

# THE TABERNACLE

## Lesson

Exodus 25:1-22; 35:30-35; 36

## Story Summary

While Moses was on Mount Sinai, God gave him the 10 Commandments for the Israelites to follow. He also gave him specific instructions for all sorts of other things. He laid out instructions for the people to build a Tabernacle or a place of worship that they could pack and travel with.

Inside the tabernacle was a special case called the ark that held very special items.

Tabernacle means “tent,” “place of dwelling” or “sanctuary.” It was a sacred place where God chose to meet His people, the Israelites, during the 40 years they wandered in the desert under Moses’ leadership. It was the place where the leaders and people came together to worship and offer sacrifices.

God gave very specific instructions to Moses on Mount Sinai regarding how the tabernacle was to be built.

You can see an artist's rendering of the tabernacle at <http://www.3dtabernacle.com/images/TabernacleComplete1a.jpg>

The tabernacle was first erected in the wilderness exactly one year after the Passover when the Israelites were freed from their Egyptian slavery. It was a mobile tent with portable furniture that the people traveled with and set up wherever they pitched camp. The tabernacle would be in the center of the camp, and the 12 tribes of Israel would set up their tents around it according to tribe. The instruction on how to build the tabernacle was first given to Moses in the wilderness, who then gave the orders to the Israelites.

God dwelled among His people in the tabernacle in the wilderness. He appeared as a pillar of cloud over the tabernacle by day and a pillar of fire by night in the sight of all Israel. When the cloud moved, the people packed up and moved.

Inside the tabernacle was the Ark of the Covenant. The word ark means chest. It was a box of wood that was covered with pure gold. Inside the box, Moses was commanded to place the Tables of Law, the actual stone tablets on which the Ten Commandments were engraved. These are the stone tablets God gave Moses to replace the tablets he broke.

God gave Moses instructions for many other parts of the tabernacle (the table for bread, the gold lampstand, the altar, the courtyard, the oil for the lampstand, the clothes for the priests, washing basin, etc.). You can feel free to mention these other things that were to be placed in the Tabernacle.

God specifically chose two men to lead the building project. One was named Bezalel and the other was named Oholiab. These men had two special qualities. 1) They were filled with the Spirit of God 2) They were very skillful with their hands and the ability to build things.

Review for Kids:

**Review:** Moses wrote the first 5 books of the Old Testament, and our lesson today is in Exodus. God gave Moses the 10 commandments on Mount Sinai. When Moses came down after 40 days on the mountain with God, he saw the people worshiping a gold calf that his brother Aaron had made. Moses was so angry, he threw down the 10 commandments and broke them! Moses melted the gold calf and mixed it in the water and made the people drink it. Then, Moses cut 2 new tablets, went back onto Mount Sinai, and God wrote the 10 commandments again. (Exodus 34:28)

**Lesson:** Today we are going to talk about how the Israelites worshiped while they were in the wilderness for 40 years. (Scripture is Exodus 35-40) God gave Moses His instructions to build a tabernacle. Tabernacle means tent and was a place to worship God. They could pack everything up and move it when they traveled through the wilderness.

They built the tabernacle 2 years after they left Egypt. (Exodus 40:17) They made it exactly as God told them He wanted it. The people donated gold, jewels, oil for the lamps, and fabric for the priests. There was so much gold given by the people, Moses had to tell them not to bring anymore! (36:6-7) Moses wanted anyone that could make items for the tabernacle to help with the work.

Aaron was the first high priest and his sons were made priests. The tribe of Levi also worked in the tabernacle with Aaron. There were special clothes made for the priest. (ch. 39) The priest wore a turban on his head, also called a mitre. (39:30) there was a gold plate on the front that said HOLINESS TO THE LORD and was tied on with a blue cord.

Model of Tabernacle in Israel



## OBJECT LESSON

Have a simple tent without instructions ready to put up.

Leave out a couple of the most important pieces.

Pick three children to try to put up the tent.

Give them some time to try to figure it out.

Then say "Oh, I forgot you might need these"

Hand them the instruction, missing pieces and someone who has put the tent together before to help them.

