

Unit 2 "I Will Be Your God, and You Will Be My People " Lesson 8

# God's Chosen People

**Objective:** Students will be able to define the word covenant as an agreement and explain how the Ten Commandments are a sign of the covenant between God and His chosen people.

## **For the Catechist**

In the *God With Us* series, the Ten Commandments are introduced in the Grade 2 book. They are identified as God's rules and "the first steps in keeping the Greatest Commandment." The Grade 3 book defines the Commandments as "rules given to show us how to grow in love of God and our neighbor." This year the children learn that the Ten Commandments are "a sign of the covenant between God and His chosen people and a guide by which the people should live." This year the children learn about the story of the Israelites and their acceptance of the Ten Commandments as a sign of their relationship with God and as a sign of their love for God.

In the Old Testament, the word covenant is used to identify an agreement between God and man. God initiates the covenants as in the covenant with Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and David. With these covenants we read how God calls to His people and how people respond to His call. By establishing a covenant with His people, God sets up a special relationship and in return He expects something special from His people.

The Latin word for covenant is *testamentum*, as used in our terms Old and New Testaments. In today's English, *testament* suggests a written record, but this is not what the Church meant when it began speaking of the Old and New Testaments. Rather it was speaking of the Old Covenant of God with Israel and the New Covenant of God with the whole world in Jesus Christ.

## **Lesson Plan Overview**

**Opening:** "Blessed are you, O Lord; teach me .... "

**Introduction:** Discussion of Moses and thankfulness

**Read Text Aloud:** Have the students volunteer to read the text aloud or have the students read sections silently.

### **Activity Tracks:**

Choose a basic, group, or craft activity (detailed on the pages that follow) to reinforce the lesson.

- *Basic:* The Ten Commandments
- *Group:* Our Newspaper  
Part 3- The Ten Commandments
- *Craft:* God Saves His People  
Part 2

**Closing:** Psalm 118/119:1-8

## **Icon Packets:**

*Come Bless the Lord:*  
Icon of the Three Patriarchs:  
Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob

## **Teaching Pics**

## ***Background Reading***

*(Direct quotations from the sources noted)*

### **God of the Covenant**

"The story of the Old Testament tells of the relationship entered into between God and His People. This relationship was called a 'covenant,' or solemn agreement, rather like a formal treaty. Of the various covenants in the Old Testament, the greatest one is the covenant made with the Israelites through the prophet Moses. On this occasion the people were liberated by God from slavery in Egypt and were led to a promised land. In return they were to worship the one, true God and they were given the Ten Commandments and the Law, as recorded in the first five books of the Bible.

"Of the other covenants the one with Adam declared that human beings would be given paradise and friendship with God if they would not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The covenant with Noah declared that God would never again destroy the world by a flood. The covenant with Abraham testified that God would make Abraham the father of a great nation, if in turn his male children and descendants would be circumcised.

"In these covenants, God's promise is guaranteed by His own witness: 'When God made his promise to Abraham, he swore by himself, having no one greater to swear by' (Heb 6:13). Despite all the sins and failures of humanity, God remains absolutely faithful to His promises, simply because they are His word. They may take centuries of our time before they are fulfilled, as with God's promise to Abraham. They may yet need to be fulfilled, as in the promise of the universal resurrection. But God's unfailing fidelity to His word remains a sign of hope to us, especially when we feel He is indifferent" (LLI 36-37).

### **The Ten Commandments**

"In return for His providential presence and as the condition of inheriting the promised land, God required a life-style of Israel which would be distinctive, both in its sense of justice and in its awareness of what is sacred. Israel's responsibility under the covenant was to keep the Law God dictated to Moses....

"The Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1-17), traditionally held to be inscribed by God's own hand on two tablets of stone, are repeated in a slightly different form in Deuteronomy 5:6-21

"As a result of the experience of God at Sinai, the covenant became the cornerstone of Israel's understanding of its relationship with God. Consequently, the notion of covenant recurs throughout the Old Testament and reappears in the New" (OTB 70-71).

### **Covenant of love between God and His people**

"The prophets of Israel proclaimed to the people that there was a special covenant of love between and His people. This covenant of love was also a covenant of justice. The new covenant established by Christ at the Last Supper was the fulfillment of all previous covenants. The Hebrew prophets cried out against injustices to the poor and weak: Jesus proclaimed that He had come to 'bring the good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives, and to the blind new sight' (Lk 4,18). Jesus Himself identified with the 'least of these' (Mt 25,45). We Christians must see Jesus in every person, especially in the less fortunate" (UCD 65).

