

The Tabernacle Was Built

BIBLE PASSAGE: Exodus 35:4–40:38

MAIN POINT: God told His people to build the tabernacle so He could dwell with them.

KEY PASSAGE: Leviticus 11:45

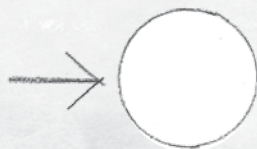
BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Who can keep God's law? No one can keep God's law perfectly except Jesus.

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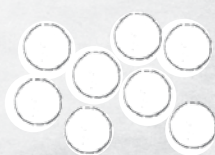
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Leader BIBLE STUDY

Thirteen of the last sixteen chapters of the Book of Exodus consist of instructions for building the tabernacle. The word *tabernacle* means “dwelling place.” The tabernacle was a portable tent where God met with His people. God had a great purpose for the tabernacle. (See Ex. 29:45–46.)

Moses had been on the mountain talking with God for 40 days. God wrote the Ten Commandments, the words of the covenant, on tablets. When Moses returned, he called all of the Israelite community together and gave them the instructions God had given him. (Ex. 24:3–4)

God's directions for building the tabernacle were very detailed. God was not trying to burden the people; He was trying to show them His holiness and absolute authority. God appointed Bezalel and Oholiab to oversee the building of the tabernacle, giving them wisdom, understanding, and craftsmanship. Every skilled person "whose heart moved him" eagerly worked on the tabernacle of the Lord. (See Ex. 35:30-35; 36:1-6.)

God gave the Israelites the tabernacle as a visual picture of His dwelling with them. The tabernacle—and later the temple that replaced it—was a temporary place for God's glory to dwell until the coming of Christ. (2 Cor. 4:6) Every part of the tabernacle was designed to illustrate God's relationship with His people.

Christ is the New Testament fulfillment of the Old Testament tabernacle. John 1:14 says that "the Word became flesh and took up residence among us." Jesus made His dwelling with people. He tabernacled with them. (Rev. 21:3)

As you teach kids about the building of the tabernacle, show them God's desire to be with His people. Emphasize that Jesus was God's plan to bring people back to Himself.



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The BIBLE STORY

The Tabernacle Was Built

Exodus 35:4–40:38

When Moses was on the mountain with God, God said, “Tell the Israelites to make a tabernacle for Me so that I may dwell among them.” God gave Moses very specific instructions for building a tabernacle and everything that went inside it.

“Make it exactly like I show you,” God said. The tabernacle would be a really big tent that the Israelites could take with them. **The tabernacle would be where God met with His people.**

So when Moses went down the mountain, he gathered the entire Israelite community together. He told them everything God had said. He asked them to bring materials: gold, silver, and bronze; blue, purple, and scarlet yarn; fine linen and goat hair; animals skins; wood; oil; spices; and gemstones. **Every Israelite who wanted to brought materials as an offering for the tabernacle.**

God gave two men, Bezalel (BEHZ uh lehl) and Oholiab (oh HOH lih ab), special skills for building and creating things. Bezalel, Oholiab, and all the other skilled craftsmen came together to build the tabernacle for God.

At the same time, people kept bringing offerings of what they had. **Pretty soon, the craftsmen came to Moses and said, “The people are bringing more than enough. We don’t need all of this.”** So Moses told the Israelites to **stop bringing their offerings.**

They built the tabernacle just as God had instructed. The tabernacle had 10 curtains made out of linen, and each curtain was 42 feet long. Eleven curtains made out of goat hair formed a tent over the tabernacle. The planks of acacia

wood were 15 feet long and 27 inches wide. Everything was done exactly as God had said.

The people made a veil inside the tabernacle. They made an ark, a table, a lampstand, and many other parts. Every part had its special purpose and was made just as God had said.

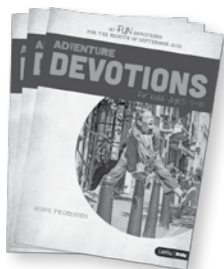
When the time came, God told Moses how to set up the tabernacle. God told him how to anoint the tabernacle so that it would be holy. *Anoint* means “to pour oil on.”

God told Moses to bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance of the tabernacle. Aaron put on the holy garments and Moses anointed him to be priest. Aaron’s sons were also anointed to serve God as priests. Moses did exactly what God commanded, and the tabernacle was finally finished.