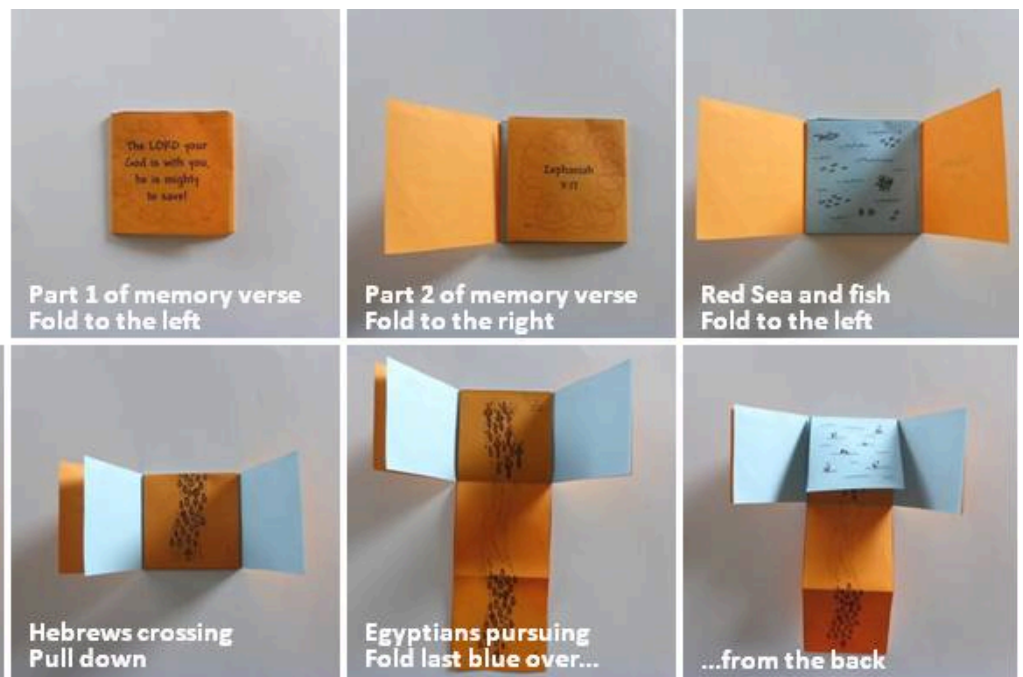
Say "God was very careful that His people knew exactly how to build His tabernacle. He did not leave them guessing. He told them exactly where and how to worship Him. He also gifted certain people so that they could do the work that needed to be done.

Memory Verse: Exodus 14:14 "The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still"

## Craft Exodus 25:10-22

### Exodus Unfold the Square

Pictures and  
directions



## GAME

Exodus 25:10-22

3 Ark of the Covenant boxes (or just boxes), small clay or paper "stone tablets" to represent the 10 Commandments

- Take the 3 (or more) Ark of the Covenant boxes
- Place the stone tablets inside one box as the students watch
- Rearrange the boxes quickly to mix them up and confuse your students
- Have them take turns guessing which Ark of the Covenant contains the stone tablets
- You can provide small prizes (like candy) to those who guess correctly

## DISCUSSION

### Discussion Questions – Construction of the Tabernacle or Tent of Meeting Read Exodus 40

• what is a Tabernacle or Tent of Meeting? (The first design of the Tabernacle was a portable worship center. The Tabernacle traveled with the Children of Israel from Mt. Sinai to Canaan where it was set up in Shiloh. It was moved to Nob after the Philistines threatened it in Shiloh. Solomon completed a stationary Temple and used the furnishings from the original Tabernacle. Richards Complete Bible Dictionary.)

• What was so important about the Tabernacle? (the design of it was given by God to Moses) • What is the significance of the Tabernacle? (God is willing to meet with His children)

• Why was there only one door? (Only one way to go to God) • What was the purpose of the altar of brass? (Sacrifice)

• What are we asked to sacrifice today? (Human will)

• What was the laver used for? (Cleaning)

• What was in the Holy Place? (Seven-branched Candlestick; Table of Shewbread; and Altar of Incense) • How many loaves of bread were on the Shewbread table? (12)

• This number represents? (Twelve tribes of Israel)

• What covered the Holy of Holies? (veil)

• Who could enter the Holy of Holies? (Only the high priest. They tied a rope on his leg. In case anything happened to him they could pull him out since no one else could go into the Holy of Holies.)

• What was in the Holy of Holies? (The Ark of the Covenant) • What was in the Ark of the Covenant? (the Ten Commandments)

• Why is this so important? (If you look at Jesus' life and the statements he made about himself, what others called him, and what he did, you can see the pattern of the Tabernacle in his life. When he refers to his body as the Temple [tabernacle] that he will raise up in three days, he is letting each of us know we are the temple of God. Look at his statements - or ask students to find these statements: o Entrance to the Tabernacle - Jesus said I am the door. John 10:9.

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o Altar - John called Jesus the Lamb of God. John 1:29 The lamb was used for sacrifice.

o Laver- purification - Jesus washed his disciples feet - he purified their footsteps

o Golden Candlesticks - Jesus said I am the light of the world. John 8:12

o The shewbread - Jesus said I am the bread of life. John 6:35 o Incense - gratitude and prayer - Jesus began many of his healings in prayer or thanksgiving.

o The Veil kept everyone but the high Priest out of the presence of God. Jesus' death on the cross ripped the veil in the temple showing that man has free access to God.

o The Ark of the Covenant contained the Ten Commandments - the laws that Jesus lived and taught. He also summed up the Ten commandments in two – • Matt 22:37-39 Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

• Jesus took those commandments from o Deut 6:4,5 Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. o Lev 19:18 Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself: I am the Lord.