A Family Celebration: The Feast of Tabernacles



Welcome to the table!

Hi Grown Ups!

We are so thankful you desire to engage your family in observing Sukkot (The Feast of Tabernacles), and we are praying that you all experience a truly meaningful High Holiday season together.

Our desire at The Sabbath Table is to empower you with this guide for rich, approachable discipleship conversations and experiences with your kids around Sukkot.

This guide is meant to provide you not with another "should," but instead with some freedom and clarity for how to focus in around the table with your child/children in a fun way that enriches their understanding of God through this holy day.

This guide includes opportunities for you all to **engage**, **enjoy**, and **encounter** the love of God in this Holy Day.

- **Engage**: A brief telling of what Sukkot is, time in Scripture, and formative questions to encourage meaningful family conversations about God's provision and presence with His people.
- **Enjoy**: An easy (and tasty!) way to build your own sukkah with your kids.
- **Encounter**: A fun and meaningful family activity focused on caring for the nations.

This requires minimal preparation and would be great to do any evening of this week long feast. Enjoy!

Engage:

- Psalm 46
  - God With Us

Enjoy:

- *Build-Your-Own Graham Cracker Sukkah*

Encounter:

- Prayer for the Nations activity

Engage:
The Feast of Tabernacles



Share with your children:

After the Israelites, God's chosen people, were rescued from slavery in Egypt by God, they went on a journey through the wilderness. In the wilderness, God kept His people safe and provided them with everything they needed... food, water, shelter, and - most importantly - **His presence**.

He lived right in the middle with them in His Tabernacle. With a lot of love and patience, He led them on a journey toward His good promises and plans for them - even when they did wrong or made mistakes.

Because God wanted His people to remember how He loves to be with them, God commanded (Leviticus 23:33–44) that they have a yearly celebration called *Sukkot* - or the Feast of Tabernacles. They were told to build a sukkah (a shelter like a booth), to gather fruit and branches, and to worship Him all together.

Sukkot also reveals to us how God, through Jesus, has come and will come again to **dwell** with His people forever! When Jesus came to earth as a baby, the prophet Isaiah (a man of God who lived about 700-800 years before Jesus' birth) shared that the Savior would be called *Emmanuel* - or "**God With Us.**" In the book of Matthew, we see how Joseph is instructed by the angel to name Jesus to reflect that He is the one Isaiah was talking about... **He is the God who is with us**! Later, John writes in the book of Revelation that Jesus will come back again to be with us forever and ever (Rev. 21:3,22).

Sukkot is a time for us to remember how He has taken care of His people and how He has been with them, and it is also a time to rejoice as we look forward to the time when He will make all the wrongs things right and dwell among us forever!

Read Psalm 46 as a family.

Formation Questions: *(after reading Psalm 46, ask:)*

- What do you think it means for God to be our "refuge"?
- What do you think God does when we are scared?
- What can you tell God when you are scared? Why do you think the writer says we don't have to fear even when scary things happen?
- What could it look like to live faithfully even when we *are* afraid?
- What lasts longer: our circumstances or God's faithfulness? How do we know?
- What difference does it make to know God is with us, not just watching us?
- What do you think it means that God is "with us"?
- When have you noticed God being with our family?
- Where in your life right now do you especially need to remember, "The LORD is with me"?
- What is one thing God has done for our family that you want to remember?
- Why is remembering what God has done in the past important when we're uncertain about the future?
- What do you think it will be like when God makes everything right?

