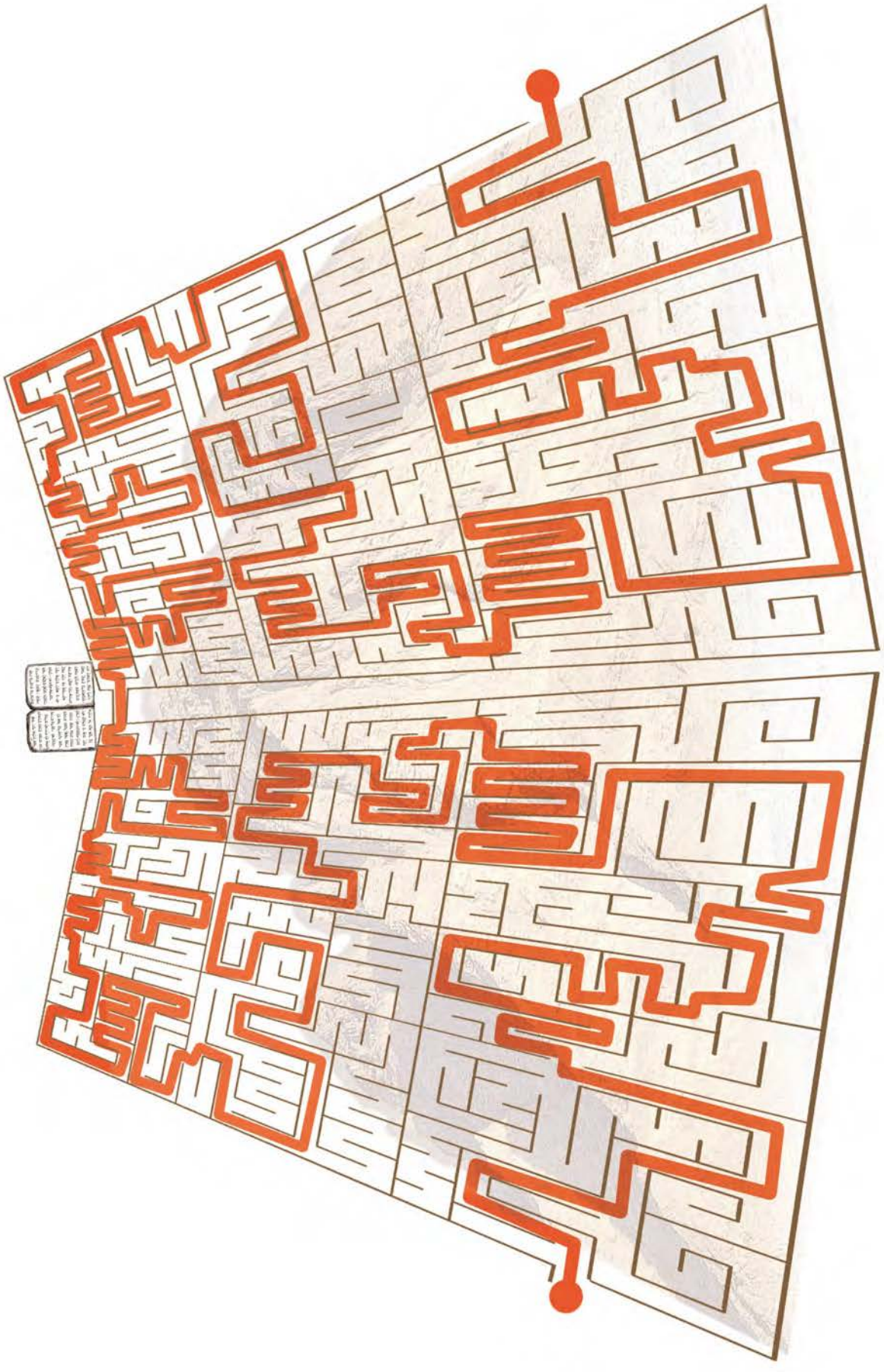
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Sinai Maze



