



11

Worship in the Tabernacle

Key Themes

- God reveals His character in the Bible.
- God provides salvation from sin through Jesus.

Key Passages

- Exodus 25:10–16, 25:30–31, 27:1, 30:1, 30:18

Lesson Focus

- The Tabernacle was a special place to worship God.



Lesson Overview



Come On In

Students will play with play dough.



Circle Time

Prayer—Using the Prayer page of the Flip Chart, discuss prayer and give each child the opportunity to pray after determining what type of prayer you will offer today.

God's Word—While God's people, the Israelites, were wandering in the wilderness, God told them to build a Tabernacle. This Tabernacle was a place the people went to worship God and make sacrifices to Him.

Song—Children will sing/repeat the "Goin' to the Promised Land" jingle and the "Be Sure to Read the Bible" song.



Activity 1: Tabernacle Items Match-Up

Students will play a game of "concentration," matching up pictures of things discussed in the lesson today.



Activity 2: Tabernacle Items

Students will color the Tabernacle Items coloring sheets.



Memory Verse Review/Snack

Children will review the memory verse while enjoying the snack for the day. You may want to use the snack as incentive to recite or repeat the memory verse.

Lesson Preparation

WHAT YOU WILL DO

WHAT YOU WILL NEED



FOR THE TEACHER

- Study the Prepare to Share section.
- Go Before the Throne

- Student Take Home Sheets



COME ON IN

- Bring play dough.

- Play dough for each student



CIRCLE TIME

- Practice the "Goin' to the Promised Land" jingle and the "Be Sure to Read the Bible" song. The lyrics can be found at the back of this Teacher Guide.
- Bring in the items listed to the right to use as illustrations during the lesson.

- Lesson Flip Chart
- Objects to illustrate the Tabernacle items during the lesson: special trinket box with "Ten Commandments" in it, bread, candlestick or candle, lighter or match, air freshener spray, soap



TABERNALE ITEMS MATCH-UP

- Print and cut two sets of the 12 Tabernacle Items Match-Up cards from the Resource DVD-ROM for use during this activity.

- 24 Tabernacle Items Match-Up cards



TABERNALE ITEMS

- Print one or more of the six Tabernacle Items coloring sheets from the Resource DVD-ROM for each child.

- Tabernacle Items coloring sheets
- Crayons



MEMORY VERSE REVIEW/SNACK

- Prepare and bring snacks.

- Lesson Flip Chart for memory verse review
- Snacks



Prepare to Share

SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

Read Exodus 25–31; Hebrews 7:26; Hebrews 10:1–14. As you prepare for this lesson and read the text, consider the holiness of God as He delivers the instructions for His dwelling place on earth with men and the atonement He offers for sin through Jesus Christ alone.

When God gives details, we should take notice. And in this account—the construction of the Tabernacle—God is all about details. In fact, it is so detailed that this is one of those sections of Scripture that people tend to skip over because of the “boring details.” But why did God include such explicit detail? These rigid directions reveal that God dwells with men according to His plan and purpose. He is absolutely changeless and holy. He knew how He wanted to be worshipped and He would not tolerate any other form. This dwelling place, with all its furnishings, was to be built according to all that God revealed (Exodus 25:9).

Some of the items included in the Tabernacle are worth mentioning here. The table of showbread was to be set outside the Most Holy Place. On it would be 12 loaves of bread—representing the 12 tribes of Israel. These were to be set before the Lord each Sabbath—and eaten by Aaron and his sons in a holy place (Leviticus 24:8–9). We can easily see that this bread also pointed toward Jesus Christ, the bread of life (John 6:35).

The golden lampstands (made of pure gold) stood across from the table of showbread. These lamps were fueled with olive oil and burned continually (Exodus 27:20). The priests certainly needed light within the Tabernacle—but surely we see that this un-extinguished light points to our Lord and Savior, “the light of the world” (John 8:12).

The most important piece of furniture instructed by God was the Ark of the Covenant—the gold-covered chest that would find its home within the Most Holy Place. The Ark would house the golden pot that had the manna, Aaron’s rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant (Hebrews 9:4). It was covered by the mercy seat (Exodus 25:17), and God would speak to the priest from above the mercy seat (Exodus 25:22) over the Ark. On the Day of Atonement, the blood of the sacrifice would be sprinkled on the mercy seat to make atonement for the sins of Israel (Leviticus 16:15–16).

