

LESSON 35

# The Tabernacle

EXODUS 25–27



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BIBLE TRUTH

GOD LIVES AMONG HIS PEOPLE

LESSON SNAPSHOT

1. **OPENING REVIEW** . . . . . **5 MIN**  
Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.
2. **BIBLE STORY** . . . . . **10 MIN**  
Read Exodus 25:1–16 from the Scriptures or read story 35, “The Tabernacle,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.
3. **OBJECT LESSON 1** . . . . . **10 MIN**  
No Curtain Divides Us  
**SUPPLIES:**
  - ✓ Bible
  - ✓ an old sheet or cloth (cut a one-inch slit to facilitate tearing it)
4. **TEACHING/DISCUSSION** . . . . . **10 MIN**
5. **OBJECT LESSON 2** . . . . . **10 MIN**  
Tabernacle Trivia
6. **SWORD BIBLE MEMORY** . . . . . **5 MIN**
7. **ACTIVITY TIME** . . . . . **10 MIN**  
Coloring Activity  
**SUPPLIES:**
  - ✓ coloring page 35—one copy for each child
8. **CLOSING PRAYER** . . . . . **5 MIN**
9. **BONUS OBJECT LESSON** . . . . . **10 MIN**  
Make It with Blocks and Clay  
**SUPPLIES:**
  - ✓ soft modeling clay (If you know an artistic person who is good with clay, invite them to participate)
  - ✓ wooden blocks
  - ✓ tabernacle diagram from study Bible or Internet

**TOTAL 75 MIN**

## PREPARING TO TEACH

### TEACHING POINTS

**God lives among his people**—This week we begin to learn about the tabernacle, which means tent or dwelling. God calls Moses to collect certain things from the people. He tells Moses to build the tabernacle with these things. The tabernacle will be God's house. He will rule Israel from the tabernacle while they wander in the wilderness. The fact that God lives with his people shows that he is very different from the dead idols of other nations.

God first lived with man in Eden. He lived with Israel in the tabernacle. Later, God was present among us when Jesus came to earth. Today, God dwells within Christians by the Holy Spirit. Finally, God will be with us in heaven where we will see him face to face.

**Gods instructs how to build the tabernacle**—God gives Moses amazingly detailed plans for the tabernacle. God's presence would dwell in the tabernacle and sacrifices would be made there for the people's sins. These tabernacle rituals become the main way Israelites worship God.

We have seen that many events in the Old Testament foreshadow or picture God's plan of salvation through Jesus. Many parts of the tabernacle do the same thing.

For example, God directs Moses in another place to build the tabernacle with a square inner court. The same square court would later be used in the temple in Jerusalem. It will also be used in the new Jerusalem that is yet to come (Revelation 21:16). God surely knows the end from the beginning (Isaiah 46:9–10). Even the design of the tabernacle points forward to God's plan of salvation.

**God gives specific plans for the altar of God**—God tells Moses how to build the altar of God, and Moses builds it. The altar is so holy that it has to be carried using poles so no one will touch it.

Countless sacrifices were made upon that altar—thousands upon thousands, year after year. But they were never enough to take away sin. Now that Jesus, the perfect sacrifice, has been offered up for our sins, we no longer need an altar in worship. Forgiveness is possible because the Son of God shed his blood for us.

**WHERE IS JESUS?** \_\_\_\_\_

How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?

Read Matthew 27:50–54.

Here we read about the temple in Jerusalem, and what happened there at the moment Jesus died. The temple was arranged just like the tabernacle that God described to Moses. There was an inner court of two rooms. The Holy Place was the first room. Within it was a room called the Most Holy Place, which was also called the Holy of Holies. A curtain divided the two rooms. The curtain was like a barrier between God and man. Only the high priest could pass through the curtain and enter the Holy of Holies. He did this only once a year as a mediator between God and man. Each year he offered a sacrifice for the sins of the people. This sacrifice had to be repeated year after year because it was not a perfect sacrifice.

But Jesus came as the perfect sacrifice. When he died on the cross, the temple curtain was torn in half. The barrier between God and man was ripped in two. God wanted everyone to understand that Jesus' sacrifice was enough to forgive all sins for all time. God would not dwell in a temple or tabernacle any longer. Now he would dwell in and among his people. From that moment on, God's people became the temple of God (1 Corinthians 6:19). Now his presence dwells continually in the hearts of Christians.

**THE LESSON**

**OPENING REVIEW** . . . . . **5 MIN**

Use last week's lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

**BIBLE STORY** . . . . . **10 MIN**

Read Exodus 25:1–16 from the Scriptures or read story 35, "The Tabernacle," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

**OBJECT LESSON 1 . . . . . 10 MIN**

**No Curtain Divides Us**

**SUPPLIES:**

- ✓ Bible
- ✓ an old sheet or cloth (cut a one-inch slit to facilitate tearing it)

This exercise will demonstrate the requirement to send a priest to talk to God.