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Sinai Maze Solution



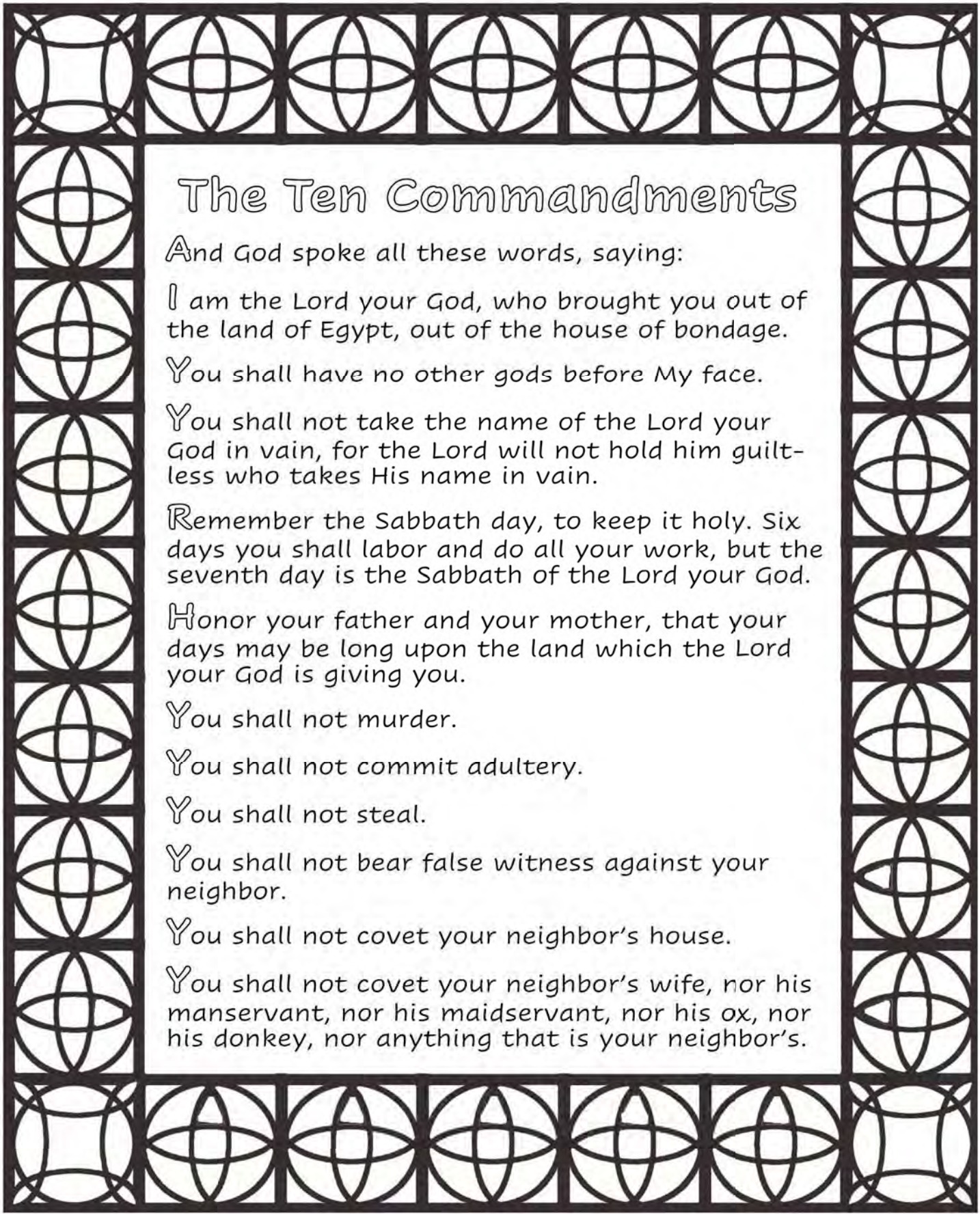
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Moses at Mount Sinai