The picture here should take our breath away as

God reveals His plan of redemption. Can you picture God above the mercy seat (Exodus 25:22) looking down at the Ark housing the Law that could never be obeyed (Romans 3:19–20), knowing that because of His holiness He must demand perfect obedience? And then, once a year—on the Day of Atonement—the blood is sprinkled, according to the Law, onto the mercy seat and God sees the sin offering presented which provides a temporary covering, but can never take away sins (Hebrews 10:11). What a wonderful foreshadowing of Christ’s sacrifice offered once for sins forever (Hebrews 10:12).

The building of the Tabernacle, far from being boring, offers us hope and the promise that by one offering—Jesus Christ—God has perfected those who are being sanctified (Hebrews 10:14).

APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

God’s instructions for the objects used in the Tabernacle included an interesting building material—acacia wood (Exodus 25:5, 25:10, 25:13, 25:23, 25:28, and others). The acacia tree was used throughout the Tabernacle—but most significantly it was what the Ark itself was made of. The acacia tree was covered with sharp thorns. Thorns are a constant reminder of the Curse placed in the garden after sin entered the world (Genesis 3:18). The Curse is real. As the workmen prepared the articles for the Tabernacle, they would have had a constant physical reminder of the presence of sin.

And this tree was what God specifically wanted used to house the Law He had given to Moses on Mt. Sinai—the Law that could never be obeyed perfectly. The law that humbles man to the knowledge of his own sinfulness (Romans 3:20).

Can you see the picture? The Ark made from the sin-cursed, thorn-covered tree, housing the Law that could never be kept, doused with the sacrificial blood every year, before the mercy seat, for atonement of the sins of the people. What an amazing foreshadowing of God’s plan of redemption through Jesus Christ—who would shed his blood once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous (1 Peter 3:18) as the propitiation for the sins of all who would believe (1 John 4:10).

We are surrounded by real reminders of the Curse and sin every day. But we can find joy and hope in the promise He has given us through the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world (Revelation 13:8).

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Tabernacle was intended to be a temporary structure until Jerusalem was established as the capital of the Israelite nation. It was used during the forty years the Israelites wandered in the desert and was replaced by Solomon's Temple 400 years later.

Houses of worship and temples were quite common at this time in history. Many cultures had temples dedicated to their pagan gods. These were often situated on mountains or high hills because the people believed that this would bring them nearer to their gods. This practice of pagan worship on the mountain tops explains the command of God to the Israelites as they entered into the Promised Land to destroy the high places that were established to worship Baal and other false gods (Numbers 33:52; Deuteronomy 12:2).

God was very precise in His directions of both the Tabernacle and the Temple. Today, however, because of Jesus Christ our Savior—Immanuel, God with us (Matthew 1:23)—we do not look to a temple to worship in, but we worship God in spirit and truth wherever we are (John 4:19–24). Jesus is the cornerstone of the church, which now grows together throughout the

world into a holy temple in the Lord (Ephesians 2:21). In fact, the apostle Paul makes it clear that we are the temple of the living God and God has made His dwelling among us (2 Corinthians 6:16). Because of this, we should endeavor to live in humble worship and praise to our holy God in all we do—consistently reflecting His glory throughout our lives.



BEFORE THE THRONE

Oh dear Lord, I thank you for the foreshadowing of Jesus Christ in the Old Testament. Help me to realize that the entire Bible is about your redemptive plan in Christ. And as I study more, allow my eyes to see Jesus Christ my Savior in every passage. Father, I pray that the children will realize the significance of the sacrifice that Jesus Christ made—the only perfect sacrifice sufficient to take away sins once and for all. Bring them to the realization of their own sinfulness and then allow them to see Jesus for the wonderful Savior that he is.



COME ON IN

As children arrive . . .

- They will play with play dough.

During this time you should be at the door welcoming the children as they come in and directing them to sit down at the tables and begin the activity. Have an aid/helper ready to engage the children with the activity.



REVIEW

Using the Flip Chart, quickly review the previous lessons with your students. Take 5 to 10 minutes to reinforce the important truths the students have heard so far in your class. Remember, children learn by repetition and review.

