



ELEMENTARY LARGE GROUP

LESSON 5

FEAST OF TABERNACLES

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Invites Us to Worship and Celebrate

SCRIPTURE: Leviticus 23

GOD'S BIG STORY: The Israelites celebrate God and worship Him by having a festival called the Feast of Tabernacles, which helps them remember how God rescued them from Egypt and provided for them in the desert.

WORD OF WONDER: Worship the LORD with gladness. Come to him with songs of joy. —Psalm 100:2

CURIOSITY

BELIEF

FAITH

- | | |
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| • Interactive Game: Palm Branch Pass | 8–10 min |
| • Welcome Question: What is your favorite holiday? | 2 min |
| • SMALL GROUP | 25 min |
| • Declaring God's Wonder | 1–2 min |
| • Prayer of Invitation | 1–2 min |
| • Worship: He is the Light, Take You at Your Word | 8–10 min |
| • God's Big Story | 5–6 min |
| • Connecting the Wonder Truth | 1–2 min |
| • In Awe of God's Wonder | 1–2 min |
| • Responding in Worship: | 3–4 min |
| • Blessing Your Kids | 1–2 min |
| • SMALL GROUP: Responding in Worship Activity | 5–10 min |



Worship with Wonder Spotify playlist

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Invites Us to Worship and Celebrate

SCRIPTURE: Leviticus 23

WORD OF WONDER: Psalm 100:2

The summer after I graduated high school, I interned for a ministry that took kids who have had difficult experiences on outdoor adventures. I remember a group that came backpacking with us. A bus dropped us off at around 12,000 feet elevation, and we spent three days hiking about 10–15 miles each day. For many of the kids, it was their first experience like this. Each night we'd set up our tents, gather around the fire for dinner, and have conversations about life and Jesus.

It's been decades since that summer, but I still remember how God worked in those kids' lives as they hiked for miles, slept in tents, and accomplished things they'd never thought possible.

Read Leviticus 23:1–2, 33–36, 39–43.

Just as we remember on Christmas and Easter what God has done, the Jewish people were called to remember their time in the wilderness, when they lived in tents after leaving Egypt. God Himself dwelled with them in the tabernacle, a tent that traveled with them until they reached the promised land. Even after they arrived, God wanted them to remember that time yearly.

Can you think of a past time when life looked different, but looking back, you see how God was with you, growing you? How can you celebrate and worship as you remember His presence and goodness?

—David Ruybalid

Worship Leader, Recording Artist, and Discipleship Pastor
Contributor to Wonder Ink

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

Moses led God's people out of Egypt and for 40 years in the wilderness. Moses is sometimes called the lawgiver and mediator of God's covenant with Israel because Moses received God's law at Mount Sinai and proclaimed it to the people.

WHAT?

God appointed *festivals* for the people to observe throughout the year. The Feast of Tabernacles took place after the harvest. It was a time to celebrate God's provision and remember how God provided for the Israelites in the wilderness after bringing them out of Egypt.

WHERE?

Leviticus is a written record of what God revealed to Moses at Mount Sinai, which was located on the Sinai peninsula between Egypt to the west and Midian and the Negev to the east. The Feast of Tabernacles was to be celebrated wherever God's people went.

WHEN?

Moses received the law at Mount Sinai shortly after the exodus from Egypt but before the Israelites wandered in the wilderness for 40 years. The Feast of Tabernacles was to be observed every year and was notably the occasion for the dedication of Solomon's Temple.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

Just as God rescued the Israelites from slavery and established them as His people, Jesus rescues us from the power of sin and death, making us part of His kingdom. Like the Israelites, we are invited to worship God and celebrate all He has done.

Large Group

Spark curiosity, encourage exploration, and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Invites Us to Worship and Celebrate

SCRIPTURE: Leviticus 23

WORD OF WONDER: Psalm 100:2

As kids arrive...

Around 20 minutes before service begins, display series theme loop. Play high-energy music in the background.

LG Leader walks around the room on mic and greets kids by name as they enter the room. Welcome kids by name and greet them with enthusiasm. Be extra intentional about hearing and responding

SLIDE: SERIES THEME LOOP

VIDEO: COUNTDOWN (2min OR 30sec) Start a countdown to begin game 10 minutes prior to service start)

Interactive Game: Palm Branch Pass

SUPPLIES: scissors (prep only), cardstock (optional), masking tape (optional)

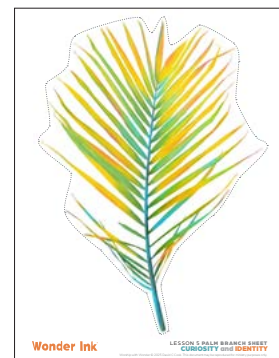
RESOURCES: Palm Branch Sheet (1 per 4–8 kids)

Ahead of time, print one copy of the Palm Branch Sheet for every 4–8, on cardstock if available. Cut out each branch along the dotted lines.

