

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**  
Telling the Difference
4. **TEACHING/DISCUSSION** . . . . . **10 MIN**
5. **OBJECT LESSON 2** . . . . . **15 MIN**  
Building the Furniture  
**SUPPLIES:**  
✓ modeling clay for several teams of children
6. **WORD BIBLE MEMORY** . . . . . **5 MIN**
7. **ACTIVITY TIME** . . . . . **15 MIN**  
The Ark  
**SUPPLIES:**  
✓ modeling clay
8. **CLOSING PRAYER** . . . . . **5 MIN**
9. **BONUS OBJECT LESSON** . . . . . **10 MIN**  
The Curtain Torn in Two  
**SUPPLIES:**  
✓ clothesline  
✓ two flat bedsheets (darker colors work best)  
✓ masking tape  
✓ pictures of the tabernacle from a study Bible or Bible dictionary or downloaded from the Internet ([http://www.the-tabernacle-place.com/tabernacle\\_articles/tabernacle\\_basic\\_layout.aspx](http://www.the-tabernacle-place.com/tabernacle_articles/tabernacle_basic_layout.aspx))

**TOTAL 85 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.

**A LITTLE BIT MORE*****Tabernacle***

The word *tabernacle* means tent or dwelling. In the Old Testament, God made his dwelling in a literal tent. In the New Testament, John writes, “The Word became flesh and dwelt [tabernacled] among us” (John 1:14). Here we see that Jesus was the ultimate fulfillment of that Old Testament picture.

The tabernacle was God’s house, which demonstrated God’s living presence among his people. God’s presence set him apart from the dead idols of the other nations. God’s presence dwelling with his people was a sign of his blessing first in the Garden of Eden and then with the nation of Israel; now God lives by his Spirit in the hearts of believers, and one day, all Christians will live with God in heaven forever.

**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**

Telling the Difference

Read Hebrews 9:1–14 together. Discuss the following question:

How is the new covenant different from the old covenant? (Under the old covenant people worshipped God in a tabernacle made by human hands. Now, under the new covenant, we can worship in the spiritual tent of our bodies. Whereas the sacrifices offered under the old covenant could only purify a person until they sinned again, Jesus’ sacrifice can cleanse the conscience. The blood of Christ purifies us from all our sin once and for all.)

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

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

**OBJECT LESSON 2 . . . . . 15 MIN**

Building the Furniture

**SUPPLIES:**

- ✓ modeling clay for several teams of children

Divide the class into teams to build a part of the tabernacle. Each team is to work on a different piece of furniture in secret, taking the description from Exodus 25:10—27:8. Compare the similarities and differences with the teams in the class.

Then ask the class the following questions:

- How were the workers able to follow these simple instructions and make the temple articles well?  
*(God filled them with his Holy Spirit so they would know exactly how to do it [Exodus 31:1–6].)*
- Why was it important that the tabernacle be exact?  
*(The tabernacle and each of its articles had a prophetic meaning and pointed to the perfect sacrifice of God. They represented the ultimate sacrifice and offering of Jesus, the Lamb of God.)*

**WORD BIBLE MEMORY . . . . . 5 MIN**

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

**ACTIVITY TIME . . . . . 15 MIN**

The Ark

**SUPPLIES:**

- ✓ modeling clay

Have the children each create an ark following the directions God gave to Moses in Exodus 25:10–22.

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

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

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

The Curtain Torn in Two

**SUPPLIES:**

- ✓ clothesline
- ✓ two flat bedsheets (darker colors work best)
- ✓ masking tape
- ✓ pictures of the tabernacle from a study Bible or Bible dictionary or downloaded from the Internet ([http://www.the-tabernacle-place.com/tabernacle\\_articles/tabernacle\\_basic\\_layout.aspx](http://www.the-tabernacle-place.com/tabernacle_articles/tabernacle_basic_layout.aspx))

Prior to class, tie the clothesline across the classroom. Try tying one end to the door hinge and the other to a window or ceiling component on the other side of the room. Throw the bedsheets over the line with the opening in the center. Then create the outline of the tabernacle on the floor with the tape. The Most Holy Place was square and the Holy Place was rectangular. Make the Holy Place large enough for your whole class to sit in.

When your children arrive have them sit down in the Holy Place while you move to the Most Holy Place and start teaching the lesson. Hold up the pictures of the tabernacle for the children to see. Of course they will not be able to see because of the curtain. Listen for their complaints. Once the children complain, talk to them about how the curtain blocks their access to you as the teacher. Then, using the information in the “Where Is Jesus?” section, talk about what happened to the curtain that separated the people from God’s presence when Jesus died.

Finally rip open the curtain and show the pictures to the children. Talk about how wonderful it was for the way to be opened for them to see the pictures—and how wonderful it is for the way to be opened to us to God’s presence.