# *The Lesson Plan*

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## **Opening**

*Let's pray, "Blessed Are You, O Lord.... " Before we begin, we are going to be silent for a few seconds and then we will be silent for a few seconds after we say the prayer three times. Our silence will tell God we are ready to listen*

## **Introduction**

*How many of you would like to have known Moses? Why? [Let them share.] (God called to him from a burning bush; he asked Pharaoh to release the Hebrew slaves; he led the people from Egypt; he parted the Red Sea.) Also, we have learned about the great things God has done for the Hebrews. What are some of them? (He freed them from slavery in Egypt; He brought them safely through the Red Sea) God also gave them food and water as they traveled through the desert. In the Old Testament we read they ate manna. I want to read to you the way the Book of Exodus describes manna: "like coriander seed, but white, and it tasted like wafers made with honey" (Exodus 16:31). "The Israelites ate this manna for forty years " (Exodus 16:35). Could you think of anything we eat that sounds like manna? (Crackers, thin bread with honey)*

*Before we turn to our lesson, let's think about what it would have been like to have traveled with Moses. Why would you want to travel with him? (He was doing what God asked; he was helping the people.) The people with Moses knew God was taking care of them and they were very grateful. How do you think they should thank God? [Let them share.]*

*One way to thank someone is by doing what the person asks. Today we are going to read about what God asked the Israelites to do.*

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## God's Chosen People



In the Bible we read about God's promises to His people. We also read about the promises people make to God. We use the word **covenant** to identify these agreements made between God and His people. A covenant is an agreement or a special relationship which God sets up with His people. God calls His people and promises to care for them, and the people promise to follow His rules.

God had acted in the lives of the Hebrew people by leading them out of slavery in Egypt. God made a covenant with them and made them His chosen people. The Old Testament Book of Leviticus tells us that God said to them, "I will be Your God, and you will be My people" (Leviticus 26:12).

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God With Us Grade 4

Unit 2: I Will Be Your God and You Will Be My People

## Reading of Text

As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type).

### God's Chosen People

Let's look at the people in the icon on the first page of our lesson. We see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They are great patriarchs of the Old Testament and are examples of men of faith. A patriarch is a father or ruler of a family or tribe. These patriarchs lived in hope of the promise of God's faithfulness. The Israelites were descended from the line of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. [This icon is in the Come Bless the Lord icon packet. More information is written on the back of the icon.]

### "I will be Your God, and you will be My people" (Leviticus 26:12).

What is a covenant? (An agreement or a special relationship which God sets up with His people: God calls to His people and promises to care for them, and they promise to follow His rules.)



We also read about this covenant in the Old Testament Book of Exodus. We read about what happened when the Hebrews were camped at the foot of the mountain of Sinai.



"Moses went up the mountain to God. Then the Lord called to him and said, 'Thus shall you say to the house of Jacob; tell the Israelites: you have seen for yourselves how I treated the Egyptians and how I bore you up on eagle wings and brought you here to myself. Therefore, if you hearken to my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my special possession, dearer to me than all other people,

though all the earth is mine. You shall be to me a kingdom of priests, a holy nation. That is what you must tell the Israelites.' So Moses went and summoned the elders of the people. When he set before them all that the Lord had ordered him to tell them, the people all answered together, 'Everything the Lord has said we will do.' Then Moses brought back to the Lord the response of the people" (Exodus 19:2-8).

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### ... the Hebrews were camped at the foot of the mountain of Sinai.

At what mountain were the Hebrews camped? (Mount Sinai)

### ... the response of the people" (Exodus 19:2-8).

What did God ask of Moses? (To ask the Hebrews to be His people) How did the people respond? (Yes, we will do whatever God asks.)

## Moses received the Ten Commandments.

*Who gave the Hebrews rules to follow?*

*(God) What are they called? (The Ten Commandments)*

**... as a sign of God's concern and love for them.**

*Why did God give the Israelites the Ten Commandments? (As*

*a sign of the covenant and as a guide by which they should*

*live.) Why did the Israelites accept the Ten Commandments?*

*(As a sign of God's concern and love for them)*

The people of Israel were very grateful for everything God did for them. Now they willingly accepted the covenant of God. They wanted to be God's chosen people.

We learned that a covenant also means that people agree to follow the guidelines given for this special relationship. God called Moses to receive the rules for the people who accepted the covenant. Moses received the Ten Commandments.



"On the morning of the third day there were peals of thunder and lightning, and a heavy cloud over the mountain, and a very loud trumpet blast, so that all the people in the camp trembled. . . . Mount Sinai was all wrapped in smoke, for the Lord came down upon it in fire. The smoke rose from it as though from a furnace, and the whole mountain trembled violently. The trumpet blast grew louder and louder, while Moses was speaking and God answering him with thunder" (Exodus 19:16-19)

God gave the Ten Commandments to the Israelites through Moses. They were to be a sign of the covenant and a guide by which the people should live. Moses delivered the Ten Commandments to the people who accepted them as a sign of God's concern and love for them.



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**.. . live as God expected of His chosen people.**

*How will the Israelites show their love for God?*

*(By following the Ten Commandments and God's Law)*

**Words to Remember:** [Read the words together, and use them to introduce, summarize, and/or review the lesson.]

### The Ten Commandments

1. I am the Lord Your God; you shall not have strange gods before Me.
2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.
4. Honor your father and your mother.
5. You shall not kill.
6. You shall not commit adultery.
7. You shall not steal.
8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.
10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

The Israelites promised that they would follow the Ten Commandments as a sign of their love for God. They would follow God's Law and live as God expected of His chosen people.

**Words to Remember**

**Covenant:** An agreement or a special relationship which God sets up with His people. God calls to His people and promises to care for them, and they promise to follow His rules.