Ask the children questions about the previous lessons as you display the lesson pages from the Flip Chart. Remind the children of each lesson's focus. This will refresh the truths in your students' minds and maintain continuity as you teach through the lessons.



Circle Time

In an orderly manner, have the children assemble in a circle away from the tables—either on the floor or in their chairs.

Bring your Bible, stuffed animal, Flip Chart, special trinket box with "Ten Commandments" in it, bread, candlestick or candle, lighter or match, air freshener spray, soap, and any other props you brought or prepared for this lesson.

PRAYER

This prayer time is designed to get children to begin to understand some simple concepts about prayer and to get them to understand that they can pray. Use a special stuffed animal—prayer bear—or appropriate object to pass around the circle as each child gets a turn to pray. Only the child with the stuffed animal is allowed to pray or speak during this time. Using the same stuffed animal or other object all year will add continuity and structure to this time.

*Turn to the Prayer page in the Flip Chart. **We start our Bible Study with prayer. Let's pray.** Briefly review the different types of prayer presented there. Then determine which type you want the children to pray today.*

- I love you prayers—Adoration
- I'm sorry prayers—Confession
- Thank you prayers—Thanksgiving
- Please prayers—Supplication

Today Supplication is suggested. You might proceed this way.

God does care about everything that happens in our lives. He promises to provide all we need and to answer prayer. Today let's say prayers of supplication—and ask Him for something we want.

➤ Before making your transition to circle time, we suggest you take time for restroom breaks and hand washing.

➤ Preschoolers need to move. This is a good opportunity to get them to move. Make an orderly transition to the circle time. You can have carpet squares if you want to sit on the floor, or help them to move their chairs into the circle.

The prayers you begin with should be specific to your needs. This will model to the children that you believe God does care about all the details of your life and you pray to Him about these things. Your example will increase their confidence in praying to God.

I'll start. Dear God, . . . (insert personal prayer here).

Pass the stuffed animal around the circle, giving all the children an opportunity to say a prayer of supplication.

Very good! Now let's put our stuffed animal away and we'll get into God's Word.

GOD'S WORD

These first four questions will be repeated each week. The repetition of these questions will help to solidify these simple but foundational truths in the children's minds at a young age.

- ? **Before we begin, what is this?** *Hold up your Bible. The Bible!*
- ? **What is in this Bible?** *God's Holy Word!*
- ? **What does the Bible tell us?** *Everything we need to know!*
- ? **And all God's Words in this Bible are what?** *True!*

► As you teach, refer often to the Flip Chart picture to keep the children engaged.

Refer to Lesson 10 Flip Chart. We talked about Moses getting the Ten Commandments from God. When God called Moses up the mountain to get the Ten Commandments, He also gave the people lots of other laws. God wanted the people to make sacrifices to Him. And God wanted to live with the people. God wanted His people to worship Him and pray to Him, so God gave the instructions to build a place for this worship. This place was called the Tabernacle. Part of the Tabernacle was like a tent and the other part was an area outside the tent surrounded by curtains. *Refer to the Flip Chart.*

The Tabernacle was going to be a special place in the wilderness where the people would worship God. Inside the tent was very special. There were two sections, the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. The Most Holy Place is where the priest went to talk to God. The priest was the only one allowed in there! *Refer to the Flip Chart.*

God told Moses to put some very special things in the Tabernacle. That's what we are going to talk about today. This Tabernacle was a special place to worship God!

I am going to read about the first thing God talked about. It is called the Ark of the Covenant. The Ark of the Covenant was a very special box that God wanted Moses to put into the Most Holy Place. It was much nicer than this fancy box—and it was bigger! *Bring out your special trinket box to show the children.* Pay attention as I read this and see if you can tell me what the Ark of the Covenant was made out of and what God told Moses to put inside the Ark. OK? *Read Exodus 25:10–16, emphasizing "gold" and "the testimony."*

Exodus 25:10–16

? What did God say the Ark of the Covenant was made of? *Gold! Refer to the Flip Chart.*

My box isn't gold. But the Ark of the Covenant was gold. And God told Moses to put the Ten Commandments in the Ark of the Covenant. *Open your special box and show them the paper that says "Ten Commandments" on it.*

The Ark of the Covenant was made of gold and had the Ten Commandments in it. This is what God's special box looked like. God wanted that in the Tabernacle. The Tabernacle was a special place to worship God. *Refer to the Flip Chart.*