God had led the Israelites from a cloud, and now the cloud covered the tabernacle. God’s glory filled the tabernacle. God made a sign for the people: If the cloud covered the tabernacle, the people would stay where they were. When the cloud lifted from the tabernacle, the Israelites would move and take the tabernacle with them.

The cloud of the Lord was on the tabernacle during the day, and fire was inside the cloud at night. All the Israelites could see it as they traveled.

Christ Connection: God instructed the Israelites to build a tabernacle so that He could dwell with them. God desires to be with His people. As part of His plan of salvation, God sent Jesus to “tabernacle,” or dwell with people on earth.



**WANT TO
DISCOVER
GOD’S WORD?
GET
ADVENTURE!**

Invite kids to check out this week’s devotionals to discover that God gave His people instructions to build the tabernacle (Ex. 35:1). The tabernacle pointed to when God sent Jesus to destroy sin and dwell with His people. Order in bulk, subscribe quarterly, or purchase individually. For more information, check out www.lifeway.com/devotionals.

Small Group OPENING

SESSION TITLE: The Tabernacle Was Built

BIBLE PASSAGE: Exodus 35:4–40:38

MAIN POINT: God told His people to build the tabernacle so He could dwell with them.

KEY PASSAGE: Leviticus 11:45

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Who can keep God's law? No one can keep God's law perfectly except Jesus.

Welcome time

- paper
- crayons or markers

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. As kids arrive, give them a piece of paper and some crayons or markers. Instruct kids to draw the most amazing and beautiful building they have ever seen or can imagine. Invite each child to describe his building to the class using the picture he drew as a visual aid.

SAY • These buildings are all beautiful! Today we are going to learn about a beautiful tent of worship called the “tabernacle.” ***God told His people to build the tabernacle so He could dwell with them.***

Activity page (5 minutes)

- “Tabernacle Tools” activity page, 1 per kid
- pencils or markers

Invite kids to complete the “Tabernacle Tools” activity page. Kids will unscramble words to see the supplies the Israelites donated to build the tabernacle. (*Answer key: yarn, spices, jewels, oil, acacia wood, gold*)

SAY • God gave His people very specific instructions on the materials needed to build the tabernacle, including the items in our activity page. A *tabernacle* is a tent of worship. **God told His people to build the**

tabernacle so He could dwell with them. Why did God want to dwell with His people?

Session starter (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Paper and tape creations

Provide paper and tape for the kids. Place them into pairs or groups of three. Give the kids a time limit and tell them they must use the materials provided to create a building.

SAY • Was it hard to build something with no instructions and with few supplies? When God told His people to build the tabernacle, He did the exact opposite of what I did! God gave His people incredibly detailed instructions, provided plenty of different supplies, and let them know the tabernacle's ultimate purpose. We'll find out more in our Bible story.



- paper
- tape
- timer (optional)

OPTION 2: Follow instructions

Before class, jot down five to six instructions for building a contraption using the building supplies you've provided. (For example: Wrap yarn around the cup twice. Connect two straws and tape them inside a cup. Tape six cotton balls to the outside of a cup.) During class, divide the class into two teams and tell them to form a tight huddle so the other team cannot see what they are building. Give each team the same supplies and read the instructions you've prepared. After a few moments, invite teams to display their creation.

SAY • God's people were given specific instructions and a variety of different supplies like you were. God even gave them skills to make the tabernacle just right. We'll find out more about it in the Bible story.

- paper sacks, 2
- building supplies (foam cups, drinking straws, toothpicks, cotton balls, tape, yarn, and so forth)
- paper
- pen

Transition to large group

Large Group LEADER

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Countdown

• countdown video

Show the countdown video as your kids arrive, and set it to end as large group time begins.

Introduce the session (3 minutes)

• leader attire

• blueprints of tree house

[Large Group Leader enters dressed in casual attire, carrying blueprints or a diagram of a tree house.]

LEADER • Hello, everyone! It's great to see you again! Does anyone know what I have in my hand? These are the blueprints my dad and I used to build this tree house.