Display the Palm Branch Pass Slide. Help kids form equal teams of 4–8. Invite each team to form a single-file line. Then ask kids to sit down in their places. If your space is small or your group includes younger kids or kids who do best with more structure, consider marking spots with masking tape on the floor for the kids to stand on. Give the first person in each line a palm branch cutout from the Palm Branch Sheet.

Explain to kids that on your “Go,” the person at the front of the line will pass her palm branch over her head to the teammate behind her. That person will then pass the palm branch through his legs to the person behind him. They will continue passing the branch over/under until it gets to the last person in line.

The last person will run to the front of the line, and everyone else will shift back one spot. The person who now has the first spot will pass the palm branch over her head to the person behind her, and the team will continue passing it over/under until it gets to the last person in line.



That person will then run to the first spot. Teams will continue this pattern until the person who started the game at the front of the line gets back to the first spot in line. The first team to finish wins!

Make It Inclusive! If kids in your group have limited mobility, consider inviting all the kids to sit in line and pass the branches from person to person (not over/under style). Kids who are less mobile can remain in the same spot throughout the game while their teammates move around them.

Leader Tip: For Younger Kids. Simplify the game for younger kids by removing the over/under element. Kids can simply pass the branch from person to person. Also, consider numbering chairs or spots on the floor to help kids keep track of where they are in line.

Gather kids back together and **display the Feast Wonder Truth Slide**. **It was so much fun watching you work together to pass your palm branches! Today we'll hear about a special celebration involving palm branches that God gave the Israelites as a way to remember His faithfulness. Today's Wonder Truth is GOD INVITES US TO WORSHIP AND CELEBRATE.**



Welcome Question

SUPPLIES: paper, coloring utensils, poster board OR , whiteboard, dry-erase markers (if needed)

SLIDE: WELCOME QUESTION

At service start time, draw kids' attention to the Welcome Question.

Invite kids to write answers on the poster board or whiteboard.

Holidays can be so much fun! Today we're going to learn about a holiday God gave the Israelites as a way to celebrate His goodness. But first it's time for small group.



Small Group

Introduce small group time. While kids are in small group, consider sitting in the groups for a few minutes each. Engage and interact as is appropriate.

Countdown

After about 15 minutes of small group, give a 5 minute warning and begin the countdown.

VIDEO: COUNTDOWN

"Hey everyone! Welcome to our Large Group Worship time! My name is _____ and I'm excited to take this time to worship God, review what we just read, and talk about ways we can respond to what we are learning about God! We are going to pray as we prepare our hearts to worship God!"

Prayer of Invitation

Before entering into God's big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use your own words. Here is an example: **Father God, we thank You for giving us Your Word and showing us Your great love for Your people. We pray that Your Holy Spirit will teach us during this time and fill us with joy as we celebrate Your faithfulness! In Jesus' name, Amen.**

Declaring God's Wonder

SLIDE: DECLARATION

Read each line boldly and invite kids to repeat after you.

Thank You, God, that You are good! (Kids repeat.)

You made me on purpose, for a purpose. (Kids repeat.)

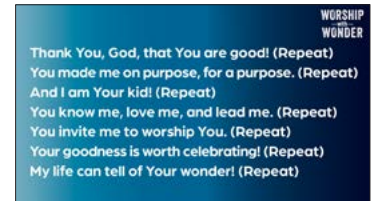
And I am Your kid! (Kids repeat.)

You know me, love me, and lead me. (Kids repeat.)

You invite me to worship You. (Kids repeat.)

Your goodness is worth celebrating! (Kids repeat.)

My life can tell of Your wonder! (Kids repeat.)



Worship

Consider sharing some about the songs you are going to sing. What they mean, why we sing them, why they are meaningful and important to you!

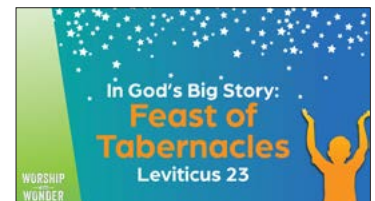
"We're going to stand and sing together! One way that we show love to God is to worship through song! So stand up, sing loud, and join in the motions with us. God loves to hear us sing praises to Him! Let's stand together and sing!"

