

Aim of lesson

To appreciate the way to approach and worship God by considering the visual aid provided by the tabernacle and its service.

Bible background

Hebrews 9 & 10; Exodus 25; 30; 38 & 40; Leviticus 16.

Outline of lesson

What does it mean to worship God?

Ask the class what they think worship is. How should you set about it? Has God given us any guidelines? Lead the discussion to the fact that God gave the Israelites in the wilderness instructions on how to worship him, and that we can learn principles from this to apply to our own approach and worship of God.

Let the class answer the first question in the workbook, and discuss the answers they have given.

The Tabernacle

Introduce the plan of the tabernacle (note that this is not to scale), explaining that the outer court was not covered, and that the Tabernacle or tent of meeting, which was covered, consisted of the holy place and the most holy place. Allow the class to complete that section of the workbook. In discussing the lessons that emerge from this section, you may like to bring out some of the following points:

- The sacrificial altar – Forgiveness of sins through sacrifice.
- The laver – The need to be washed before going into God's presence.
- The table of shewbread – God always makes a provision for our needs.
- The lampstand – There is light in God's presence. Light lets you see the way to go, it shows up faults, it is necessary for growth.
- Altar of incense – On the day of atonement the high priest took a censer filled with incense from the altar into the most holy place. Revelation 5:8 suggests that incense represents prayer. Through prayer we can be brought into the presence of God himself.
- The veil – The veil curtained off the most holy place because the way in had not yet been shown (Hebrews 9:8). Now we can enter through the new living way of Christ (Hebrews 10:19,21) where the veil represents the body, or flesh, of Christ. Note also Matthew 27:51 where the veil is described as having been torn in two.
- The ark – This contained the law. When in the company of God's thoughts expressed in his word, we are in the presence of God himself. The mercy seat above the ark of the covenant represented the throne of the invisible God. Mercy is always central to our meeting with God. We never enter his presence by our own right. The main objective is to encourage the class to think of their own approach to, and worship of, God and to help that grow and develop.

Digging deeper

The Pentateuch

The section explains the content of the first five books of the Bible and suggests starting to learn the names in order, and at the same time gaining a picture of what each book is about. Many children, of course, will know this already, but some will not.

The answers in the 'Genesis' section are:

- The world
- Mankind
- A new start
- Nations
- Languages
- Israel

Relevance to our lives

You may find it helpful to get the class to write a prayer together about putting God at the centre of their lives, coming near to him and living in his presence. This could be used by the superintendent to close the school.

Prayer

Dear Lord, thank you that you are always present. Help us to draw near to you in our thoughts and actions, and to put you at the centre of our lives.

Other suggestions for activities

- A simple card model of the Tabernacle could be made by the class, but this would probably require more than one week, unless prepared almost entirely beforehand.
- A mature class may like to summarise the contents of Hebrews 9:1-14.