

Lesson Seven

Meeting with God



Growing as a Teacher

Scripture

Exodus 25:1–9
Exodus 35:1–38:17; 40

Bible Truth

God gave his people plans for building the tabernacle, where he would meet with them and live among them.

Lesson Aim

To know that God has provided the only way we can come to him: through faith in the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ.

Memory Verse

REVIEW:

PSALM 121:1–6

Optional:

Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

JOHN 14:6

“They will know that I am the LORD their God, who brought them out of Egypt so that I might dwell among them. I am the LORD their God” (Exodus 29:46). This verse states the theme of the book of Exodus and explains the purpose of the tabernacle. The Lord graciously chose to dwell with his people.

As we read God’s instructions for building the tabernacle and Moses’ obedience in doing everything “as the LORD had commanded” (Exodus 39:43), we can become lost in the repetitious details and fail to see the fundamental truth: God gave precise instructions and expected obedience. The Israelites could meet with him only in the place he specified and according to the procedures he commanded.

The presence of a dwelling place for God reminded the people of his kingship over them. But it also looked ahead to the incarnation, when God would dwell among his people in the Person of Jesus Christ. The crucified and resurrected Christ—who now sits in the presence of God, not in a man-made sanctuary but in heaven itself (Hebrews 9:24)—has sent the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, to indwell all who are truly united with Christ. Fellowship with God is no longer associated with a tabernacle or building but is due to God’s gift of a new heart.

The tabernacle, furnishings, mediators and procedures were only shadows of what was to come. The blood of an animal was never sufficient to pay the price for sin, as the constant repetition of the sacrifices confirmed (Exodus 29:38–39), and human priests were never holy enough to go into the presence of God without first offering a sacrifice on their own behalf. But all of the requirements for restoring the relationship between the holy God and sinful people were fulfilled in the Person and work of Jesus Christ, who was the sufficient and final sacrifice and High Priest. The popular idea that people of all religions worship the same God even though they approach him through a variety of means is tragically mistaken. The Bible declares that faith in Jesus Christ is God’s only way for anyone to go into his presence (Hebrews 9:11–15).

Your students cannot grasp the abstract symbolism of each part of the tabernacle or each ceremony. Pray for their increasing understanding as you emphasize that we can know God only by loving, trusting and obeying Jesus Christ, the only Savior and High Priest we need.

Lesson Seven at a Glance

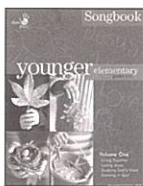
Step	Minutes	Children's Activities	Supplies (complete list, p. 11)
1 Welcome	5–10	Play <i>Following Orders</i> .	<input type="radio"/> Small rewards
2 Bible Time	15–20	Listen to the story of Moses and the Israelites building the tabernacle.	<input type="radio"/> TA 1a map* <input type="radio"/> TA 7a Tabernacle* <input type="radio"/> TA 7b Tabernacle Interior*
3 Memory Verse	5–10	Review Psalm 121:1–6 by doing a choral reading.	<input type="radio"/> TA 1b Psalm 121**
4 Activities	10–15	Complete the inside pages of <i>At Home 7</i> to review God's way for the Israelites to meet with him and his way for us to meet with him.	<input type="radio"/> <i>At Home 7</i> ** <input type="radio"/> Pencils <input type="radio"/> Markers or crayons
5 Final Focus	5	17 Sing "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty" (<i>Songbook</i> , p. 26) and close in prayer.	<input type="radio"/> Songbook <input type="radio"/> <i>At Home 7</i> ** <input type="radio"/> Optional: song poster, <i>Younger Elementary Vol. 1</i> CD

Total time: 40–60 minutes

* *Younger Elementary Teaching Aids Pack*
** *Younger Elementary Student Activities Pack*



Practical Preparation



Younger Elementary Vol. 1 Songbook

All the songs for this quarter and the entire year are in the Songbook (included in the Fall Teacher's Kit).