Blueprints are pictures of plans and instructions for how to build something, like a tree house! The instructions in these blueprints describe everything we need to know so we can build what the designer had in mind. What if we didn't have blueprints and just made the tree house however I wanted? It might look pretty cool, but would the tree house be safe enough to play in? Would it be wise if I checked out these blueprints and then tossed them out the window? No way!

Giant timeline (1 minute)

LEADER • Do you remember last week when we talked about the Ten Commandments? **God gave us rules to help us know how to love Him and others.** God's rules showed us how holy God is and how sinful we are.

• Giant Timeline

Today's Bible story is called "The Tabernacle Was Built." You see, the Israelites were traveling through the desert on their way to the promised land. They followed the cloud of God's presence in the day time and a pillar of fire in the night time. But God's people needed a place where they could meet with Him to worship Him, and later they needed a place where they could offer offerings to say they were sorry for their sins.

Big picture question (1 minute)

LEADER • Do you remember our big picture question from last week? ***Who can obey God's law? No one can obey God's law perfectly except Jesus.*** God is holy, and He commands His people to be holy. The tabernacle was going to be a special place where holy God could meet with His people. Since it was a place where God's presence would dwell, He had some very specific instructions about how to build it!

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Exodus 35:4–40:38. Tell the Bible story in your own words, or show the Bible story video "The Tabernacle Was Built." For a shorter version of the Bible story, read only the bolded text.

• Bibles
• "The Tabernacle Was Built" video
• Big Picture Question Poster
• Bible Story Picture Poster

LEADER • God told His people to build the tabernacle so He could dwell with them. God gave them specific instructions and told them to build the tabernacle just as He had told them. They did! The people built the tabernacle just like God had described it to Moses. Not only that, but the people were happy to give special gifts to Moses and the priests for the tabernacle to be a place of beauty too!

God desires to be with His people. As part of His plan of salvation, God sent Jesus to “tabernacle,” or dwell with people on earth

Ask the following review questions:

1. What did God want the Israelites to build? (*a tabernacle, Ex. 35:10-11*)
2. What were some of the materials needed to build the tabernacle? (*gold, silver, and bronze; blue, purple, and scarlet yarn; fine linen and goat hair; animals skins; wood; oil; spices; and gemstones; Ex. 35:5-9*)
3. Whom did God give special skills for building the tabernacle? (*Bezalel and Oholiab, Ex. 36:1*)
4. What did God command Moses to do to the tabernacle once it was finished? (*anoint it with oil, Ex. 40:9*)
5. What were the Israelites supposed to do about the cloud of God’s presence when it rested or lifted from the tabernacle? (*Follow the cloud wherever it guided them, Ex. 40:36*)

Tip: Provide /I’m a Christian Now for new Christians to take home and complete with their families.

The Gospel: God’s Plan for Me (optional)

Use Scripture and the guide provided with this session to explain to boys and girls how to become a Christian. Assign individuals to meet with kids who have more questions.

Encourage boys and girls to ask their parents, small group leaders, or other Christian adults any questions they may have about becoming a Christian.

Key passage (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together Leviticus 11:45. Invite kids to say the key passage after you twice.

LEADER • Because the Lord is our God, we are to be separate from sin, just like He commanded the Israelites. The only problem is that we keep sinning, even when we try really hard not to. We can't do anything to take away our own sins. That's why we need Jesus to be our Savior!

Sing the key passage song.

- Key Passage Slide or Poster
- "You Must Be Holy" song

Discussion starter video (4 minutes)

LEADER • Do you remember when we learned about how God created people? God walked with Adam and Eve in the garden, but they were separated by sin. Check out this video.

Show the "Unit 6, Session 2" discussion starter video.

LEADER • Samuel was thinking of some pretty clever ways to bring the two bugs together, but in the end, Emiliano had the best idea because it actually worked! We are all separated from God by our sin. What are some ways that people try but fail to get back to God on their own? [*Going to church, being a good person, giving to the poor, etc.*] How did God solve the problem of our sin separating us from Him?

While we could not fix our sin problem and get to God, He certainly could solve the problem and

- "Unit 6, Session 2" discussion starter video

He did through Jesus. Because Jesus paid the penalty we deserved for our sins, our relationship with God is made right again when we trust in Christ. We couldn't get to Him, but He got to us! What are some ways that we can enjoy our friendship with God? [*reading the Bible, praying, worshiping, etc.*]

Sing (4 minutes)

• "Holy God (Holy, Holy, Holy)" song

LEADER • There is no one like God. Can you believe it? The God who made the whole world and everything in it wants to be with us! That's worth singing about. Sing together "Holy God (Holy, Holy, Holy)."

