

Moses Part 8 - Rules for Freedom





The Israelites had been rescued from slavery, but they did not yet know how to live as free people. At Mount Sinai God gave them the Ten Commandments – not rules to trap them but rules for freedom. These covenant words revealed God's heart and showed his people what he values and how life works best in relationship with him and with one another. In this session the young people will discover that God's rules are a gift that bring freedom and shape his people for life with him.

You will need:

- Ten Commandments cards handout (numbers 1-10 with the commandment on the back)
- Two dice (for the alternative game option)
- Flipchart paper and pens
- Slips of paper with each commandment written out (or the group's rewritten versions from Amplify)



Say

1

Today we'll discover more about the moment God gave Moses the Ten Commandments. Let's see how well you know them!

Leader's notes:

Arrange the Ten Commandments cards at the front of the group and split into two teams.

One person from team 1 chooses a number and then has to say the corresponding commandment. If they get it right, the team wins the card. If they get it wrong, they don't win it. Play then passes to the next team: one person chooses a number and guesses the commandment. Continue until all the cards have been won – the winning team is the one with the most cards.



Alternative version: Use the throw of two dice to determine the number of cards that the team must guess the commandment for. If you roll an 11 or 12 make these a 'wild' roll so the team can choose any number card they would like.

The Ten Commandments

- 1. You shall have no other gods but me.
- 2. You shall not make for yourself an idol, nor bow down to it or worship it.
- 3. You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God.
- 4. You shall remember and keep the Sabbath day holy.
- 5. Respect your father and mother.
- 6. You must not kill.
- 7. You must not commit adultery.
- 8. You must not steal.
- 9. You must not give false evidence against your neighbour.
- 10. You must not be envious of your neighbour's goods. You shall not be envious of his house nor his wife, nor anything that belongs to your neighbour.



Ask:

Which command do you find the easiest/most difficult to keep? Explain your answer.



Read Exodus 20:1-21 together.

Say:

The Israelites had only just escaped slavery. They were free, but they didn't know how to live as free people yet. For hundreds of years in Egypt, they had been told what to do, what to build, how to act. Now they were on their own in the wilderness. At Mount Sinai, God gave them a new way to live.

These weren't just 'rules' - they were part of a covenant. God was saying: 'I've saved you, I love you, and here's how life will work best if you're going to be my people.'



Leader's notes:

Highlight that God chose to deliver his commandments in a dramatic way - thunder, lightning, smoke, fire! This wasn't just about passing on information. God wanted his people to feel the weight of his holiness and the seriousness of his words.

Ask:

- What do you think it felt like to stand at the foot of the mountain that day?
- Why do you think God chose to reveal himself in such a dramatic way?

Leader's notes:

Discuss the difference between the first four commandments and the remaining six. The first four focus on loving God (who he is, his name, his day). The last six focus on loving people (family, truth, property, relationships, life).

Say:

Sometimes we hear the Ten Commandments as if they are just a list of 'don'ts'. But every 'don't' shows us something God cares about deeply.

Leader's notes:

Work through each commandment with the group, taking it from a negative 'don't' to a positive declaration of what God values.

For example:

- 'Don't murder' 'God values life'.
- 'Don't steal' 'God values honesty and fairness'.
- 'Remember the Sabbath' 'God values rest and balance'.

Ask:

- Why do you think God gave these commandments to his people at this point in their journey?
- Do you think these commandments are relevant to our lives today? Explain your thoughts.

Leader's notes:

Once you've explored what each commandment shows about God's heart, ask the group to rephrase them into everyday language that makes sense in their world. Write these down on flipchart paper as you go.

Examples:

- 'Do not misuse God's name' 'Don't use God's name as a swear word or as a joke'.
- 'Do not covet' 'Don't get jealous when someone else has something you want'.

Say:

God gave the Ten Commandments not to burden his people, but to show them how life works best when we live in relationship with him and with one another. They remind us that freedom isn't doing whatever we want – it's living God's way, in love for him and for others.





Ask:

- Which of the commandments do you think people in our world are most likely to break or ignore?
- What does that tell us about what people value most today?

Ask:

The title of our session is Rules for Freedom. How does that sit with you? Does it make sense?

Say:

At first, 'rules' and 'freedom' don't seem to go together. Usually we think rules stop us doing what we want, while freedom means having no limits. At Mount Sinai, God turned that idea upside down. His rules weren't chains – they were a pathway into freedom.

Leader's notes:

Divide the group into smaller teams. Give each team a sheet of flipchart paper and pens.

Ask them to brainstorm two lists:

- 1. Rules that restrict freedom (eg unfair school rules, pointless regulations).
- 2. Rules that bring freedom (eg traffic lights that make roads safer, rules in sport that keep the game fair, boundaries that protect friendships).

After 10 minutes, get each group to share their lists.

Ask each team to circle one example from each column that feels most real to their own lives. Then discuss how those rules either trap or free them.

Say:

The Israelites discovered that God's commandments weren't about trapping them; they were about protecting their relationship with God and each other. True freedom isn't doing whatever we want. It's being able to live fully the way God designed us to.

Ask:

- Can you think of an example when having rules actually gave you more freedom?
- What do you think life would be like if everyone ignored God's commands?
- Which of God's 'rules for freedom' do you think our world needs most today?





Ask:

- If God's rules are really for our freedom, what would it look like for you to live more fully in that freedom this week?



Leader's notes:

Place ten slips of paper around the room with each commandment written on them (or use the group's rewritten versions from Amplify). Play reflective music and invite the young people to walk quietly around the room, reading each one slowly.

Encourage them to stop at the commandment that speaks most to them today. It might be one they want to thank God for, or one they find hardest to live out.

Give time for silent prayer at each spot. Then invite them to write a short prayer on a slip of paper, turning the command into a personal request.

For example:

'Do not steal' → 'God, help me to be content and honest'.

'Remember the Sabbath' \rightarrow 'God, teach me to rest well and trust you'.

Say:

As you pray, remember that God's rules are not there to trap us but to set us free to live the best kind of life with him and with others.

Leader's notes:

Encourage the group to take their prayer home to use throughout the week.



Sau

In a piece of music, the coda brings the different aspects of the melody, harmonies and bassline to a conclusion. It pulls together the different themes and often, but not always, brings resolution to a piece of music.



Ask:

As you reflect on everything you have learned today, what is your coda?

What is the one thing you will take away from the events in today's story?

Leader's notes:

Give the young people a moment to think about your question and briefly share their coda with the group before the session comes to an end.







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You must not kill.	You must not commit adultery.	You must not steal.	You must not give false evidence against your neighbour.	You must not be envious of your neighbour's goods. You shall not be envious of his house nor his wife, nor anything that belongs to your neighbour.



5	4	3	2	1
10	9	8	7	6