17 "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty"
Younger Elementary Vol. 1 CD



Order CD and/or extra Songbooks from Great Commission Publications at 800-695-3387 or www.gcp.org.

In addition to the passages in Exodus, read Hebrews 9 as you prepare this week so that you may better grasp the significance of the tabernacle and the sacrifices.

Prepare a song poster (see p. 10) for the three stanzas of "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty," which you will begin teaching your students this week. The words are also on the back of *At Home 7*. Decide which words or phrases you will need to explain and plan your explanations. Plan to use the *Younger Elementary Vol. 1* CD, if possible. You might want to tell your pastor that the children are learning this hymn and ask him to include it in an upcoming worship service.

Consider buying small items at a Christian bookstore to use as rewards for the **Welcome** activity. Review the activity carefully so that you understand how to lead it.



Welcome

5–10 minutes

After you welcome the children and give a special welcome to visitors, tell them they are going to play *Following Orders*. Explain that you will give an order, but they are not to move until you say, “Line up!” Begin by telling them their first order is to stand at attention in a line across the front of the room. Then say, “Line up!” Their second order is to arrange themselves in order of height. Tell them to be sure the person on their right is taller, then say, “Line up!” Repeat this process several times, explaining orders, then saying, “Line up.” Include such orders as lining up by alphabetical order of their first names, by their ages, by alphabetical order of their last names, by grouping hair color, etc.

Conclude the game by passing out rewards for having followed orders well. Use something small, such as pencils, stickers or other small items from a Christian bookstore. For the final command, have them hold out their right hands and close their eyes so you can walk by and put the rewards in their hands.

As the children return to their seats, explain that following orders is an important part of life. Soldiers, students, football players and employees must follow orders. *Then say* **God often gave orders to the Israelites. When they didn’t follow his orders, they suffered the consequences. Today we’re going to learn about a time when Moses and the Israelites followed God’s orders exactly. That was a really joyful time for them.**



Bible Time

15–20 minutes

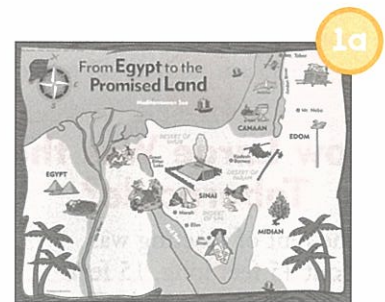
Turn in your Bible to Exodus 35. *Say* **In last week’s lesson we learned that God wrote the Ten Commandments on two stone tablets and gave them to Moses on Mount Sinai. Refer to TA 1a map.** It was also there that God told Moses to build a tabernacle, which was a tent for the Lord. God gave him a pattern showing exactly how it should be built. *Ask* Why do we live in houses or apartments? (*shelter from weather, dangers*) Does God need a house to keep him warm and dry, and to protect him from wild animals? Of course not! Why did God tell the people to build a house for him? God would live there among his people and meet with them when they came to worship him.

When Moses told the people they were to build the tabernacle, he began by announcing two important commands from God. First, they were to work on the tabernacle for six days each week,



Provide colored markers or crayons for children who arrive early to decorate the song poster with pictures to help them remember the words. Drawings might include the following:

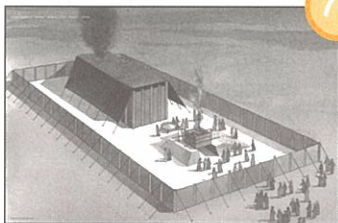
- a crown (King)
- a sun (creation)
- a cross (salvation)
- a church (temple)
- an ear (hear)
- a bird (wings)
- a heart (love)



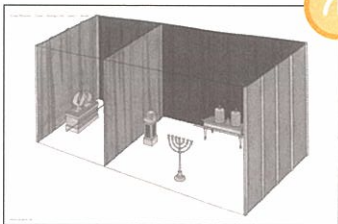


Portable Tent

The Israelites spent many years wandering in the wilderness before God led them into the Promised Land. The tabernacle was a tent that traveled with them and was assembled wherever they set up camp.



