

Harvest in Hard Places Leader's Guide

Four missions experiences on sharing Jesus in hard places

Location: North Africa and the Middle East (country of Morocco)

Focus verse: John 4:35 “Don’t you say, ‘There are still four more months, then comes the harvest’? Listen to what I’m telling you: Open your eyes and look at the fields, for they are ready for harvest.”

Overall message: Have you ever seen a blade of grass grow between two boulders and wondered how it could grow there? God makes everything grow – even in hard places. Barriers to the Gospel make North Africa and the Middle East (NAME) a hard part of the world for sharing Jesus, but God is making people ready to hear the Good News. There is a harvest in hard places! People are waiting to hear about Jesus. *Note to leaders:* Because this area of the world can be dangerous to believers, we cannot name Christian workers. While we will focus on specific countries for learning purposes, we will use these experiences to help children understand all NAME people groups and God’s plan for them to know Him.

Before you begin: This resource is a collection of experiences to plug your kids into global missions. We hope you will take the ideas included here and expand your children’s view of missions and their role in God’s kingdom.

<p>This leader’s guide includes plans for four, short missions experiences that can be added to your existing programs or events:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Cultural experience  Prayer experience  Giving experience  Serving experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each of these missions experiences is designed to last 10 to 15 minutes. • Use these as an addition to a weekly meeting or combine for a longer missions focus. • Customize these resources to fit your needs. • [Note: If you are using the DVD-ROM, all videos and handouts are included. Please follow the directions on the cover to access all files.]
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Here is a simple glossary that may be useful to you as you communicate these ideas to children:

Mission(s)—A job God gives a person He has chosen to tell another group of people the Good News about Jesus. The person God sends is called a missionary.

Missionary—A Christian chosen by God who obeys His command to go and tell another group of people the Good News about Jesus. (Preschool version) A Christian chosen by God who obeys and goes to tell another group of people about Jesus.

People group—A group of people who share the same language and way of life.

IMB (International Mission Board)—A group created by Southern Baptist churches in one sacred effort to share Jesus with people around the world who wouldn’t otherwise have the opportunity to know and follow Him.

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Harvest in Hard Places Cultural Experience

Prepare

- From the DVD-ROM or kidsonmission.org, prepare to show the **A farmer speaks** video.
- Download and print the **NAME map (Morocco)**, **Harvest in Hard Places focus verse** and the **Olive tree photo**. Tape the photo to a wall where children can easily gather around it.
- Provide a sampling of olives or slices of bread and olive oil for dipping. *Remember to check with parents about food allergies.

Introduction

Invite children to gather around the **Olive tree photo**. Share that God made olive trees very strong. They can live for hundreds of years. The oldest trees are thought to be 2,000 years old. An olive tree can survive without a lot of water and is even fire-resistant. It can grow in places you may not think plants could grow, and it produces a harvest of 20 to 100 pounds of olives!

A farmer speaks

- Ask children to watch as an olive farmer living in North Africa and the Middle East (NAME) explains the process of harvesting olives.
- Show the **A farmer speaks** video.

The Truth about Jesus

- Show the **Harvest in Hard Places focus verse** and ask kids to read along or repeat after you.
- Explain that Jesus is comparing people to the harvest. He is saying that people – even people living in hard places – are ready to hear about Jesus if believers are willing to go and tell them. That’s why Christian workers go to places where travel is difficult and living conditions are harsh. They also go to places where followers of Jesus can be treated badly.
- Share that Morocco is a country in Northern Africa where the Gospel is not always welcome.
- Point out the country of Morocco on the **NAME map (Morocco)** and share that most Moroccan people are Muslim and don’t believe Jesus is God’s Son. They need to hear the truth about Jesus.

Taste test

- Share that the country of Morocco is one of the top 10 producers of olive oil in the world.
- Invite children to taste a sampling of olives or dip bread into the olive oil provided as you close in prayer.



Harvest in Hard Places Cultural Experience

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Pray

Ask God to help Christians who are going to the harvest in hard places. Pray that people in Morocco will hear the truth about Jesus.



Harvest in Hard Places Prayer Experience

Prepare

- From the DVD-ROM or kidsonmission.org, download the **Moroccan music** audio file and print the **Mint tea photo** and **Prayer tea** document. Prior to this experience, cut out the tea leaves with prayer requests and place them in a teapot or large teacup.

Recap

Morocco is a country in Northern Africa where followers of Jesus can be treated badly. Many Moroccans are Muslim. They don't believe Jesus is the Son of God. Still, God is preparing many people in this country to hear the truth if believers will go and tell them. Morocco may seem like a difficult place for the Gospel to spread, but we can trust there is a harvest in this hard place.

Prayer tea

- Share that Morocco is not only a big grower and harvester of olives, but the country is also known for its tea.
- Hold up the **Mint tea photo** and explain that most Moroccans like to drink their tea with mint and sugar. Mint tea is the tea of hospitality and is often served to guests in homes and cafés.
- Invite children to pretend they are in a Moroccan café.
- Play the **Moroccan music** audio file to set the scene.
- You can explain that the music you are listening to is traditional Moroccan music. You can explain that the *oud* [ood] is a pear-shaped, stringed instrument that is commonly used in Moroccan music like what you are hearing.
- Ask children to join you in praying for Morocco.
- Choose one volunteer to pick a tea leaf prayer request out of the teapot or teacup.
- Ask the volunteer to read and pray for the request chosen or pray together as a group.



