

# The Tabernacle

*Exodus 25:1 – 31:18; 35:1 – 40:33*

**The Big Idea:** God dwells in us.

**Read the passage**

**Story Summary for Children:**

In these passages, God gives Moses instructions for building the Tabernacle and the Israelites obey. Yahweh began by telling Moses to instruct the Israelites to bring offerings of gold, silver, and bronze; blue, purple and scarlet yarn and fine linen; goat hair; ram skins dyed red and hides of sea cows; acacia wood; olive oil; spices and fragrant incense; onyx stones and other gems. God did not specify how much each person should bring; rather, each person should bring what his heart prompted him to bring.

God gave instructions to Moses for building God's dwelling place among the people, called the Tabernacle. The first instructions were for building the Ark of the Covenant, which was a chest that would hold important things like the stone tablets of the Covenant. Then God gave Moses instructions for building a table, an altar of incense and a lamp stand. The Ark, table and altar of incense would be made of wood and covered with gold and the lamp stand would be made of pure gold. The table would hold bread dedicated to God and the altar of incense would contain burning incense as a sweet-smelling aroma to God.

Then God gave instructions for how to build the Tabernacle, which would be a big tent. It would have poles, curtains and a covering. God also gave instructions for building an altar. The altar would be used for burning offerings to God. The priests would place animals on the altar as sacrifices to God. The people were also told to construct a wash basin for the priests. The final part of the Tabernacle was the courtyard, which would be the front yard of the Tabernacle. It would be enclosed by a fence and serve as a meeting place for the Israelites and Yahweh.

God also gave Moses instructions for establishing priests, including what they would wear, how they would be dedicated to God and what they would do.

Moses came down from the mountain and gave the instructions to the Israelites. The people brought such big offerings that Moses had to tell them to stop, because they had more than enough material. And so the Israelites built the Tabernacle and did just as the Lord instructed. When the Tabernacle was finished, God came down and filled it with His glory. During the day, there was a big cloud around it and at night there was fire in the cloud. That was how the Israelites knew that God was in the Tabernacle.

**Family Lesson Discussion Questions:**

1. What was the Tabernacle? (a big tent where God dwelled with his people and they worshiped him)
2. Where did the material for the Tabernacle come from? (the people brought offerings)
3. How much did the people bring in offerings? (more than what was needed!)
4. What happened when they finished the Tabernacle? (God came down and filled it with his glory)

**Family Application Discussion Questions:**

1. Where does God dwell now?
2. How does God come to dwell in us?
3. How do your friends see God in you?

**Memory Verse:** *“Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit lives in you?”* (1 Corinthians 3:16)

**Parents:** Ask your children how they see God in you. Talk with your family about how God can live in them. Then talk about how we should live if God is in us.

**A Look Ahead:** Next Sunday is our Christmas service and the Big Idea will be, “God dwells with us.” Ask your family, “What is the greatest gift God has ever given us?”