Pray (2 minutes)

Before transitioning to small groups, make any necessary announcements. Invite kids to pray before dismissing to small groups.

LEADER • Dear Lord, Thank You for giving Your people instructions for building the tabernacle. Thank You that You don't need a physical tabernacle to dwell with us because You sent Your Son, Jesus, to die on the cross in our place so we can be with You forever.

Dismiss to small groups

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.



God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.



We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)



God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.



Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:19.



We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus.

Small Group LEADER

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KEY PASSAGE: Leviticus 11:45

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Who can keep God's law? No one can keep God's law perfectly except Jesus.

Key passage activity (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster
- facial tissues
- markers
- rope or twine
- clothespins

Note: The High Priest could enter the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement. Kids will learn more about the Day of Atonement in the next session, "God Gave Rules for Sacrifice."

Write one word from the key passage on facial tissues and hang them in mixed order on a piece of twine or rope with clothespins. Invite kids to work together to hang the "curtains" in the correct order and then say the key passage together.

SAY • God told His people to build the tabernacle so He could dwell with them. Part of building the tabernacle included sewing curtains! The tabernacle reminded God's people to be holy because God is holy, like it says in our key passage. On one day a year only one man could step behind the veil into the Holy of Holies where God's presence rested.

Later, when Jesus died on the cross to take away our sins, the veil separating God and people was torn from top to bottom. Through Jesus, we can be with God forever!

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- Main Point Poster
- red construction paper
- blue and purple shapes
- glue sticks
- markers

Bible story review & Bible skills (10 minutes)

Encourage kids to open their Bibles to Exodus 35. Guide kids to slowly flip through Exodus 35–40 and ask them to call out subject headings they read in their Bible. For non-

readers, you may need to call out the subject headings in your Bible.

SAY • God spent about six chapters describing very detailed instructions for building the tabernacle. There were lots of instructions, but God gave Bezalel, Oholiab, and other craftsmen the special skills and talents to make everything just as God instructed. Why did God tell His people to build the tabernacle? *[Accept responses.]* **God told His people to build the tabernacle so He could dwell with them.**

Option: Retell or review the Bible story using the bolded text of the Bible story script.

Explain to the kids that they are going to make a picture of the tabernacle curtain together, but you are going to give them specific instructions they need to follow. Read the following instructions:

1. Sit quietly in your chair while I hand out your building materials.
2. Do not touch the building materials until I say so.
3. Place the red construction paper in front of you horizontally, or long ways.
4. Write the main point across the entire page: **God told His people to build the tabernacle so He could dwell with them.**
5. Flip over the paper.
6. Glue a purple shape in the center of your paper.
7. Glue the blue shapes in each corner of your paper.
8. Glue another purple shape next to the top left blue shape.

SAY • The curtains were a symbol of the separation from God caused by our sin. We do not have the power get rid of our sin. We need Jesus. Jesus died on the cross and rose again to take the punishment we deserve for our sin.

Activity choice (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: D-W-E-L-L human alphabet

Encourage kids to form groups of five kids. Explain that you want them to spell the word *DWELL* using only their bodies. Encourage creativity! Kids may use sign language, use their bodies to make the letters while standing, or join with another group to lay down on the floor and spell *DWELL*.

SAY • Who remembers what *dwelt* means? [*Accept responses.*]

Just like we used our bodies to build the word *dwelt*, God's people used special materials to build the tabernacle. **God told His people to build the tabernacle so He could dwell with them.**

God dwells with Christians today through His Holy Spirit, so He no longer needs a physical tabernacle. God gives His Holy Spirit to everyone who trusts in His Son, Jesus.

- construction paper
- yarn
- liquid glue
- crayons, colored pencils, or markers

OPTION 2: Make a yarn tent

Invite kid to use glue and yarn to outline the shape of a tent on a piece of construction paper. Invite kids to use crayons, colored pencils, or markers to decorate their tent. While kids draw, briefly retell the Bible story to remind kids about the materials and hard work that went into building the tabernacle just as God described. When kids have finished, invite them to write the main point on the bottom of their art work.