Harvest in Hard Places Giving Experience

Prepare

- Download and print the **Harvest in Hard Places focus verse** if you haven't already and the **Meal plan** document. Cut out the photos included in this document and tape them to a wall for children to see.

Recap

Morocco is a country in Northern Africa where followers of Jesus can be treated badly. Many Moroccans are Muslim. They don't believe Jesus is the Son of God. Still, God is preparing many people in this country to hear the truth if believers will go and tell them. Morocco may seem like a difficult place for the Gospel to spread, but we can trust there is a harvest in this hard place.

Farmer knows best

- Remind children about the olive farmer in the **A farmer speaks** video. (Take time to show the video if you haven't already.)
- Share that the farmer in the video has been harvesting olives for many years. His experience helps him know the best way to harvest the olives. They will handpick table olives to keep them from damage and use sticks to shake olives for oil out of the trees.
- Read the **Harvest in Hard Places focus verse** aloud.
- Remind kids that Jesus is comparing people waiting and ready to hear the Gospel to the harvest.
- Explain that just like the olive farmer learns all he can about olives and the best ways to harvest them, Christian workers learn all they can about the people living around them and the best ways to share about Jesus.
- Share that Christian workers Nik and Ruth Ripken* have lived and served in some of the hardest Muslim areas of Northern Africa. They know people who have been hurt and even killed for following Jesus. The Ripkens understand that not knowing Jesus is far worse than dying for Him, so they learned the best ways to tell them about Jesus. Sharing a meal with nonbelievers is one way.
- Remind children that hospitality is important to many Moroccans, and the same is true for most living in Northern Africa.
- Explain that Christians have seen how God uses friendships to open doors to share the Gospel in hard places.

*Names changed



Harvest in Hard Places Giving Experience

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Meal plan

- Just \$20 gives most missionaries the money they need to take nonbelievers out to eat or provide a meal for them in their home.
- Sharing a meal often leads to opportunities to share the truth about Jesus.
- Direct kids to the **Meal plan** cutouts on the wall.
- As a group, discover how many meals you could provide for a missionary to share with nonbelievers.
- Consider asking kids not to spend money on one of their favorite food purchases and to give that money to your church's international missions offering instead.
- You can find ways to give directly to missionaries at **imb.org**.

Pray

Ask God to help Christians working in hard places learn the best ways to share Him with others.



Harvest in Hard Places Serving Experience

Prepare

- From the DVD-ROM or kidsonmission.org, prepare to show the **Voices from the Harvest** video.
- Download and print the **My voice** worksheet for each child.

Recap

Morocco is a country in Northern Africa where followers of Jesus can be treated badly. Many Moroccans are Muslim. They don't believe Jesus is the Son of God. Still, God is preparing many people in this country to hear the truth if believers will go and tell them. Morocco may seem like a difficult place for the Gospel to spread, but we can trust there is a harvest in this hard place.

Voices from the harvest

- Show the video, **Voices from the Harvest** to hear stories of people becoming followers of Jesus in Northern Africa and the Middle East (NAME).
- After the video, ask kids to list some of the ways people in NAME are hearing about Jesus. (camps, Facebook, friendships...)

Add your voice

- Tell your group that most Moroccans are Muslim and do not believe Jesus is God's Son. Sometimes, followers of Jesus are not treated well but we know God loves everyone in Morocco and wants them to hear about His Son.
- Share that one really cool way Moroccans and other Northern Africans can hear about Jesus is with our voice. God is bringing them to our neighborhoods and communities!
- Ask children to raise their hands if they have any Muslim friends or know of any living near them.
- Explain that most of our Muslim friends and neighbors will be open to talking about Jesus. Even though Muslims don't believe He is God's Son they respect Jesus. Many believe He was a good man and teacher, but they don't know the Good News that He died for our sins and now lives!
- Encourage your group to love their Muslim friends and neighbors by using their voice to tell the truth about Jesus and sharing what He has done in their lives.
- Give each child a copy of the **My voice** worksheet and work through each section together. Once the sheet is filled out, children will have a copy of their personal testimony to share. (Be sensitive to children who have not yet accepted



Harvest in Hard Places Serving Experience

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Christ. Invite these kids to work alongside others who have, and offer an opportunity for them to talk with you more about the decision to follow Jesus.)

- If time allows after the worksheets have been completed, ask kids to share their story with the group.
- Encourage the group to share their stories about Jesus with their Muslim friends and neighbors. Tell them to look for opportunities to share with everyone, everywhere.

Pray

Pray for Jesus to give your group boldness to share Him with everyone, everywhere. Ask that Muslims in NAME and at home will hear about Jesus and choose to follow Him.



Harvest in Hard Places Going Further

More ideas using this theme

- Download and print the **Harvest in Hard Places parent letter**. Give to parents so they can continue talking about this theme as a family.
- Help your group learn to share the Gospel with Muslims by watching the **Prophet's Story** video at theprophetsstory.com. This video was specifically created for a Muslim viewer and offers another opportunity for your children to review the Gospel message to share with their Muslim friends and neighbors.
- For more on IMB's work in all of North Africa and the Middle East, go to namepeoples.imb.org.
- Don't forget to visit kidsonmission.org for more activities and KOM experiences you might have missed. Also, like us on Facebook and see how other churches are using KOM.
- Download and print the **Breaking Barriers newsletter**. This includes activities on all three missions packages in this release. Use it as an introduction to the 12 Breaking Barriers experiences or as a review. Make enough copies for each child to have one to take home.