



WEEK 1

ELEMENTARY LESSON GUIDE



BIG IDEA

I can spend time with God anywhere.

THE BIBLE

The Israelites Build the Tabernacle: Exodus 35:4-35; (James 4:8a)

LARGE GROUP TIME

WHAT? *What are we talking about today?*

MUSIC | "God of Wonders"

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play [this video](#) and encourage kids to sing and dance along with you.

ACTIVITY | Wandering Game

- Are you ready for an adventure? This month, we will follow the epic stories of the Old Testament in the Bible – stories of God’s people in the wilderness. . . where they wandered for forty years! Let’s play a wilderness wandering game together.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Ask the kids to line up behind a leader and follow them in a wandering path around the room. The leader should occasionally complain about the long trip and encourage the kids to complain as well. Lead them back to the starting point before moving on to the next activity.
 - **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** For kids whose movement is impaired by a physical disability, consider giving the group toy race cars to create wandering paths on the table in front of them or have them create "wandering" patterns in the air with ribbons or scarves.

QUESTION | Road Trip List

- If you knew you had to wander for a very long time, let's say 40 years! **What would you bring with you?**



- The people of God missed a lot of things while they were wandering in the desert. One of the things they missed the most was the feeling that God was with them.

THE BIG IDEA | I can spend time with God anywhere.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Write the Big Idea on a poster board. Set the poster on an easel and cover it with a brightly colored cloth or scarf, preferably in purple, blue, or deep red. Tell the kids to do a drumroll by patting their legs with their hands, then remove the cloth with a flourish.
- Today's Big Idea is: **I can spend time with God anywhere!**

SO WHAT? Why does it matter to God and to us?

VIDEO | Epic, Episode 1

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play this week's [teaching video](#).

SCRIPTURE | Exodus 35:4-35

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give kids access to the assorted materials (see the included shopping list) around the room. Allow kids to pick one item to use as they interact with the story. Tell them to bring their item to the front when their item is mentioned. At the underlined words, pause for the kids to bring up their items, reminding them if necessary. (You can read Exodus 26-27 for a more detailed background for today's story.)
 - **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** If you have students with limited mobility due to physical disabilities, consider having the kids work together in pairs to select their items from around the room and bring them forward as appropriate.
- When the Israelites were wandering in the desert, they sometimes forgot God was there with them, so God gave a man named Moses instructions.
- God told Moses to have the Israelites gather fine materials to make a home for God so that God could travel with them. Of course God was with them wherever they were anyway! But this home for God would help the Israelites remember this.
- This home was called a Tent of Meeting or Tabernacle. This is how God told them to build it:
 - Make curtains of fine, twisted linen or yarns of **blue, purple, and deep red**.
 - Use **gold clasps** to hold the curtains together. Weave pictures of winged angels in the curtains. Join them together to make walls.
 - Then, make a tent around the curtains with **goat hair**.
 - Make frames from **acacia wood** and **silver bases**. Assemble the tabernacle exactly as I have told you at every place you stop to rest.
- God's people built the tabernacle exactly as they were told and put it up each time they stopped during their journey in the wilderness, to remind them God was with them while they traveled.

VIDEO | The Tabernacle

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show [this video](#) of a 3D model of the tabernacle.



- Here is how the tabernacle might have looked!

ACTIVITY | Where Do We Worship God?

- The Israelites built the tabernacle as a home for God while they were traveling. It was a place for them to worship God.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Prepare a parachute or a large sheet. Space the kids evenly around the parachute/sheet and have them hold on to the edge. When you give them a signal, have all the kids lift it up together and run under it, towards the center. Once they are at the center, ask the following questions:*
- **Where are some places where we worship God?**
- **Do we need a specific place to worship?**
- **Why do we come to church to worship?**

SCRIPTURE | James 4:8a

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Look up the verse and read it!*
- The Israelites believed they needed to carry a home for God with them to spend time with God.
- **What does this verse tell us about where we worship God?**
- **Do you need to always be in a special place to spend time with God?**
 - **PRETEEN HACK:** *Ask a follow-up question: How can it help to set aside a special place to spend time with God?*

NOW WHAT? What does God want us to do about it?

ACTIVITY | Wilderness Art

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Give each kid a sheet of sandpaper and a few crayons. Ask them to write, "I can spend time with God anywhere." across the top of the page. Tell them to pick one dark color to draw a wandering path around the page, as though they were wandering in the desert. Ask them to color the spaces around the wandering path with bright colors to show how God was with the Israelites all along.*
 - **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** *For kids with fine motor challenges, provide markers or chunky crayons that are easier to grip as drawing utensils. For kids with learning disabilities such as dyslexia and dysgraphia, write out the phrase "I can spend time with God" on a poster, whiteboard, or a similar large format so they can see how the words are spelled. Encourage them to copy the phrase as best as they can.*

REFLECTION | Wherever I Am

- We know we can spend time with God wherever we are. We can carry something around with us like the Israelites did or we can use whatever we have with us to help us remember God.
- Hmm...what do we have here that we can use to spend time with God? Ah! Here are the cards we used to build the "house" earlier. We can use these as a reminder that God is always with us and we can talk to God anytime we want.



- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Help each child choose four cards (one of each suit) from the deck of cards used earlier.
 - **PRETEEN HACK:** Have an older kid share a story about how they spend time with God. Maybe they pray and talk to God, or they like to listen to music that celebrates God.

PRAYER | Prayer Cards

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Ask the kids to draw each card from their stack and pray according to the instructions below. Encourage them to use the cards to guide them in prayer whenever they want to spend time with God.
 - **Hearts:** Pray for someone you love.
 - **Diamonds:** Tell God how thankful you are for something special in your life.
 - **Spades:** Ask God for strength to do something you need to do.
 - **Clubs:** Tell God how sorry you are for something you've done that you shouldn't have.

MEMORY VERSE | Hidden in Sand

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Ahead of time, lay [plastic tablecloths](#) on the floor and prepare shallow dishes (inexpensive [foil pans](#) work great for this!) filled with [sand](#). Write the memory verse on index cards (or use thematic cards like [these!](#)) with one word on each card. Let each kid find a card, then work together to put the words in order to make the memory verse complete.

SMALL GROUP TIME

DISCUSSION

- Where were the Israelites when they built the tabernacle?
- What were some of the materials they used to build the tabernacle?
- Why did they build the tabernacle?
- Re-read James 4:8a. What can you do to come near to God?
- Where do you go to spend time with God?
- What are some things you can do to help you spend time with God?
- What do you do when you are spending time with God?

ACTIVITY | Super Web

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give each kid a paper plate, and have them cut tiny slits all around the edge of the plate with a scissor ([here's](#) how it might look when they're done!). With a long piece of yarn, have kids wrap the yarn around the plate to make their own spider web (for continuity with the lesson, use blue, purple, and red yarn.)
- Spider-Man builds webs constantly to trap his enemies and also to go from place to place very quickly. . . it's very important for him to build webs to do his job! We don't have to make anything like that, but we always need to make time for God!



- How will you spend time with God in the coming week?

MEMORY VERSE | 1 Samuel 12:24 (NIV)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Introduce kids to this month's memory verse, teaching them the signs (a combination of SEE and ASL) we've provided.*