



ELEMENTARY SMALL 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

- Welcome Question: What is your favorite holiday?
- Curiosity Questions
- Word of Wonder: Psalm 100:2
- Word of Wonder Activity
- Discussion Questions for Younger and Older Kids
- Small Group Prayer Time
- LARGE GROUP
- Responding in Worship: Food Offering and Praise



Worship with Wonder Spotify playlist

INVITATION

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

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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.

LESSON 5 ELEMENTARY

Small Group

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

LESSON AT A GLANCE

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Pre-Service Connection (15–20 min)

RESOURCES: [Coloring Page](#), whiteboard, poster paper, or butcher paper, writing utensils

Small group leaders should be seated in place in their small groups 20 minutes prior to service time. Have activities ready to keep children occupied and engaged WITH you. This time is important to build relationships, welcome new kids, and keep structure in the room - you should be an active participant with them! Learn the kids names, and make sure they all know yours too!

Warmly welcome new friends, and introduce them to your group. Allow quieter kids who don't engage with the board games to color. Involve them in the curiosity questions.



As kids arrive..

Invite them to write/draw the answer to the Welcome Question on the designated board:

Set out sheets of paper and colored pencils.

While kids are playing in their opening activity groups..

Pose the following “I’m curious” questions. Say “I’m curious...” before each question and give kids a chance to think about and answer each one. After each question, consider having kids share their ideas with a neighbor before you call on one or two of them to share with the group.

- What makes your favorite holiday special to you?
- Why do you think we celebrate holidays?

Small Group Begins

After the Opening Activity, Large Group Leader will begin small group time by reading the Welcome Question aloud and inviting everyone to open their Bibles and begin.

WORD OF WONDER

Worship the LORD with gladness. Come to him with songs of joy.

—Psalm 100:2 (NirV)

Word of Wonder

SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid)

The Word of Wonder for the Worship with Wonder series is Psalm 100:2. Today we've seen that God invites us to worship and celebrate Him. This verse shows us what it's like to worship God. Let's read the Word of Wonder together! Invite kids to open their Bibles to Psalm 100:2. Read the verse 1–2 times as a review. Then invite kids to clap a steady beat and say the verse to the beat. As they find a rhythm together, encourage them to make the beat faster as they say the verse.

Gather kids to talk about these questions:

- What do you think it means to “worship the LORD with gladness” (Psalm 100:2)?
- Through His Word (the Bible), God invites us to worship Him with gladness and joy! What does this show us about what God is like?

Leader Tip: Have the definition of gladness ready in case your kids need help: “experiencing pleasure, joy, or delight.”

Word of Wonder Activity

SUPPLIES: whiteboards (1 per small group), dry-erase markers (1 per small group), erasers or clean socks (for erasing) (1 per small group), paper, markers (optional, 1 per small group)

Ahead of time, tear a blank sheet of paper in half and crumple it up into a pretend snowball for each small group. Each small group will need its own whiteboard (lap-size boards work great!), dry-erase marker, and eraser or clean sock (for erasing). If those aren't available, small group leaders can use a blank sheet of paper and marker instead. (If using small whiteboards, your snowballs may also need to be small, so kids can hit just one word on the board with them.)

Invite kids to shout out different emotions (or feelings) and have the small groups write them on their whiteboard (or a blank sheet of paper), leaving space between each word. If a kid shouts out gladness, affirm their idea and tell them you will save it for later. Don't write “gladness” on the board (yet). **Now let's take turns throwing this snowball at our list.** Hold up the crumpled paper. **We'll act out whichever emotion your snowball hits** (or gets nearest to hitting) **as we say the Word of Wonder. We can show the emotion through our facial expressions, tone of voice, and physical movements.**

After a few rounds, erase all the emotions (or flip the paper over) and write, gladness. Talk together about what gladness is and how we can show it in our lives. **Our Word of Wonder says to worship the Lord with gladness. Let's show what gladness looks like as we say the verse one more time!** Say the verse together, letting your gladness show!

Small Group Discussion: Younger Kids

SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid); Bible Story Picture (1/SG)

Help kids use the table of contents in their Bibles to find Leviticus 23. As kids find the passage, explain that this part of the Bible was written by Moses, the leader God chose to help His people. God gave Moses special instructions to tell the people about a big celebration called the Feast of Booths. It was a time to remember how God took care of them when they lived in tents in the wilderness. God wanted them to celebrate and be thankful. Let's hear about this special party for God!

