

LEAD SHEET

EXODUS: AFTER THE SEA WAS PARTED - WK 12
THE PRESENCE OF GOD WITH HIS PEOPLE
SEPTEMBER 25, 2016

THIS MONTH'S FAITH SKILL:

SHARE YOUR GRACE STORY

If you want to know God better, tell other people about Him!

GETTING STARTED

General Discussion:

- Have you ever built something, for example a fort, tree house, or sandcastle? *(Allow students to share.)*
- After you built this, did you have specific rules for who could go into your new creation or play with it? If so, what were they? *(Allow students to share.)*

Last week, we discussed the specific instructions that God gave Moses regarding building the Tabernacle. A lot of effort and thought went into this process and the different areas to be included in the Tabernacle. Finally, it was completed; there were no more instructions to follow to build it. Nevertheless, there were still instructions regarding how it would be used. God gave specific instructions about how the Tabernacle would function.

General Discussion:

- When you were younger, were there places you were not allowed to go in your house or in your neighborhood? If so, what were those places? *(Parents' bedroom, etc.)*
- What was it about these places that stopped you from entering them? *(Let students share.)*

As we think about the Tabernacle, there are certain times and areas in which even Moses had restrictions on entering into it. The Tabernacle had specific rules as to when someone could enter, and even when a person was allowed, they could only enter so far. There was one who was always allowed and made His presence known, and that is God. We are going to look into this idea more as we wrap up the Exodus series.

DIGGING IN

Read Exodus 40:34-35

Discussion Questions:

1. What filled the Tabernacle and in what form? (*The glory of the Lord in the form of a cloud.*)
2. Who was not allowed to enter the Tabernacle? Why? (*Moses. The cloud was on it, symbolizing the presence of God in the Tabernacle.*)

Once the Tabernacle was completed God's presence filled it in the form of a cloud covering the area; however, Moses was not allowed to enter. This wasn't because Moses had done anything wrong, it was because God was exhibiting His holiness in this dwelling place. Eventually, Moses will be allowed to enter but only with God's permission.

Read Exodus 40:36-37

Discussion Questions

1. Which people group is discussed in verse 36? (*The people of Israel.*)
2. When will the people continue traveling? (*When the cloud rises from the Tabernacle.*)
3. When do the people remain where they are? (*When the cloud hovers on the Tabernacle.*)
4. What factor decides whether the people stay in camp or leave the camp? (*God. If He tells them to leave or not based on whether or not the cloud is lifted from the Tabernacle.*)

The people of Israel are on a journey to Canaan—the Promised Land—but it is important to remember that they are following God’s guidance on this journey. When God moves (lifts the cloud from the Tabernacle) the people will move, when He stays (the cloud remains over the Tabernacle) the people will stay. This is an example of the people of Israel putting their trust in God’s guidance to get them to the Promise Land.

Read Exodus 40:38

Discussion Questions:

1. What is with the people during the day?
(The cloud of the Lord.)
2. When is the fire present? *(During the night.)*
3. What is the Tabernacle’s symbolism for these traveling people? *(The presence and guidance of God.)*

While it came in a different form, God’s presence was with the people of Israel both day and night in the Tabernacle. This guiding presence helped them travel to the Promised Land by not only directing them but also by telling them when they should or should not travel. The people put their trust in God and allowed Him to guide them, and His presence never left.

MAKING IT REAL

This passage is short, but it is a way to wrap up the book of Exodus. It allows us to see the importance of the Tabernacle as it symbolized God’s continual presence with His people as they traveled.

General Discussion:

- Think back to all of our studies of Exodus, how has God been with the people of Israel? *(In captivity He heard them, He rescued them, the Red Sea, the law, etc.)*

- What is your favorite example? Why?
(Allow students to share.)

The great news for us is that we don't have to carry around a Tabernacle built with specific guidelines in place in order to experience God's presence and nearness. We have His Spirit!

Read John 14:26

Discussion Questions:

1. If you lived during Exodus, what would have taken the place of the advocate, the Holy Spirit? *(The Tabernacle represents God's presence with His people.)*
2. What does it mean to you that you don't have to carry around a Tabernacle to know God is present?
(Among other advantages, it's less exhausting!)
3. What does this say about God's character, both then and now? (He is faithful, He doesn't change, He wants to have a relationship with us.)

We have seen God's character throughout the book of Exodus in the examples where He continued to be with His people, and He continues to be with us today. We never have to question this because we have the reminder in John that God sent His Spirit to be with us as an advocate, always.

General Discussion:

- Have you experienced a time when you needed God's presence with you? *(Allow students to share.)*
- In your opinion, what is the best part about the Holy Spirit's promise in John? *(Allow students to share.)*

Exodus has clearly shown us that God is present with His people throughout their journey from exile. As we studied, we realized that it is His character to be with His people, even to the point of sending the Holy Spirit to be with us today. When it may feel like you are in exile and absent from God, never question if He is there because God is always present with His people.

CLOSING PRAYER

Pray that your students will experience the presence of God in their lives just as the Israelites did with the Tabernacle.