WORSHIP VIDEOS: He is the Light, Take You at Your Word

God's Big Story

SLIDE: TITLE

Leader Tip: The Feast of Tabernacles is also known as The Feast of Booths, which comes from the Hebrew word *sukkot* (sue-COAT), meaning "booths." In Hebrew, the festival itself is called *Sukkot*. It is a time when God's people build booths (temporary shelters) to celebrate God's provision and remember how He led them in the desert after the exodus from Egypt.



In our Bible Story today, God told His people to celebrate and remember His faithfulness, let's watch a video that helps us picture what that looked like. God wanted His people to pause, celebrate, and not forget how He took care of them. As you watch, notice how the people obey and give thanks to God in joyful ways. Think about how we can remember and celebrate what God has done for us, too!

VIDEO: GODS BIG STORY

LESSON 5 FEAST OF TABERNACLES

EXPERIENCE IT! SCRIPT

SUPPLIES: Bible, party decorations (balloons, streamers, garlands, etc.), party hats (1 per kid), party blower, something for kids to wave (such as streamers or ribbon wands), branches (real or artificial, 1 per kid, optional), plastic fruit and veggies (optional), bowls (optional), baskets (optional), special snack and drink (1 per kid, optional)

Ahead of time, decorate the storytelling area with all things party: balloons, streamers, garlands, etc. Also consider including things that show abundance: clusters of grapes (real or fake), bowls of fruits and veggies (real or fake), etc. Get enough party hats for all the kids. During the storytelling, kids will celebrate by waving objects they will later gather and lay on the ground in a circle. Streamers and ribbon wands work well. Decide what the kids will wave and prepare accordingly (for example, cut streamers into 2' sections for easy waving). If possible, also have branches (real or artificial) on hand that kids can use for making their floor circles. Consider placing the hats and streamers (or other wave-able objects) in baskets for easy distribution. If you plan on serving a special party snack and drink near the end of the story, prepare them ahead of time.

Allergy Caution: Be aware of any latex allergies or sensitivities among your kids and leaders before doing this activity!

The leader/storyteller enters the teaching area super pumped for the party, wearing a party hat, blowing a party horn, and waving streamers.

Happy party day, everyone! I'm so glad you're here ... I just love parties! And you know what they say ... the more the merrier! You can't celebrate with just one person, right? What are some things you like to celebrate? Call on several kids to answer.

Thanks for sharing! Hang on ... you're all missing something ... I know! Party hats! Pass out party hats to everyone who wishes to wear one. Remind kids not to share hats but to wear only the one they're given. **Fantastic! Now where were we? Oh yes! Parties and celebrating! Today we get to celebrate someone very special. In fact, this person is the king of parties ... He created them! And we're going to celebrate Him through a particular kind of party called a festival.**

I just had another great idea! Every time I say, festival or celebrate, let's wave these (hold up wave-able object) **in the air!**

Pass out streamers (or other wave-able object) to each kid. Invite the kids to practice waving their object whenever you say, *festival* or *celebrate*. It's key that they only wave their objects once each time they hear *festival* or *celebrate* and then place their objects on the floor or their laps after every wave.

Nice job! Let's get to it!

Blow party blower one last time; then set it aside. Open the Bible to 2 Chronicles.

After God delivered His people from slavery in Egypt, He took care of them in the wilderness and gave them all they needed to survive. The Lord rained down bread from heaven called manna and provided birds called quail for the people to eat. When the people were thirsty in the dry desert, God made water flow from a rock. What an amazing God!

Later, at Mount Sinai, God provided His commands for the people, showing them how life works best. God's law taught them how to live as His people by honoring Him and reflecting His goodness to others. Here's the part I was looking for! In the law, God gave them instructions for festivals to celebrate throughout the year. These festivals would help God's people remember everything He had done for them and help them honor God by always putting Him first. Remind kids as needed to wave their objects once each time they hear *festival* and *celebrate*.

Moses—who God worked through to lead the people out of Egypt—announced the festivals to the people. One of the festivals was called the Feast of Tabernacles. It came after the final harvest of the year, when the people gathered all the crops from the land. It was a time to worship God and celebrate how generously He gives. This festival marked another year of God providing food for His people, since all good things come from God, including the crops of the field—grains, fruits, and olives. God makes them all grow!

The festival took place in the fall. The first day of the festival was a day of rest. The people took branches from growing trees. Fruit trees, palm trees, willows, and other leafy trees. These branches were a reminder of the generous harvest. Using the branches, they celebrated before God for seven days. The people made food offerings to the Lord, bringing Him the best they had to give. It was a big party!

During the seven-day festival, the Israelites lived in temporary shelters called “tabernacles,” or “booths.” They were huts made from the branches of trees. God told His people to live in these booths during the festival, so they would always remember how they had lived in the wilderness after God brought them out of Egypt. God had provided manna and quail in the wilderness, and He was still providing for His people year after year. The harvest proved it.

