

A JOURNEY THROUGH DANGER

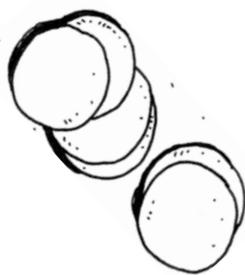
There were many, many people camped in the desert near to Mount Sinai. So much had happened to them in the past weeks. They had left Egypt, the land where they had become a nation of slaves. Pharaoh's army had pursued them to the Red Sea where they were afraid that they would be killed. Moses, who God had chosen to be their leader, stretched out his hand

over the sea. The waters divided and they were able to walk through the sea on dry ground. When Moses stretched out his hand again, the Egyptians who were following them were drowned as the water returned. Of course, Moses could not divide the waters. He obeyed God and God made a path through the sea for His people.



It was not long after seeing how wonderfully God had saved them, that the people began to be afraid again. This time they feared that they would all die of hunger in the desert. But God had not brought the Israelites out of their slavery only to let them die for want of food. Each morning something small and white covered the ground. Moses explained that this was the food God had provided for them. On five days of the week, each family was to collect as much food as they needed for the day. On the sixth day they were to gather enough for two days, for the seventh day was the Sabbath: a day of rest from work. The people called this food 'manna'. It could be baked or boiled and it continued all the time they lived in the desert. Their other great need was water and this God also provided for them, telling Moses to strike the rock and when he did so water came out for the people to drink.

Safely through the Red Sea, their need of food and water met, there was still one more danger to meet before they made their camp at Mount Sinai.



Manna was a bit like coriander seed and its colour was like bdellium – an aromatic gum. The Israelites gathered the manna and ground it in hand mills, boiled it, beat it and also made it into cakes. It tasted like cakes baked with oil (See Numbers 11:7-8).

They were attacked by some people called Amalekites. Moses instructed Joshua to choose some men to fight them and God helped the Israelites to win the battle.

In everything that happened to them, God was teaching His people that He was able to save them, provide for them and protect them. He was also the one who led them. It was not left to Moses to decide which way they should go.

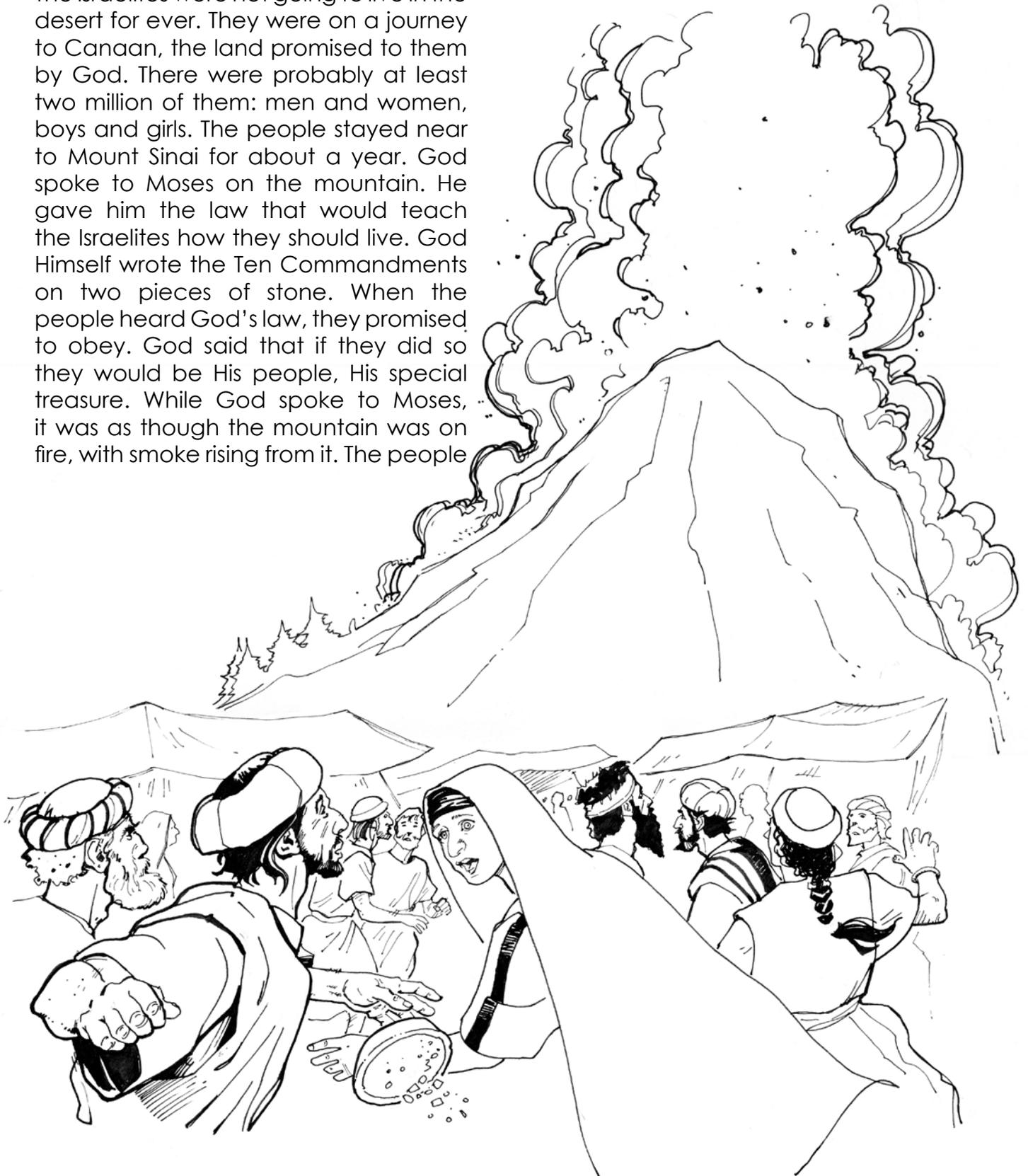


FIND OUTS ?