Enjoy:
Build-Your-Own Graham Cracker Sukkah

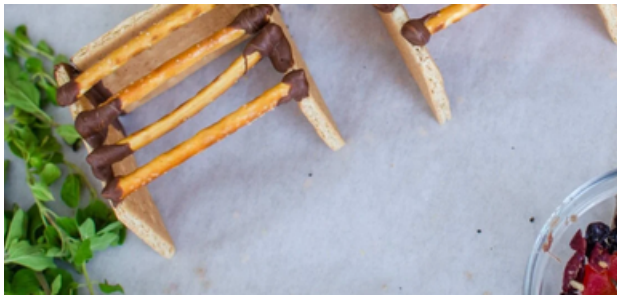
The Feast of Tabernacles has many rituals, but the primary one commanded in Scripture is to dwell in a sukkah to remember God's provision and presence in the wilderness. Today, a sukkah is commonly built to allow view of the stars with decorations of branches and greenery representative of the harvest.

You may not be able to build a sukkah in your backyard or on your porch, but these easy, build-your-own graham cracker sukkahs will not only be fun to build... they'll also be a lovely decoration to remind you about God's love for His people! Or it's ok to eat them, too. 🙂

Use this time of building and decorating to talk with one another about how you have seen God be present with your family and how He has been your provider in this past year.

> The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.
>
> -Psalm 46:11

- Supplies Needed:
  - Cookie sheets with parchment or wax paper on them to contain any mess
  - Graham Crackers
  - Candy melts or melted chocolate
  - Pretzel Sticks (the thin kind)
  - Cookie Icing (pre-packaged/store bought works great)
  - Dried fruit or sprinkles
  - Mint sprigs or any leafy herb



Instructions:

- Begin by building the three walls of your sukkah by dipping the edges of your graham crackers in melted chocolate and holding them together until firm.
- Dip the ends of a pretzel stick in melted chocolate and place on the top of your sukkah structure to begin to form the roof. Repeat about 3-4 times.
- When your sukkah is dry, it's time to decorate! Use the melted chocolate to attach pieces of dried fruit or sprinkles, and add the green herbs to the roof.
- That's it! Use everyone's sukkahs to decorate your dining table for the 7 days of the Feast!

Encounter:
Prayer for the Nations Activity

Introduction:

As we consider what Sukkot ultimately points to - the future ingathering of all the nations to worship Him and dwell with Him forever - it is a beautiful time to appreciate our diverse world and pray for all nations and tribes to turn to Him.

As you begin to unpack the idea of praying for the nations with your children, here are a few things you can discuss:

- **Prayer is powerful.** 1 John 5:14-15 reminds us that we can be confident God hears us. Jesus reminded His followers that the things we ask in His name, He will accomplish them (John 14:13-14) for the glory of God.
- **All people are loved by God.** John 3:16, spoken by Jesus, reminds us that God loves the WHOLE world so much that He gave His only Son to pay the price of sin forever. The covering of Jesus is how we can dwell with God forever! We need to pray for the nations to believe in Him.
- **Israel is still beloved by God.** Psalm 122: 6 reminds us to pray for the peace of Jerusalem... and we know that ultimate peace is in Messiah, Jesus. As the big family of God, we need to pray for the Lord to bring peace to His people, Israel, and for them to put their trust in the Messiah.

> Even those I will bring to My holy mountain,
> And make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be acceptable on My altar; For **My house will be called a house of prayer for all the peoples.**
>
> Isaiah 56:7 NASB

Activity

Invite your family to **select a country/nation they do not know much about to pray for.**



Give each member an opportunity **look up the answers to the following questions** (pair up with younger children):

- *What language does the country speak?*
- *Where is it located on the globe?*
- *How many people live in the country?*
- *What is the primary religion of the country? How many people are unreached with the good news of Jesus?*
- *Do they have the Bible in their language?*
- *What is it like to live there?*
  - *Do they have affordable access to education, water, food, housing?*
- *Are there any important historical events that are still impacting the poeple today? (wars, shifts in leadership, etc)*

Invite younger kids to color an example of the country's flag. Show them pictures of people who live there. Then, **invite everyone to pray specifically for a different need of this country**. *We also encourage having someone pray at the end for Israel and the Jewish people to recognize who their Messiah is.* Consider concluding by reading Isaiah 56:7 and thanking God for His heart for the nations.