Help kids form smaller groups of about 8–10 kids. **OK. Since God's people made these little shelters to party in during the Feast of Tabernacles, let's do something similar. Everyone, take your streamers** (or ribbon wands or other objects) **and gather with a small group. We're going to imagine these streamers are the tree branches God's people collected to build their temporary shelters. Arrange your streamers on the floor in a circle big enough for your group to gather inside.** Allow time for kids to create their circles, and if possible, offer branches as well as extra streamers or ribbon wands to each small group. Invite kids to gather inside their circles.

Now that we've gathered, let's do what the Israelites did! The Feast of Tabernacles was a way to remember how God gave His people what they needed. In your group, share about a time God helped you or gave you what you needed, or a time you felt God near. Allow time for kids to share stories of God's help and faithfulness.

Leader Tip: God works powerfully through the testimonies of His people—including yours! Ahead of time, think prayerfully about a story you can share with kids about a time God helped or provided for you, or a time when you were aware of His nearness. If possible, assign a leader to each small group, and encourage them to kick off their group's sharing time by sharing their own stories of God's faithfulness.

If you prepared a special party snack and drink, serve it during this small group sharing time.

After the sharing time, groups can stay gathered within their “temporary shelters.” Let them know that they no longer need to wave their objects when they hear festival or celebrate (they won’t want to destroy their circles!).

The celebration of God’s generosity ended on the eighth day with another day of rest. The people presented a food offering to God. Each year, they would celebrate this festival to honor God and put Him first, recognizing that all good things come from Him.

When God created the festivals for the people, He was giving them an opportunity to worship Him as Lord and celebrate His faithful love. Festivals like the Feast of Tabernacles were opportunities to remember what God had done in the past when He rescued and provided for His people. God still rescues and provides for us today. Through Jesus, He makes us part of His big story—part of His forever family—and gives us all we need. So, we can worship with wonder at who God is and what He has done. We have so much to celebrate, and that’s exactly what God invites to do. God invites us to worship and celebrate! Consider inviting kids to pick up their objects and wave them one last time in celebration of God and all He has done!

Allergy Caution: Be aware of any food allergies or sensitivities among your kids and leaders before doing this activity!

Connecting the Wonder Truth

SLIDE: WONDER TRUTH

Pose the following question to kids to help them connect the Wonder Truth to God’s big story:

Our Wonder Truth today is GOD INVITES US TO WORSHIP AND CELEBRATE. Where did you see our Wonder Truth in action in the story? Allow kids to answer freely.



In the Old Testament, God rescued the Israelites from slavery and made them His people. Many years later, God sent His Son, Jesus, to earth. Through Jesus’ death on the cross, God rescues us from the power of sin and death and makes us part of His family. Like the Israelites, we are invited to worship God and celebrate all He has done!

In Awe of God’s Wonder

Spend a few moments allowing kids to think about the wonder of God’s story, ask questions, and simply be in awe of Him! Instruct them to spend 30-60 seconds talking with their SG about each question.

What did you discover about what God is like from today’s part of God’s big story? Allow kids time to reflect on the character of God and what His instruction for the Israelites to celebrate this feast shows about Him. Briefly review today’s story if they need prompting to share answers.

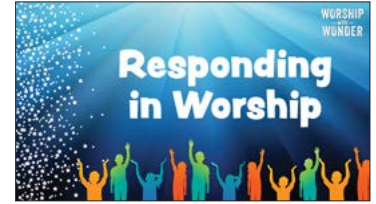
What questions do you have after hearing about the Feast of Tabernacles? Our society is very different from the one described in Leviticus. Encourage kids to share any questions they have as they think through this feast and what it would’ve looked like for the Israelites to celebrate in this way. Consider sharing one of your own questions!

Responding in Worship

SLIDE: RESPONDING IN WORSHIP

Talk about ways we can respond to what we are learning with next steps such as tithing, prayer, asking questions, and worship. Encourage kids to ask their SG leaders any questions they were wondering during the lesson.

***Introduce this next song and invite kids to respond and participate in worship. See the "Worship Posture Tutorial" on the RBKids Resource Page.



WORSHIP VIDEO: INDESCRIBABLE

Blessing Your Kids

Encourage the kids to hold their hands out in front of them, with palms up, as if their hands were open to receive something. Tell them to listen and receive the blessing as you speak it over them. Use your own words. Here is an example:

Blessing: The Lord is faithful! May you always take time to remember His blessings and praise Him for all He has done! May you worship God and celebrate His goodness all the days of your life!