

Modesty Amid Plenty

Storyteller: *set the green underlay in front of you, but leave it rolled up.* When God's people journeyed through the desert, they

Deuteronomy 8:7-18

The LORD your God is bringing you into a good land with streams that flow from springs in the valleys and hills. You can dig for copper in those hills, and the stones are made of iron ore. And you won't go hungry. Wheat and barley fields are everywhere, and so are vineyards and orchards full of fig, pomegranate, and olive trees, and there is plenty of honey.

After you eat and are full, give praise to the LORD your God for the good land he gave you. Make sure that you never forget the LORD or disobey his laws and teachings that I am giving you today. If you always obey them, you will have plenty to eat, and you will build good houses to live in. You will get more and more cattle, sheep, silver, gold, and other possessions.

14 But when all this happens, don't be proud! Don't forget that you were once slaves in Egypt and that it was the LORD who set you free. 15 Remember how he led you in that huge and frightening desert where poisonous snakes and scorpions live. There was no water, but the LORD split open a rock, and water poured out so you could drink. 16 He also gave you manna, [b] a kind of food your ancestors had never even heard about. The LORD was testing you to make you trust him, so that later on he could be good to you.

17 When you become successful, don't say, "I'm rich, and I've earned it all myself." 18 Instead, remember that the LORD your God gives you the strength to make a living. That's how he keeps the promise he made to your ancestors.

had very few good things. They had food to eat, but only as much as they needed. They had water to drink, but no extra water. They had to carry all their belongings with them, so they could not own much. But they had one great treasure: God!

And God was leading them to their promised land. *Unroll the green underlay slowly as you go on.* The land that God led them to was very different from the desert. It had green pastures and streams of water. There were hills rich in natural resources where they could mine for copper and iron. *Finish unrolling the underlay and lay the pennies out in a row close to you.* The land was good for farming, so they could grow grain and fruit.

Put the wheat and the apple on the underlay beside the pennies. And they still had their greatest treasure, God!

When God's people were journeying in the desert, God went with them as a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, and they carried God's Law with them inside a special carrying box, the Ark. *Put the Ark in the middle of the green underlay below the wheat, fruit and pennies.* When God's people came into the promised land, they brought the Ark and the Law with them.

When God's people were journeying in the desert, they had no houses to live in, only tents. They loved God so much they made a special tent for God, too. Of course, God cannot be made to fit inside a tent, but the Ark of the Law was the symbol that God was with them, and they

Story Materials

- Green underlay
- grain
- fruit
- pennies & nails
- tabernacle model
 - frame
 - blue hangings
 - grey covering
 - red roof
 - leather carpets
 - veil on pillars
- furnishings
 - ark
 - incense altar
 - presence table
 - menorah
 - laver
 - altar

Tray, basket or shallow open box to hold the story

put it inside God's tent. When God's people came into the promised land, they brought God's tent with them. Here is what it was like:

It had wooden frames in a rectangle -- *set the tent-frame on the green underlay*. It had walls of blue linen -- *lay the blue linen over the tent frame* – and coverings of wool -- *lay the woolen covering over the blue linen* – and of goat-skins -- *lay the two pieces of leather on the floor* – with leather dyed red on top – *lay the red leather roof on top of the grey wool*.

Inside the tent was an extra tent wall to make a separate room just for the Ark – *fold up the sides of the tent over the roof, so that the children can see inside and you can reach inside. Hang the Veil, and place the ark into the smaller of the two rooms created that way*. This space was called the Holy of Holies.

Put the incense altar just the other side of the veil from the Ark. It had an incense altar near the Ark where burning incense would make a cloud of sweet-smelling smoke. The sweet smoke reminded them of the Ark's holiness.

Put the table of shewbread a couple of inches further on to the side of the incense altar. It had a table with twelve loaves of bread on it, one for each of the twelve tribes of Israel. The bread reminded them of the heavenly bread – manna -- that God gave the tribes in the wilderness.

Put the menorah across from the table...across from the table it had a candle-holder for seven candles, called a menorah, as a reminder of the seven days of creation. *Fold down the tent wall on your side of the tent, but leave the children's side up so they can see inside*.

Put the altar and the laver outside the tent at the end opposite the Ark. Outside of the tent was a bronze-covered altar for sacrifices, and a bronze basin where the priests could wash to

get ready for prayer. *Draw with your hand a line all around the Tent and its precincts*. Around it all they put up a cloth fence to show that the whole space – the Tabernacle -- was holy.

When God's people entered the promised land, they built themselves good houses to live in, instead of tents. But the Ark remained in a tent. God's people began to have silver and gold and many possessions to be thankful for. But God's tent was a reminder that their relationship with God was the one thing that truly mattered. *Carefully put the assembled Tabernacle onto the tray, and return the furnishings to their basket, on the tray. Fold the underlay and lay it over the basket*.