



LESSON 5 FOR LEADERS

INVITATION

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

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: We Can Worship and Celebrate God

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
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LESSON 5 FOR LEADERS

FEAST OF TABERNACLES

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.



Curiosity

Belief

Faith

Identity

LESSON 5 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Curiosity Activity: Build a Booth

SUPPLIES: bedsheet, chairs (at least 4), palm branches

Set out at least four chairs and a bedsheet. Invite the kids to help you build a fort by putting the sheet over the chairs. The kids can lay their palm branches on top of the fort.

Have you ever been camping in a tent? If so, what was it like? Allow the kids to share. **Did you know that God's people stayed in tents in the wilderness a long time ago?** The kids can take turns crawling in and out of the tent. Every time they go into the tent, ask them to say one thing God has given them or done for them.

In our story today, we're going to learn about a time when God's people—the Israelites—built tents called *tabernacles*, or *booths*, kind of like these to stay in during a festival. A festival is a celebration, like a party, to remember what God has done and worship Him. They used leaves from trees to put on top of their tents, kind of like the green papers we put on top of our tent. God's people stayed in tents and celebrated with a feast to remind them of the ways God took care of them and the good gifts He gave them. Gifts from God are blessings. God has given us good gifts too, and we can also worship and celebrate Him. We'll learn more about it in our story! We'll use our tent again to help us imagine what it was like for the Israelites to celebrate God with the festival.



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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 Your great love and for all the blessings You have given us. We pray that Your Holy Spirit will help us remember all You have done for us and will fill us with joy as we celebrate You. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

God's Big Story

Pull out the Bible

Ask: What is this called? The Bible

Ask: Why is the Bible special? Because it is God's word. Everything in it is true. It really happened.

Tell the Bible story

Use the script provided:

SUPPLIES: Bible, toy fruit or vegetable

Our God's big story today is a great story from the Bible about God's people, the Israelites. Encourage the kids to say, "Israelites." Let's find out from the Bible what the Israelites did in the desert!

God took care of His people, the Israelites. He saved them from being slaves in Egypt. God took care of them in the wilderness and gave the people food and water. Hold up the toy food. One of the things God wanted the Israelites to do was to have festivals, or parties, to celebrate Him! Invite kids to clap and wave their hands.

One of the festivals was called the *Feast of Tabernacles*. This feast happened right after the Israelites gathered the food that grew in the land. It was a time to worship God and celebrate how much He gives. All good things come from God! Invite kids to clap and wave their hands.

The first day of the festival was a day of rest. The people took branches from trees that had a lot of leaves on them. They used the branches to praise God for seven days. It was a big party! Invite kids to clap and wave their hands.

During the festival, the Israelites stayed in tents called *tabernacles* or *booths*. God told His people to live in the booths during the festival. This helped them remember the way God's people lived after God saved them from Egypt. God gave them food in the wilderness. He gave them everything they needed.

The festival lasted for eight days. The last day was one more day of rest before the festival ended. Invite the kids to pretend to sleep for a moment. **At the very end of the festival, the people gave food back to God. They had the festival every year to remember how God took care of them!** Invite kids to clap and wave their hands.

God wanted the people to have festivals to celebrate and love Him. He wanted them to remember how good He is and how much He loves them. God still loves us and helps us. He gives us good gifts. **We have a lot to celebrate because God is so good to us. We can worship and celebrate God!** Invite kids to clap and wave their hands.