7a



7b



How Large Was the Tabernacle?

The tent of meeting was about 45 feet long, 15 feet wide and 15 feet high. The fence surrounding the courtyard was approximately 150 feet long and 75 feet wide.

but they were to rest on the seventh day because that was the Sabbath, the Lord's holy day. Listen while I read what God said should happen to anyone who worked on the Sabbath. *Read Exodus 35:2 from your Bible.* Anyone who worked on the Sabbath would be put to death! God was really serious when he commanded them not to work on the Sabbath!

Second, the Lord commanded that all the people bring offerings of things to be used in making the tabernacle. They were excited that God was going to live in the middle of their camp. They wanted his tent to be beautiful and to remind them of God's glory. They brought so many gifts of silver, gold and jewels that Moses told them not to bring any more! Wouldn't it be wonderful if that happened in our church? Think of how many missionaries we could send to other countries or how many people in our own town we could tell about Jesus if everybody put so much money in the offering plate that our pastor told us not to give any more!

Display TA 7a Tabernacle. Moses carefully told the people the details of God's plan. Soon the camp rang with the sounds of hammers and saws. Mothers made curtains from fine linen and from sturdy cloth woven of goats' hair. Others embroidered the linen curtains with blue, purple and red threads. Men beat gold into thin sheets, built furniture, or cleaned and dyed animal skins.

When Moses looked at the things the people had made, he couldn't find a single mistake. They had carefully done everything just as the Lord had commanded.

Soon the time came to set up the tabernacle and move in the furniture. First the workers set up a sturdy frame of gold-covered boards in this shape. *Refer to TA 7a Tabernacle, tracing with your finger the shape of the tent.* Over the boards they hung embroidered curtains. Then they covered the outside with the goats' hair cloth and animal skins.

Inside the tent were two rooms. *Display TA 7b Tabernacle Interior. Point to the two rooms and to the individual items as you describe them.* The larger room was the Holy Place and the smaller one was the Holy of Holies. They were separated by a thick curtain. Only one thing was placed in the Holy of Holies—the ark of the covenant. It was a chest made of wood that was covered with gold. It was carried by poles that fit through rings on its corners. Moses placed inside the ark the stone tablets on which God had written the Ten Commandments, just as God had told him to do.

Three pieces of furniture were in the Holy Place: the table of showbread, the altar of incense and the golden lampstand. Outside the tent was a courtyard surrounded by a fence made of fine linen curtains. In the courtyard were the altar of burnt offering and a basin where the priests washed their hands and feet before entering the tent.

When the tabernacle was set up, Moses sprinkled sweet-smelling oil on the furniture and dishes to show that they were holy—they belonged to God. God had chosen Aaron to be the high priest of Israel, and his sons were to help him. Moses dressed

Aaron in the beautiful robes that had been made for him and helped Aaron's sons put on the white garments of the priests. All the men in Levi's family would be helpers in God's tabernacle, but Aaron and his sons were to be God's special servants.

At last everything was ready. God was pleased that the people had built the tabernacle exactly as he had commanded. His cloud of glory filled the tabernacle with its brilliant light as it rested on the ark of the covenant. God was meeting with his people and living among them, just as he had promised.

But one problem remained. The people of God were still sinful. God is holy. How could sinful people come to a holy God? God gave them the way when he designed the courtyard of the tabernacle. When the people wanted to meet with God, they brought a lamb with them. As they went through the curtain at the gate of the courtyard, the first thing they saw was a huge altar where they were to give an offering to God. The worshiper would place his hands on the lamb's head and confess his sins. That was like saying, "Little lamb, you must take my place and take the punishment I deserve for breaking God's law. I cannot come to him until my sins are covered." Then the lamb would be killed and Aaron would sprinkle its blood on the altar. This didn't happen just once. Every time a person went to the tabernacle to worship God, he had to take a lamb to be sacrificed for his sins.