SAY • The tabernacle looked similar to a tent. It was always located in the center of the Israelites' camp as they made their way through the wilderness and into the promised land. **God told His people to build the tabernacle so He could dwell with them.**

Journal and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute each child's journal and instruct the kids to write about a time when they knew God was with them. As kids draw or write, ask them how God dwells with us today.

SAY • Before sin entered the world, God walked in the garden with Adam and Eve. They sinned, and God removed them from the garden. Years later He dwelled with the Israelites through the tabernacle. When Jesus was born as a human, however, God the Son was able to dwell with us face-to-face. When we trust in Jesus as our Savior, He gives us the Holy Spirit to dwell within us. God will never leave us!

Make sure each child secures this week's sheet in the journal, and then collect them. Keep the journals in the classroom so they will be available every week or as often as you wish to use them.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the coloring page provided with this session. Pray, thanking God for choosing to dwell with the people He created. Pray for each child by name, asking God to open her eyes to the fact that the tabernacle shows God's great love for His people, but it also shows us that sin causes a separation between us and God. Pray that the kids will trust in Jesus to bring them back to God.

Make sure to give kids the big picture cards to take home to reinforce the Bible story with their families.

- pencils
- Journal Page
- Bible Story Coloring Page, 1 per kid
- crayons or markers
- *Big Picture Cards for Families: Kids*

Journal Page

God Is Holy

Key Passage: Leviticus 11:45

Big Picture Question: Who can keep God's law?
No one can keep God's law perfectly except Jesus.

Session 1: The Ten Commandments: Love Others
Exodus 20:12-17

God gave us rules to help us know how to love Him and others.

Session 2: The Tabernacle Was Built
Exodus 35:4-40:38

God told His people to build the tabernacle so He could dwell with them.

Session 3: God Gave Rules for Sacrifice
Leviticus 1-27

Because God is holy, God requires a sacrifice for sin.

Session 4: Worship Only God
Deuteronomy 1; 3:23-4:40

The Lord alone is God; there is no other besides Him.

Session 6: God Reminded His People of His Covenant

*Deuteronomy 5:1-6:25;
8:1- 11:1,26-28*

God reminded His people of His covenant with them.





**I am Yahweh,
who brought you up
from the land of Egypt
to be your God, so you
must be holy because
I am holy.**

Leviticus 11:45





**I am the LORD that
bringeth you up out
of the land of Egypt,
to be your God: ye shall
therefore be holy, for
I am holy.**

Leviticus 11:45





**“I am the LORD who
brought you up out of
the land of Egypt to
be your God. You shall
therefore be holy,
for I am holy.”**

Leviticus 11:45





**I am the LORD, who
brought you up out
of Egypt to be your
God; therefore be holy,
because I am holy.**

Leviticus 11:45



God told His
people to build
the tabernacle
so He could dwell
with them.





Tabernacle Tools

INSTRUCTIONS: Unscramble the words and draw a line from the word to the picture of the item.

DOWNLOAD THE
TGP FAMILY APP

KEY PASSAGE: Leviticus 11:45

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

- Who can keep God's law?
No one can keep God's law perfectly except Jesus.

BIBLE STORY: THE TABERNACLE WAS BUILT

- God gave the Israelites specific instructions for building the tabernacle.
- The people gave offerings of gold, silver, jewels, and other items to build the tabernacle.
- The Israelites built the tabernacle just as God told them to build it.

FAMILY DISCUSSION STARTERS:

- What was the purpose of the tabernacle?
- What did the cloud represent?
- How can your family spend time with God?

FAMILY ACTIVITY:

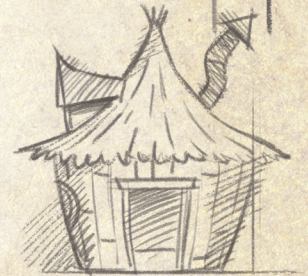
- Build a model of the tabernacle using craft sticks, fabric, and other supplies.
- Take it further: Read John 1:14 to your kids. Talk about God's plan to send Jesus to dwell with us on earth and die on the cross to rescue us from sin.

Younger Kids Activity Pages
Unit 6, Session 2





Who can keep God's law?





Who can keep God's law?

No one can keep
God's law perfectly
except Jesus.