Read Leviticus 23:1–2, 33–36, 39–41, and 42–44. aloud. Then discuss the following:

- **When God gave His people (the Israelites) instructions for the Feast of Tabernacles, what are some of the objects He told them to use to worship Him?** (branches from palms, willows, and other leafy trees. If needed, reread Leviticus 23:40.)
- **What were the Israelites to live in during this festival?** (temporary shelters called “tabernacles” or “booths”)
- **God told the Israelites to live in temporary shelters so they would remember something important. What did God want them to remember?** (that the Israelites lived in temporary shelters in the wilderness when God brought them out of Egypt. If needed, reread Leviticus 23:43.)
- **What are some of the different ways God took care of the Israelites?** (He brought them out of Egypt, provided manna and quail to eat, made water flow from a rock, provided food to eat each year.)
- **What are some ways that God takes care of you?**
- **Why do you think it's important to take time to remember all the good things God has done for you?**

Our God is a good God who cares for us! He invites us to worship Him and celebrate His goodness so that we won't ever forget how much He loves us. Let's spend some time praying, thanking God for all the ways He has been good to us!

Prayer Time: Younger Kids

Invite kids to take turns saying something they are thankful to God for. Then allow kids to share their prayer requests. Close in prayer together by praising God for inviting us to worship and celebrate.

Large Group

Guide kids into knowing God, exploring His big story, and marveling at His wonder.

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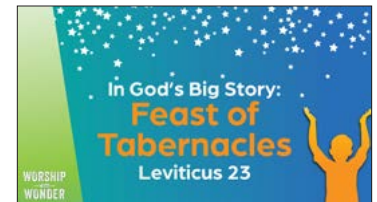
Prayer of Invitation

Before entering into God's big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use the prayer here or your own words: **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.**

God's Big Story

Hear It, Watch It, Experience It!

This lesson includes three opportunities for your kids to enter the story—each one reinforces the others! **HEAR** it read directly from the Bible. **WATCH** it in a video. **EXPERIENCE** it through the live script.



SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid)

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Feast Title Slide, [Feast of Tabernacles God's Big Story Video](#)

Invite kids to open their Bibles to Leviticus 23. Explain that Leviticus is one of the first five books of the Bible, and these books are referred to as the Law. God gave the Law to show His people the best way to live. Display the Feast Title Slide.

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.

Let's start by reading part of God's big story directly from the Bible. Afterward, we will watch and experience more of the story! Ask for volunteers to read these verses from the Bible while everyone else follows along: Leviticus 23:1–2, 33–36, 39–41, and 42–44. Then do one or both of the following:

- View [Feast of Tabernacles God's Big Story Video](#)
- Use the following Feast of Tabernacles Experience It! Script

Small Group Discussion: Older Kids

SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid), **Bible Story Picture (1/SG)**

Help kids use the table of contents in their Bibles to find Leviticus 23. As kids find the passage, explain that Moses wrote this part of the Bible when God's people were still traveling through the wilderness after leaving Egypt, around 1400 B.C. God gave them special days and celebrations to help them remember all He had done for them. One of these was the Feast of Booths, a joyful week when the people lived in tents to remember how God provided for them in the wilderness. God wanted them to celebrate His faithfulness every year. Let's read what God told Moses to share with the people.

Turn to Page 3 of this guide and help kids understand the context of this passage.

Invite kids to follow along as you read Leviticus 23:1–2, 33–36, 39–41, and 42–44. Then discuss the following:

- **When God gave His people (the Israelites) instructions for the Feast of Tabernacles, what did He tell them to present to the Lord for eight days during the sacred assembly?** (*food offerings. If needed, reread Leviticus 23:36.*)
- **The Lord told the Israelites to take palms, willows, and the branches of other leafy trees. What were they supposed to do with them?** (*rejoice before the Lord with them. If needed, reread Leviticus 23:40.*)
- **Why did God want the Israelites to live in temporary shelters during the Feast of Tabernacles?** (*so they would remember that their ancestors—relatives before them—lived in temporary shelters when God brought them out of Egypt. If needed, reread Leviticus 23:43.*)
- **The Lord wanted the Israelites to remember all the ways He cared for them when they came out of Egypt. What are some of those ways?** (*He brought them out of Egypt, provided manna and quail to eat, made water flow from a rock, provided food to eat each year.*)
- **What are some of the different ways God cares for you?**
- **Why do you think it's important for the Israelites and for us to stop and celebrate the different ways God has cared for us?**

God invites us to worship Him and celebrate His goodness so that we regularly remember His faithfulness. God is a good God who cares for us, but we can forget this truth when we don't take the time to thank Him. Let's pray now, thanking God for how good He is to us.

