

March 15 Elementary

Bible Passage: Exodus 35–40/ The Tabernacle Was Built

Story Point: God told His people how to build the tabernacle where He would dwell with them.

Memory Verse: “The Lord is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation; this is my God, and I will praise him, my father’s God, and I will exalt him.” Exodus 15:2 ESV

Big Picture Question: What is worship? Worship is celebrating the greatness of God.

Christ Connection: *God instructed the Israelites to build a tabernacle where He would dwell with them. God desires to be with His people. As part of His plan to save sinners, God sent Jesus to “tabernacle,” or dwell, with people on earth.*

***STORY:**

God had delivered the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, and He wanted to make them His special people. He made a covenant with them at Mount Sinai, and **God gave rules to show how to love Him and others.** Moses was still on the mountain when the Israelites sinned by worshiping an idol. **God disciplined His people for worshiping a golden calf.** God would have been right to destroy the Israelites, but He showed them mercy.

God loved His people. He wanted to be with them even though they disobeyed. In today’s Bible story, God made a way to meet with Him. Listen to this:

The Tabernacle Was Built

Exodus 35–40

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. 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.**

“Make it exactly like I show you,” God said.

So Moses gathered all the Israelites 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.

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. Inside the tabernacle, the people made a veil. 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.

CLOSER:

Leader • The people came together as one community to complete a really big project: the tabernacle! **God told His people how to build the tabernacle where He would dwell with them.** So many people were involved. They gave their time, their skills, and their possessions. In fact, they gave so much that Moses had to tell them to stop. They had given more than enough materials for the project!

They worked together to follow all of God’s instructions. The whole purpose of this project was to help them worship God. ***What is worship? Worship is celebrating the greatness of God.***

The tabernacle was God’s plan to meet with His people. How awesome it was that God allowed the people to be part of putting it all together! You know they had to be proud of the tabernacle when it was completed. It was truly a place where they could celebrate the greatness of God. And once it was all set up, God’s glory came and rested on the tabernacle for all the people to see. God’s glory was in the form of a cloud by day and fire by night. That would have been an amazing sight! The Israelites could see physical proof of God’s presence with them every day.

***Christ Connection:**

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

Leader • Through the tabernacle, God showed His people that He loved them and wanted to be with them. But the tabernacle didn’t last forever. God had a better plan in mind to dwell with His people. As part of His plan to save sinners, God sent Jesus to “tabernacle” or dwell, with people on earth. God came down in the flesh through His Son, Jesus.

***GOSPEL PLAN:**

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 3:18.

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.

***PRAYER**

God, what an honor that You invite us to be part of Your plan to point people to Jesus and bring You glory. Give us humble and generous hearts to offer our time, talents, and possessions for the sake of the gospel. We love You. Amen.

KEY PASSAGE / MEMORY VERSE:

“The Lord is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation; this is my God, and I will praise him, my father’s God, and I will exalt him.” Exodus 15:2 ESV

***DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

COMPREHENSION:

- How did the people know to build a tabernacle? (*God told them to and gave specific instructions how, Ex. 35:10-19*)

- Where did the materials to build the tabernacle come from? (*the Israelites gave them, Ex. 35:4-9*)
- Who were Bezalel and Oholiab? (*two men that had special skills to build the tabernacle, Ex. 35:30-35*)
- Why did Moses tell the people to stop bringing supplies for the tabernacle? (*they had already brought more than was needed, Ex. 36:5*)
- How did the Israelites know when God's presence was in the tabernacle? (*A cloud would rest on the tabernacle, Ex. 40:34-37*)

YOUNGER:

Distribute a Bible to each kid. Help them use a table of contents to find Exodus 35–40. Discuss the divisions of the Bible and which divisions Exodus is a part of (The Old Testament, the Law). Remind the kids some of the ways Bible divisions can help us make sense of God's Word.

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

- Why do you think God wanted to dwell with His people? *Guide kids to discuss the fact that God loves us. He wants to be with us and to help us learn to love and obey Him.*
- How else has God come to dwell with us? *Guide kids to discuss that God sent Jesus to dwell with people. Jesus lived a perfect life, died the death we deserve, and rose again. Now, anyone who believes in Jesus receives the Holy Spirit, who lives with us and helps us love and obey God.*
- Do we need a special place to worship today? *Guide kids to see that, although we gather in buildings to worship God together, we no longer need a tabernacle or temple. Remind the kids that, through the Holy Spirit, God dwells with us everywhere we go. Help them understand that how we worship God is more important than where we worship Him.*

Say • God told His people how to build the tabernacle where He would dwell with them.

Because Jesus died and rose again, we can have God's presence in our lives all the time through the Holy Spirit.

OLDER:

Distribute Bibles. Guide boys and girls to open their Bibles to Exodus 40. Show the Old Testament Mediterranean Map and remind kids about the Israelites' exodus from Egypt (H8). Explain that they moved toward the promised land of Canaan (G9), stopping along the way at Mount Sinai (I9), where God gave His people the Law through Moses.

***ACTIVITY:**

1. DRAW THE TABERNACLE

Supplies:

*Paper

*Colored markers/pencils

SAY: God gave very specific instructions for building the tabernacle. Though we may not know exactly what it looked like, we can get a pretty good idea by reading the instructions God gave in the Bible.

Read the following sections to the groups and let them draw what they think it should look like. At the end, you should have some “interesting” tabernacles to look at!

1. The tabernacle inner curtains: Exodus 26:1-6
2. The tabernacle outer curtains: Exodus 26:7-14
3. The tabernacle frame: Exodus 26:15-29
4. The Holy Place: Exodus 26:31-37
5. The Courtyard: Exodus 27:9-19

SAY: Today, God gives believers the Holy Spirit, who dwells in our hearts and is always with us!