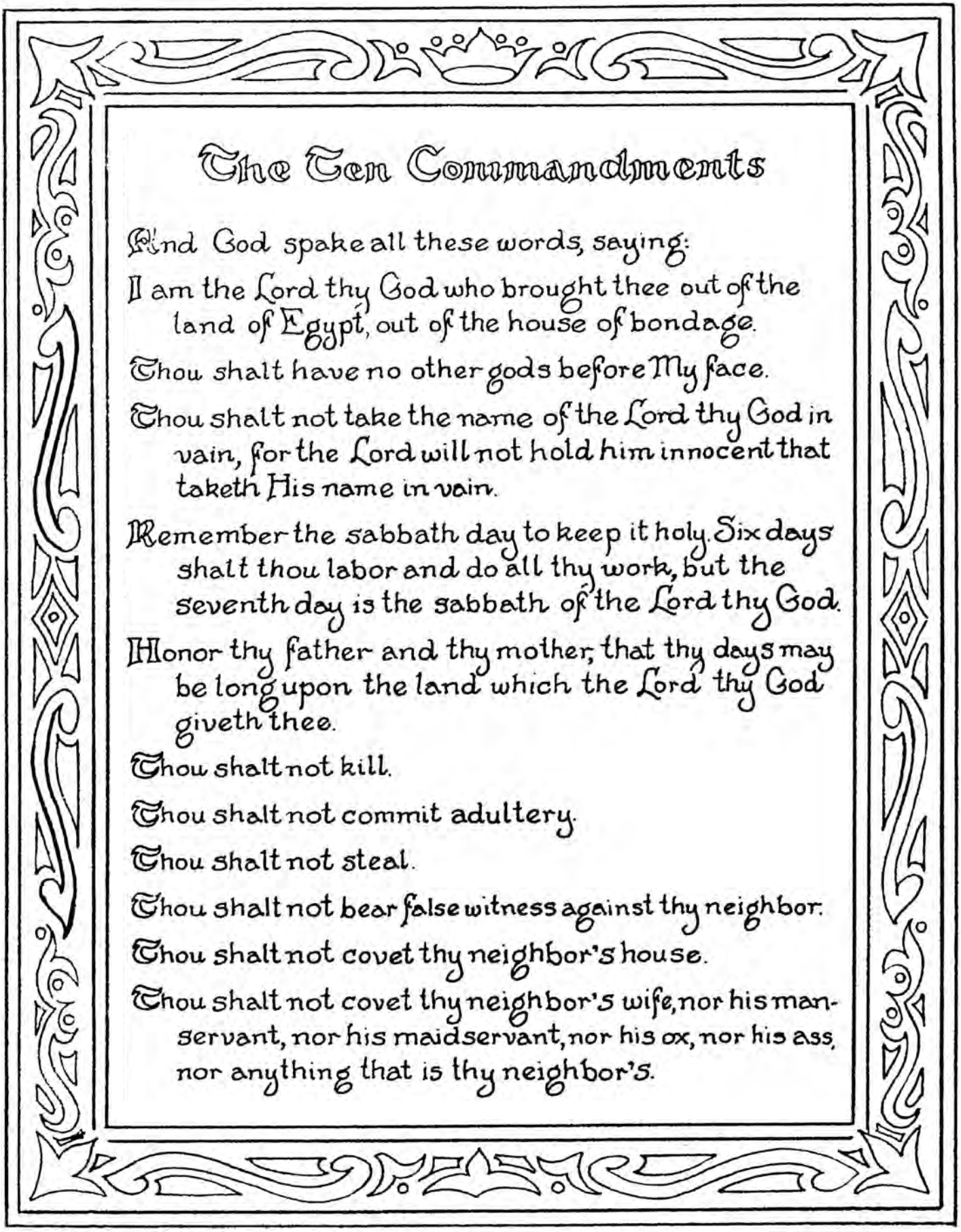
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Ten Commandments Calligraphy—NKJ



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Ten Commandments Calligraphy—OKJ



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Closing & Recitation

Before Moses received the Ten Commandments the people promised, "All that the Lord has spoken we will do". It may seem amazing that they promised to obey the Lord before they heard what He would say! They had complete trust in Him. He had rescued them from slavery in Egypt.

We too can trust the Lord's wise and loving leading and promise to do all that He has spoken. Let's say it together now. "All that the Lord has spoken we will do". Take home a recitation slip and practice these words each day.

All that the Lord has spoken we will do. Exodus 19:8	**All that the Lord has spoken we will do. Exodus 19:8**
All that the Lord has spoken we will do. Exodus 19:8	**All that the Lord has spoken we will do. Exodus 19:8**
All that the Lord has spoken we will do. Exodus 19:8	**All that the Lord has spoken we will do. Exodus 19:8**
All that the Lord has spoken we will do. Exodus 19:8	**All that the Lord has spoken we will do. Exodus 19:8**

Online Extras

Looking for something "extra"? Try these online ideas!

Ages 3-6 Listen to *The Ten Commandments* (58sec), a song telling the Ten Commandments at www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/video-the-ten-commandments-song/.

Ages 7-10 Make a *Mount Sinai Diorama,* pp. 16-17 at www.newchurchvineyard.org/file/family-lesson-the-ten-commandments-2-exodus19.pdf.

Ages 11-14 Watch *Sound of the Shofar* (1min 52sec). Hear a ram's horn trumpet like the children of Israel used at www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/video-sound-of-the-shofar/.

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