Prayer Time: Older Kids

Invite kids into worship by encouraging them to share things they are thankful to God for. After this time of thankfulness, allow kids to share any prayer requests they have. Close this time by inviting a volunteer to pray. Encourage the volunteer to thank God for the chance to worship Him and celebrate all the ways He has been and will continue to be faithful.

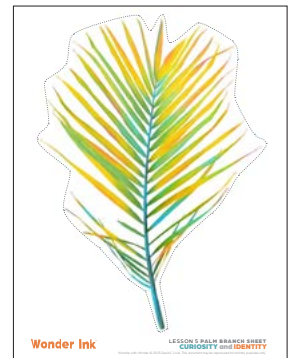
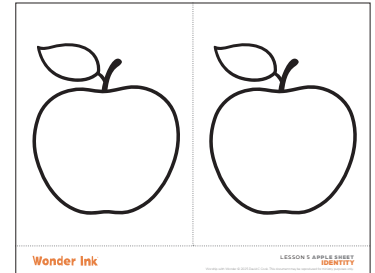
PAUSE for Large Group time, then continue...

Responding in Worship: Food Offering and Praise

SUPPLIES: scissors (prep only), coloring utensils, cardstock (optional), basket (optional), green construction paper (optional)

RESOURCES: Apple Sheet (1 per 2 kids), Palm Branch Sheet (1 per kid), [Worship with Wonder Elementary Spotify playlist](#)

Ahead of time, print one Apple Sheet for every two kids and cut the sheets in half. Also print copies of the Palm Branch Sheet for each kid, on cardstock if available, and cut them out. (If your group is large and cutting out a palm from the Palm Branch Sheet for each kid is too time intensive, consider using strips of green construction paper to represent palm branches, one strip per kid). Set out coloring utensils. Designate a place where kids will place their apple offerings, such as in a basket on the stage area. Next to it, set the precut palm branches (from the Palm Branch Sheet) or green construction paper strips. Cue the [Worship with Wonder Elementary Spotify playlist](#) to “Here I Am to Worship.”



Today in God’s big story we learned that the Israelites brought food offerings

to God to thank Him for the harvest. An offering is a gift we give God, and during the Feast of Tabernacles, God’s people gave Him the very best of the food from their harvest. Let’s take time to reflect and give our own offerings to God. Hand one half of an Apple Sheet to each kid. Hold one up as you continue. **These apples can remind us of the food offerings the Israelites gave to God during the feast. On your apples, you get to write or draw something you would like to give to or dedicate to God. It could be one of your talents, such as the beautiful song you can play on the piano or when you give your all in a volleyball game. You could also offer God an action, such as helping a teacher or parent. As you think about what you want to give to God as an offering, remember that your gift is not a way to earn God’s favor. God invites everyone to become His children by following Jesus, and He loves all His children! Your offering is simply a way to say, “Thank You” to God for all the ways He has helped and cared for you.**

Leader Tip: For Older Kids. If your older kids need more of a challenge, encourage them to write a different offering for each day of the week. The Israelites brought a food offering to the Lord for seven days and then again during the sacred assembly on the eighth day!

Make It Inclusive! Writing or drawing what they want to give God as an offering can be a difficult concept for some kids while writing or drawing might be hard for others. Consider providing other mediums kids can use to create gifts for God. For example, they might make creations out of play dough, bendable wax sticks, or stickers on paper and give them to God as their special offerings.

When you are finished creating your offering, you can place it here to symbolize giving it as a gift to God (indicate where kids should place their offerings). **You can then grab a palm branch** (or green strip of construction paper). Point to the pile of paper palm branches or strips. **After the Israelites gave their offerings, they used palm branches and other green leaves as they worshiped God. When you’ve all had time to create your offerings, we will use our branches to worship God and celebrate because He is faithful!**

Allow kids time to create their offerings to God. Consider playing music from the [Worship with Wonder Elementary Spotify playlist](#) as they work. When kids finish, they can bring their apples to the designated area and grab a palm branch (or paper slip). Once all the kids have their palm branches, play “Here I Am to Worship” from the [Worship with Wonder Elementary Spotify playlist](#) and invite kids to sing along and wave their palm branches.