Leader Tip: The Feast of Tabernacles (or Feast of Booths) 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.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. **What was the feast called that we heard about today?** (*Feast of Tabernacles, Festival of Booths*)
2. **What did God's people stay in during the festival?** (*tents, temporary shelters, booths*)
3. **What did the palm branches remind God's people of?** (*that God gave them lots of food that grew in the land*)
4. **Why did God's people have the festival every year?** (*to celebrate how God took care of them and gave them good things*)
5. **What has God done for you that you want to thank Him for?**
6. **What good food has God given you that you're thankful for?**
7. **How can you remember and celebrate God and all that He has done for you?** (*If kids need help, offer suggestions such as praying and telling Him "Thank You," writing or drawing a picture, worshiping or singing, and having a feast or celebration.*)
8. **What food would you want to eat at a feast to celebrate and worship God?**

WORD OF WONDER

**Worship the Lord with gladness. Come to him
with songs of joy.**

—Psalm 100:2

Word of Wonder

Gather kids to discuss these questions:

- **What are some ways we can worship God other than singing?** (*If the kids need help, offer suggestions such as: through our words, art, dancing, movement/postures, etc.*)
- **What is your favorite worship song? Why is it your favorite? What does it say about God?**



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LESSON 5 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Game: Under the Tent

SUPPLIES: parachute

Invite other leaders to help hold the sides of the parachute or bedsheet. **In today's story, God's people made tents to stay in during a celebration so they could worship and celebrate God. Let's pretend we're in a tent like the Israelites were during the Feast of Tabernacles. We'll raise the "tent," and you will all run under it and say, "We love You, God!"** Practice a few times. You may want the kids to run under the parachute or bedsheet one at a time.

For some extra fun, name categories to invite kids to run under the tent. Here are some ideas:

- wearing red
- has a brother
- likes the color yellow
- likes to play soccer
- likes to ride a scooter or bike
- likes to sing
- has a pet



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Responding in Worship: Harvest of Praise

SUPPLIES: cardstock (1 sheet per every 4 kids); scissors (prep only); ink pads (various colors); basket; wet wipes streamers, or palm branches from God's Big Story

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Fruit Cards (1 set per every 4 kids), songs from the Early Childhood flash drive

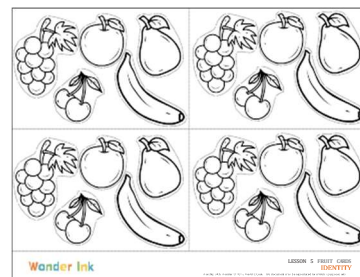
Ahead of time, print one set of the Fruit Cards on cardstock for every four kids. Cut the cards apart. Set out a basket and some ink pads. You may want to have wet wipes nearby for easy cleanup of hands.

Did you know that the Feast of Tabernacles was only one of the festivals God gave His people? Through the festivals, the people could come together to remember all God had done for them and celebrate how amazing He is! Do you have times when you gather with your family and friends? Allow responses. If kids need help coming up with ideas, talk about birthdays and holidays like Christmas and Easter. **What happens when you're together?** Allow responses.

Maybe you eat, tell stories, and laugh together. It's a party! God's people did the same. Today we're going to think about what God has provided for us, remember what God has done, and celebrate by praising Him!

Show kids the Fruit Cards and ink pads. You may want to demonstrate how to press a finger on an ink pad and then on the Fruit Card. Invite kids to fill in the fruit shapes with fingerprints. With each fingerprint, they can share one praise to God for who He is and what He's done. Some ideas are: His care, His love, His giving them family and friends, His creation. **One of the things people did during the Feast of Tabernacles was to eat good food and to give an offering, a gift, back to God from the plants and vegetables they grew. This helped them celebrate God and thank Him for all He gave them. God gives us good gifts too. We're making something to remind us of that. We can worship and celebrate God too!**

When the cards are complete, the kids can place them in the basket like they're giving their praises to God. Then play songs from the Early Childhood flash drive and all the kids to dance and sing. You could also give them streamers and palm branches for this time of worship.



Prayer and Blessing

After the kids finish their activity, pray with them, thanking God for everything He gives us and everything good thing He does for us.

Let's talk to God. Gracious God, thank You for how wonderful You are. You are so good to us. Thank You for the many blessings You have given us. Today we worship and celebrate You! We love You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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.

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!