Then God told them to build a special table. The special table would go into the Holy Place of the Tabernacle. The Tabernacle was a special place to worship God. God told the people to put something on the table. I am going to read what God's true Word says. Listen and tell me what God said to put on the special table. *Read Exodus 25:30, emphasizing "bread."*

Exodus 25:30

? What did God want on the special table? *Bread! Bring out the bread you brought in.*

OK. What is next? Listen carefully. *Read Exodus 25:31.*

Exodus 25:31

? What did God want in the Holy Place with the table? *A lamp stand!*

Bring out your candlestick or candle. The lampstand wasn't really a lamp. They didn't have electricity back then! It was a VERY fancy candle. And God told the people that it should stay lit all the time. God wanted this special lampstand in His Tabernacle. The Tabernacle was a special place to worship God. *Bring out your lighter or a match. Light the candle. Refer to the Lampstand on the Flip Chart.*

OK. So we have the Ark of the Covenant, the table of showbread, and the golden lampstand. *Refer to the Flip Chart.* There was one more thing God wanted inside the tent. Listen and see if you can tell me what it was. *Read Exodus 30:1 emphasizing altar.*

Exodus 30:1

? What was the last thing to go in there? *An altar.*

Yes. This was to be an altar of incense. That means they would burn stuff on the altar that smelled good to God. *Bring out the air freshener you brought in and spray it in the air.* All these things went inside the tent in the wilderness.

There are two more things we want to talk about. These things went out here in the courtyard. *Refer to the Flip Chart.* I'll tell you about them. One was a bronze laver. This was to be like a big sink or a bathtub. It would be filled with water and the priest would clean himself in it before he would begin his worship to God. *Refer to the Flip Chart. Bring out your soap. Exodus 30:18.*

Exodus 30:18

The last place was the altar of burnt offering. See the fire on here? This is where the priest would offer sacrifices—animals—to God. The animals would be burned on this altar. *Refer to the Flip Chart. Bring out your lighter or matches again. Exodus 27:1.*

Exodus 27:1

These are some of the things that God told the Israelites to put into the special Tabernacle. There is something really neat about some of these things. And that is they remind us of Jesus! Let me tell you how. Do you see the lampstand? *Refer to Flip Chart.* It was used for light. *Refer to the lit candle or bring out your lighter and light it.* And when Jesus came, He said that He is the light of the world!

Do you see this table with bread on it? God said the bread had to be there. *Refer to Flip Chart.* Well, when Jesus came He said He was the bread of life! *Bring out your bread.* The Tabernacle was a special place for God's people to worship Him. And it also pointed them to Jesus, who came as the light of the world and the bread of life.

SONG

Refer to the Flip Chart Song page. OK! All of this happened while the Israelites—God's people—were in the wilderness! They were headed for the Promised Land when Moses went up on the mountain to get the Ten Commandments and that is where God gave him the instructions to build the Tabernacle. Let's get up and march. We'll pretend we are the Israelites, "Goin' to the Promised Land!" *Sing/recite "Goin' to the Promised Land."*

That was fun. I want to sing another song about God's Holy Word—the Bible. It reminds us that we should read it every day. Or have someone read it to you every day until you learn to read! *Sing "Be Sure to Read the Bible."*

Great! Let's get back into our circle and we are going to play a card match game!

➤ Musical instruments, marching, and motions can be added to this section to add interest and help learning.



Tabernacle Items Match-Up

MATERIALS

- 24 Tabernacle Items Match-Up cards—two sets of the cards provided on the Resource DVD-ROM

INSTRUCTIONS

While still in your circle, show the children the different cards and briefly explain what they are. They are pictures of the items that were in the Tabernacle and things from today that remind us of the things God told them to put in the Tabernacle. Lay the 24 cards out on the floor. The children will try to match the cards. You can divide the children into teams or allow them to try to match the cards individually.

Show the 12 different cards to the children. God instructed the Israelites to put some very special things into His Tabernacle. I showed you some things that we might have around the house to remind us of what was in the Tabernacle. We are going to try and

match up the cards showing us all of these things. Allow children to play the match-up game. As they find the pairs, discuss the item, where it was in the Tabernacle, and how it reminds us of Jesus. Refer to the Flip Chart.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

God gave the people instructions on how to build the Tabernacle and what to put into it. The Tabernacle was a special place where the people in the wilderness worshipped God.