- Find out how God led His people. Read Exodus 13:21-22.
- Find out how we know that so many things happened in a short time. Read Exodus 19:1 and 2.

THE MOUNTAIN WHERE GOD SPOKE

The Israelites were not going to live in the desert for ever. They were on a journey to Canaan, the land promised to them by God. There were probably at least two million of them: men and women, boys and girls. The people stayed near to Mount Sinai for about a year. God spoke to Moses on the mountain. He gave him the law that would teach the Israelites how they should live. God Himself wrote the Ten Commandments on two pieces of stone. When the people heard God's law, they promised to obey. God said that if they did so they would be His people, His special treasure. While God spoke to Moses, it was as though the mountain was on fire, with smoke rising from it. The people



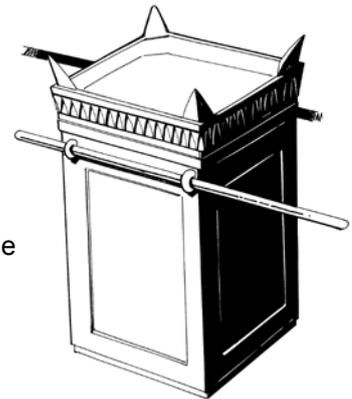
were told that they must not touch the mountain. When they saw lightning and heard thunder and the sound of a loud trumpet, they were afraid.

More than four hundred years before the Israelites set out on their journey through the desert, God had given a promise to a man whose name was Abraham. God told Abraham that his descendants would own the land of Canaan. Now, in the desert of Sinai, God was preparing His people for the day they would enter their own land. The nations around them worshipped idols: statues made of gold, silver, stone or wood. Idols do not see or hear or do anything to help those who bow down to them. Those who worshipped idols did many things that were wicked and cruel. God's people were to be different, worshipping the one true God who made them, and showing love and concern for one another. This is what God's law would teach them.

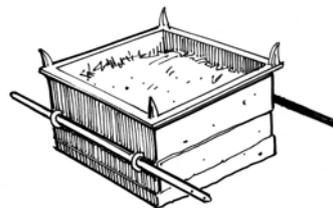
God had something more to speak to Moses about whilst he was on the mountain. He gave Moses instructions for making a very special tent and the furniture that was to go inside it. You will realize that this was not to be like any tent you have ever seen if you think about the things that were needed to make it. The list included gold, silver, bronze; blue, purple and scarlet thread;

linen, goats' hair, animal skins and acacia wood. All these things were to be given by the people as an offering to God. It seems surprising that people who had been slaves and were now living in tents in the desert would have very much to give.

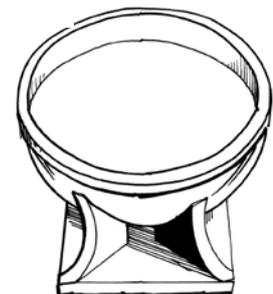
The Tabernacle Furniture



The Altar of Incense
See page 20



The Bronze Altar
See page 16



The Laver
See page 16



FIND OUTS?

- Find out why the Israelites would have gold and silver to give when Moses told them what was needed. Read Exodus 12 :35-36.
- Find out why God gave instructions for the people to make the special tent. Read Exodus 25:8.
- Find out what we usually call the special tent. Read Exodus 26:1.

GIFTS AND SKILLS

There is something that we need before we begin to make anything: we need a plan. We have to know about materials, measurements and colours. Either we will use an instruction sheet that is provided for us or we must make our own plan. It was God who gave Moses the instructions for making the tabernacle. At least four times God told Moses that everything must be made

just as he was shown on the mountain. Every detail was given so that there could be no mistake. Everything about the tabernacle teaches us about the Lord Jesus Christ. It could only do that if it was made exactly as God said.

Many skills would be needed for this work. There would be wood to carve, jewels to cut and set, gold, silver and bronze to work with. There would also



be engraving, tapestry work and weaving to do. God told Moses that He had given skill in all these things to two men named Bezalel and Aholiab. Not only would they be able to do the work, but both these men were also able to teach others. Amongst the Israelites there were skilled craftsmen who were able to share in this very special work.

Moses told the people all about the tabernacle that God had commanded them to make. He explained exactly what would be needed, but no one would be forced to give. God had said that those who were willing and who had any of the necessary materials should bring them as an offering. When the people had listened to all that Moses had to tell them, they went back to their tents.

Each morning men and women came to Moses, gladly giving some of their possessions as an offering to God. Some brought their gold jewellery, some brought silver, bronze or wood. Some of the women were able to make coloured thread and linen. There were people who gave animal and goats' hair. The rulers brought precious stones, oil and spices. Whatever the people brought, Moses gave to Bezalel, Aholiab and the other craftsmen so that they could get on with the work.

A day came when those who had been working, stopped what they were doing because they needed to speak to Moses. They had to tell him that nothing more was needed. Moses must

tell the people to stop bringing their gifts each morning. The people had been so willing to give that there was enough for everything that was to be made.



FIND OUTS?

- Find out what jewellery the people gave. Read Exodus 35:22.
- Find out what skills God gave to Bezalel. Read Exodus 35:30-34.
- Find out what skills God gave to Aholiab. Read Exodus 38:23.