Place a Bible open to one of the chapters we are reading. Cover it with the sheet. Ask for a volunteer. Ask them to tell the class what a particular verse says. Tell them that the Bible is under the cover, which needs to be lifted to read it. When they then go to touch the cover, shout out, “No, don’t touch that.” Then explain that you are the only one who can touch it. They should look confused.

You could then explain that the Word is holy and that you want them to read it, but they cannot touch the sheet. Finally make a deal. Tell them you will act as the person in the middle. You will read it and tell them what to say to the class. Read a short portion such as Exodus 25:10 and then whisper it to the volunteer who then should repeat it to the class.

Explain how the priest would go inside to meet with God on behalf of the people. The people could not go by themselves. Now God has made a way for all of us to pray and talk to him. Take the sheet, rip it in two, and toss it aside. Explain that when Jesus died, the temple curtain was torn in two. Now anyone who trusts in Jesus can approach the throne of grace and speak to God.

**TEACHING/DISCUSSION . . . . . 10 MIN**

Using the teaching points, teach through the lesson for today.

**OBJECT LESSON 2 . . . . . 10 MIN**

**Tabernacle Trivia**

Hold a trivia competition about today’s Bible story. Divide the class into two teams. Choose one child from each team for each question. The first child of the pair to raise their hand and answer correctly earns one point for their team.

1. What piece of furniture would later hold the Ten Commandments? (*the ark of the covenant*)
2. Name two of the items that were kept in the ark of the covenant. (*the stone tablets of the Ten Commandments, a pot of manna, and Aaron's staff that budded*)
3. What kind of wood was used in the construction of the ark of the covenant? (*Acacia wood*)
4. What metal was the lampstand made out of? (*gold*)
5. Name two of the three main colors of the tabernacle curtains? (*purple, blue, and scarlet*)
6. Which piece of tabernacle furniture was decorated with almond blossoms? (*the lampstand*)
7. What metal was the altar covered with? (*bronze*)
8. What type of oil was used in the lamp? (*olive oil*)
9. Which of the following was not used in constructing the tabernacle: goat skins, ram skins, skins of sea cows, skins of fine horses? (*skins of fine horses*)
10. What decoration was to be sewn into the curtains? (*cherubim*)

Then ask the class the following questions:

- What do we learn by reading all the instructions God gave about the tabernacle?  
(*We realize God wanted it to be constructed a certain way for a very specific purpose.*)
- Why couldn't Israel just build a house for God the way they wanted to?  
(*God is holy, and his holiness needed to be honored and guarded. The only way God could dwell with man then was knowing that his Son would one day atone for the sins of his people. The tabernacle and its furniture were a continual reminder of Jesus' coming sacrifice, and the tabernacle kept the sin of man away from God and his holiness.*)

**SWORD BIBLE MEMORY . . . . . 5 MIN**

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

**ACTIVITY TIME . . . . . 10 MIN**

**Coloring Activity**

**SUPPLIES:**

- ✓ coloring page 35—one copy for each child

While the children are coloring, engage them by asking the following questions:

- **Who can name some of the parts of the tabernacle?**  
*(Exodus 25—27 tells us the parts of the tabernacle were the Holy Place, the Most Holy Place, the curtain dividing the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place, the ark of the covenant, the golden lampstand, the table, and the incense altar. Outside the tabernacle were the courtyard walls, the bronze altar, and the basin.)*
  
- **What were the walls made out of?**  
*(thick curtains so the people could not see inside to the most holy place where the presence of the Lord dwells)*
  
- **Does God have a tabernacle today?**  
*(Yes, God has a living tabernacle today. He dwells in the hearts of Christians.)*

See Ephesians 3:16–17 (NIV): “I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.”

**CLOSING PRAYER . . . . . 5 MIN**

Pick several children to pray prayers based on the day’s scripture passages.

**BONUS OBJECT LESSON . . . . . 10 MIN**

**Make It with Blocks and Clay**

**SUPPLIES:**

- ✓ soft modeling clay (If you know an artistic person who is good with clay, invite them to participate.)
- ✓ wooden blocks
- ✓ tabernacle diagram from study Bible or Internet

Younger children love seeing visually what you are describing verbally. So, using the blocks, outline the two rooms of the tabernacle. Refer to a diagram of the tabernacle to get the proportions correct. Use one block as the ark. Use clay to make the wings of the cherubim that go on top of the ark and rings for the sides so that poles can carry the ark. There is no need to worry about perfection; the children have vivid imaginations. If you want, ask an artistic person to join you and work the modeling clay as you tell the story. You will be surprised to see how enamored with the story the children get as they watch it take shape before their very eyes.

Explain the dividing curtain to the children and how when Jesus died, the curtain was torn in two, opening up the way for all men to have access to God.