We are going to go back to the tables now and color more of the items God wanted in His Tabernacle.

Oversee an orderly way to get the children back to their seats, especially if the chairs were moved for circle time.



Tabernacle Items

MATERIALS

- Tabernacle Items coloring sheets

INSTRUCTIONS

Have the children color one or more of the Tabernacle Items.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

The Tabernacle was a very special place. It was a place the people would worship God. The items in the Tabernacle were very special, too. God knew just what He wanted and the people obeyed, made the items, and put them in just like God wanted



Memory Verse Review/Snack

Exodus 20:1–3 And God spoke all these words, saying: “I am the Lord your God . . . You shall have no other gods before Me.”

After thanking God for your snack, review the memory verse with the children while enjoying the snack for the day. You may want to use the snack as incentive to recite or repeat the memory verse.

Use the Memory Verse page in the Flip Chart. Explain the verse to the children as you go over the verse together. Say the verse and point at each picture several times. Ask the children if anyone wants to try to say it on their own.



Applying God's Word

WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

God told the people to build a Tabernacle. This Tabernacle was a special place of worship to God. The people made sacrifices there. God told the people what to put in the Tabernacle.

One thing was the golden lampstand. That reminds us of Jesus who is the light of the world. Another thing in the Tabernacle was the table of showbread. The priest always had to have bread on the table. This reminds us that Jesus is the bread of life.

GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

The priests sacrificed animals in the Tabernacle on the Altar of Burnt Offering. *Refer to the Flip Chart.* These sacrifices were made because the people were sinners. And the sacrifices had to be made over and over again.

That reminds us of Jesus. Jesus had to make a sacrifice, too. He had to die on the Cross. And when Jesus died, He made a way for our sins to be forgiven forever. If we believe in Him and are really sorry for our sins, Jesus will forgive us once and for all. Jesus's sacrifice was final.

► Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind the children to practice the memory verse this week.



Group Prayer Time

- Thank God for the day, His Word, and the wonderful children in your class.
- Pray that they will one day understand that Jesus was the final sacrifice once and for all.

Do you still have more time? Review the past quarters using the Flip Charts, add another coloring page, recite and review the current and past memory verses, sing more songs, or bring out play dough. Keep the children occupied with intentional, God-centered activities until their parents come to pick them up.

Song Sheet

GOIN' TO THE PROMISED LAND

(Similar to "Goin' on a Lion Hunt" jingle for children)

Goin' to the Promised Land. *Children repeat.*
Wave goodbye.

God's on our side. *Children repeat.*
Point up to God.

We're not afraid! *Children repeat.*
Hands on hips, look brave.

What's that? *Children repeat.*
Look around with hands above eyes—scared!

Pharaoh's army! *Children repeat.*
Hands on face, look scared!

They are behind us— *Children repeat.*
Look behind you.

Red Sea is in front of us— *Children repeat.*
Look in front of you.

God will provide! *Children repeat.*
Point up to God.

Goin' to the Promised Land. *Children repeat.*
Wave goodbye.

God's on our side. *Children repeat.*
Point up to God.

We're not afraid! *Children repeat.*
Hands on hips, look brave.

What's that? *Children repeat.*
Look around—scared.

The Red Sea! *Children repeat.*
Eyes wide, look scared.

Can't go over it. *Children repeat.*
Move both arms in an upward arc.

Can't go under it. *Children repeat.*
Move both arms in a downward arc.

Have to walk THROUGH it! *Children repeat.*
March in place.

Goin' to the Promised Land. *Children repeat.*
Wave goodbye.

God's on our side. *Children repeat.*
Point up to God.

We're not afraid! *Children repeat.*
Hands on hips, look brave.

God's on our side! *Children repeat.*
Point up to God.

BE SURE TO READ THE BIBLE

(To the tune of "If You're Happy and You Know It")

Oh, be sure to read the Bible every day.
(If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands.)
Clap clap or stomp stomp.

Oh, be sure to read the Bible every day.
(If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands.)
Clap clap or stomp stomp.

For God's Word is what we learn,
(If you're happy and you know it,)

From our sins it helps us turn.
(Then your face will surely show it.)

Oh, be sure to read the Bible every day!
(If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands!)
Clap clap or stomp stomp.