**The Ten Commandments:** A sign of the covenant between God and His chosen people and a guide by which the people should live.

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## Activity Tracks

### Basic: The Ten Commandments

[This worksheet is in the student text.]

*Today we are going to review the Ten Commandments as we complete the sentences. Before you complete the second part of this activity, think about ways that you follow these commandments. How do they show love for God and each other?*

The Ten Commandments	
I. Write the words that are missing for each of the commandments.	
1. I am the Lord your God; you shall not	<u>have strange gods</u> <u>before me.</u>
2. You shall not take the name of	<u>the Lord your God in vain</u> _____
3. Remember to keep holy	<u>the Lord's day</u>
4. Honor your	<u>father and your mother</u>
5. You shall not	<u>kill</u>
6. You shall not	<u>commit adultery</u>
7. You shall not	<u>steal</u>
8. You shall not bear false witness	<u>against your neighbor</u>
9. You shall not covet your	<u>neighbor's wife</u>
10. You shall not covet your	<u>neighbor's goods</u>
II. Write in your own words how we show our love for God by following the Ten Commandments.	
_____	
_____	
_____	
_____	

**Group:** Our Newspaper

Part 3 The Ten Commandments

*Materials:* Construction paper, glue, scissors, markers

*Complete the articles for the class newspaper. Work as a group arranging the stories on construction paper. Paste the stories onto the paper and have someone write the title on the first page. Staple the pages together and have the students gather together to read the paper. [Other possibilities are to laminate the pages and connect them with yarn pulled through holes on the side of the paper; type the articles in newspaper format and make a copy for each student.]*

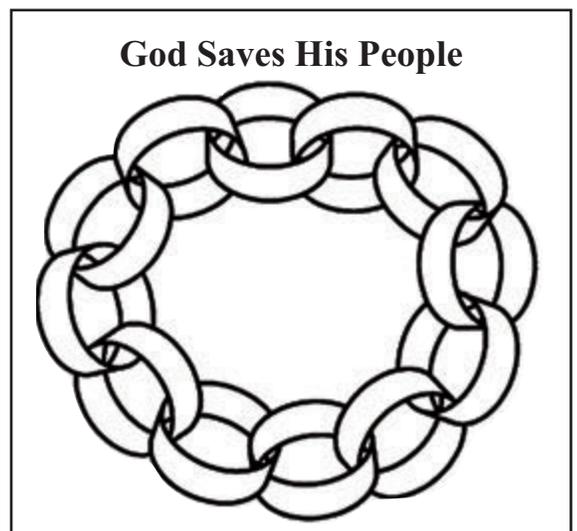
**Craft:** God Saves His People

Part 2

*Materials:* The materials that were used last week to make the paper chain

*Today we are going to complete the paper chain we started last week. What is the chain representing? (The chain of events that took place to save the Hebrew people.) Let's complete the links that tell us about how the Israelites received the Ten Commandments.*

*Now we are ready to connect the chain to our poster board. Our chain is in a circle because we start by telling how the Israelites called out to God and we end by showing how God forms a covenant with His people. They are to be one with God. Let's add our title to the poster board, "God Saves His People."*



**Closing:**

*Let's pray Psalm 118/119:1-8. [Add this psalm page found at the end of this lesson to the prayer booklet.]*

**Psalm 118/119:1-8**

Happy those whose way is blameless,  
who walk by the teaching of the Lord.  
Happy those who observe God's decrees,  
who seek the Lord with all their heart.  
They do no wrong;  
they walk in God's ways.  
You have given them the command  
to keep your precepts with care.  
May my ways be firm  
in the observance of your laws!  
Then I will not be ashamed  
to ponder all your commands.  
I will praise you with sincere heart  
as I study your just edicts.  
I will keep your laws;  
do not leave me all alone

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*Covenant*

*The Ten  
Commandments*

A sign of the covenant between God and His chosen people and a guide by which the people should live

An agreement or a special relationship which God sets up with His people: God calls to His people and promises to care for them, and they promise to follow His rules.

# Unit 2 Review

I. Place the following list of events in the correct order. For each lesson, start with number 1 to identify the first event discussed in that lesson.

## *Lesson 6*

- 3 Moses says "Yes" to God and agreed to save the Israelites.
- 1 The Hebrew people call out to God to save them.
- 2 God calls to Moses from the burning bush.

## *Lesson 7*

- 5 Pharaoh changes His mind.
- 1 Moses asks the Pharaoh to free the Israelites.
- 3 God sent ten plagues upon the Egyptians before Pharaoh agrees.
- 6 The Israelites march through the path in the Red Sea.
- 4 Pharaoh frees the Israelites.
- 7 The Red Sea drowns the Egyptian soldiers.
- 2 The Pharaoh says "No" to Moses; he will not free the Hebrew people.

## *Lesson 8*

- 1 God makes a covenant with the Israelites and makes them His chosen people.
- 4 The Israelites promise to follow the Ten Commandments and God's Law.
- 2 The Israelites say "Yes" to God when He asks them to accept His covenant.
- 3 God calls Moses to receive the rules for the people who accepted the covenant.