Perhaps some of the Israelites wondered, "How can an animal take my place?" The Bible tells us that the lamb was a picture of the Son of God who someday would come to earth to be the *real* sacrifice who would die in place of his people. They would never need to sacrifice another animal because Jesus would take the punishment for all the sins of all God's people.

We don't sacrifice animals to pay the price for our sins because Jesus has taken our punishment. The only way anyone can come to God is by loving and trusting Jesus as his Savior. Listen to what Jesus said. *Read John 14:6 from your Bible.* Aren't you glad God has planned a way for his children to come to him?



Memory Verse

5–10 minutes

To review **Psalm 121:1–6**, divide the class into two groups to recite the psalm as a choral reading. Before you begin, explain the procedure and ask for a volunteer to do the solo reading. If you have time, repeat the choral reading, reversing the groups and using a different volunteer as the soloist. (*Reading printed on next page.*)



First Catechism

This would be a good time to learn or review *First Catechism* Q/A 65–67 (also on p. 93).

65 Q. *How were sinners saved before Christ came?*

A. By believing in the promised Messiah.

66 Q. *Before Christ came, how did believers show their faith?*

A. By offering the sacrifices God required.

67 Q. *What did these sacrifices represent?*

A. Christ, the Lamb of God, who would come to die for sinners.



First Catechism is available from Great Commission Publications at 800-695-3387 or www.gcp.org.



Cost of Salvation

God gives us salvation as a free gift, but it was not cheap. Jesus Christ paid a high price when he died on the cross.



Teaching Tip

Use sticky notes in different colors on the poster (TA 1b) to help students know whose turn it is to speak which part.

Optional Memory Work

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

JOHN 14:6



Enrichment

Discover more about the tabernacle by looking up the answers to these questions in your Bible. Share your findings with the class.

When God gave Moses the directions for building the tabernacle, where was Moses and how long did he stay? (Ex. 24:16, 18)

What metal covered the ark of the covenant? (Ex. 25:11)

What design was woven into the curtain fabric? (Ex. 26:1)

Who was the only person who could enter the Holy of Holies and how often could he go in? (Heb. 9:7)

What words were engraved on a gold plate and attached to the high priest's turban? (Ex. 28:36)

- 17 "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty"
Songbook, p. 26



Items to Send Home

- *At Home 7*

- Group 1:** I lift up my eyes to the hills—where does my help come from?
Group 2: My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth.
All: He will not let your foot slip—he who watches over you will not slumber;
Student: Indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.
All: The LORD watches over you—
Group 1: The LORD is your shade at your right hand;
Group 2: The sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night.



Activities

10–15 minutes

Give each child a copy of *At Home 7*, pencils and crayons or markers. Read aloud the title and directions for the part(s) you choose to do.

In *Coming to God His Way*, provide help as needed. To fill in the blanks at the bottom of the page, help as needed with looking up and completing the verse. Remind the children that the only way God has provided for us to come to him is through faith in Jesus Christ.

Answers: way, Father

In *God Provides the Way*, read the acrostic aloud after the page is complete. **Answers:** Commandments, covenant, offerings, God, instructions, work, way, worship, sacrificed, helps



Final Focus

5 minutes

As you conclude today, teach your students the first stanza of "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty," a wonderful traditional hymn filled with references to God's sovereign care and grace for his people. Using the song poster (if you have made one; see p. 10), teach them the first stanza. (The words are also printed on the back of *At Home 7*.) Explain difficult words or phrases.

As you close in prayer, thank God for sending Jesus Christ to take the punishment for our sins and to provide the way for us to know God.

As the children leave, be sure each one has a copy of *At Home 7*, and encourage them to show it to their parents.