



Solomon Builds God's Temple

7

Key Theme

- God is worthy of our praise.

Key Passages

- 2 Samuel 7:12–13; 1 Chronicles 28:9–19; 1 Kings 6:1–14, 8:1–13, 8:54–61

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Compare the Tabernacle and the Temple.
- Explain the importance of God's Temple to Israel.



Lesson Overview



Come On In

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Write on the board, "Where is the Temple today?"

Students will place bookmarks at 2 Samuel 7, 1 Chronicles 28, and 1 Kings 6 and 8.

Students will practice the memory verse by unscrambling the words on the activity sheet and then reciting the verse to each other or to the class.



Studying God's Word

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Solomon built the Temple according to God's design, which was handed down to him from David. Upon completion, the Lord descended, and His glory filled the Temple. He was pleased to dwell there among His people.

- Study the Prepare to Share section.
- Print one Temple Image from the Resource DVD-ROM for your use.
- Go Before the Throne.
- Print one Ark of the Covenant Image from the Resource DVD-ROM for your use during class.



Activity: The Temple Today

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You will lead students through several passages of Scripture to examine the idea of the Temple and worship in the New Covenant.

- Print and cut apart the Scripture Strips from the Resource DVD-ROM.
- Student Guides
- Pencils



Prepare to Share

SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the lesson key passages along with this background.

You might be able to imagine how David felt. He was living in an opulent palace as king while God's presence was in a tent that was moved from place to place (2 Samuel 7:1–7). He wanted to honor God by building a Temple where God could be worshiped. God had other plans—David's son Solomon was to build the Temple (2 Samuel 7:12–13). David had shed too much blood in too many wars. Because of this, God did not want him to build His Temple (1 Chronicles 22:7–8). However, David did have a part in the building of the Temple. He collected the wealth in gold, silver, bronze, and timber needed to build the Temple (1 Chronicles 28:14–18). God gave David the understanding and instructions in writing on how to build the Temple, and David passed the plans on to Solomon (1 Chronicles 28:11–19).

Like the plans for the Tabernacle God gave to Moses, the instructions that David received from God described in amazing detail every pattern and design to be included in the construction of the Temple and its fixtures. Take a few minutes, right now, to read through 1 Kings 6 and 7:13–51. Imagine yourself walking through this majestic building and examining all of the ornate details described. How would you feel standing in a place that was designed by God for His own worship?

The Tabernacle was temporary and portable. It was used for worship by the Israelites while they were wandering in the desert and for another 440 years after that. The Temple, however, was a permanent structure built atop a mountain (1 Kings 6). All of the details of the Temple, from the towering pillars in the front to the large cherubim standing in the inner sanctuary, pointed to a God who was majestic and worthy of praise. Stone

walls replaced the fabrics and skins that composed the Tabernacle, and the interior was paneled with the finest cedar and sculpted with exquisite reminders of God's providence. Rather than one table and lampstand, the Temple had ten of each made of solid gold (1 Kings 7:48–49; 2 Chronicles 4:8). The altar of incense, also made of solid gold, stood outside the doors to the Most Holy Place. The Temple was a constant reminder that God's holiness and majesty demanded a very specific pattern of worship.

Imagine the splendor of the massive rooms, their walls completely covered with gold, carvings, chains, pomegranates, and palms. The light from the ten lampstands would have danced around the room in brilliant splendor. But that was not so in the Most Holy Place—the only light there would have come from the presence of God dwelling above the Ark of the Covenant.

When the Temple was finally dedicated, the Ark of the Covenant was put in place in the shadow of the wings of the cherubim, containing only the two tablets of the law given to Moses (1 Kings 8:6–9). After the priests had placed the Ark, God's presence was seen as the cloud of His glory filled not only the space above the mercy seat but also the entire Temple (1 Kings 8:10–11). God was pleased to dwell among His people in this Temple.

For now this would be the center of worship for the Jews. Here, they would celebrate the feasts, offer their gifts and sacrifices to God, fulfill the national sacrifice on Yom Kippur (The Day of Atonement), and worship God with songs of praise and thanksgiving. Sadly, all of this came to an end 420 years later when God sent Nebuchadnezzar's army to sack Jerusalem in 588 BC because of Israel's sin. The Babylonians leveled the Temple, taking its great wealth as a trophy back to Babylon (2 Chronicles 36:17–19).

So, despite all of the pageantry and majesty of this first Temple, it would not last forever. In fact, a second Temple would be built to worship God in

Jerusalem—the Temple that existed during Jesus's ministry and that was destroyed in AD 70. But God does not demand ornate temple worship today. Jesus made this point clear when He spoke to the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well. He told her plainly that the place of worship would no longer be in Jerusalem, but true worshippers—those who worship God through His Son, the Savior Jesus Christ—would worship in spirit and in truth (John 4:20–24). In fact, the New Testament teaches that we—the church, Christ's body—are the temple of God (1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:19; Ephesians 2:19–22).

So, rather than trekking to Jerusalem, Christians are privileged and invited to approach God's throne of grace with great boldness (Hebrews 4:14–16). Because of Jesus's death on the Cross and His Resurrection from the dead, all believers may offer prayers directly to God and receive the grace and mercy He promises. What a glorious truth to share with the whole world!

HISTORICAL/APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

Four hundred eighty years after the Israelites left Egypt (1 Kings 6:1), Solomon began building the Temple. The foundation was put in place in the fourth year of his kingship and the work was completed seven years later (1 Kings 6:37–38). The Temple was constructed of the finest stone. Lumber was imported from around the region, and the finest craftsmen were employed in the work. Nothing less would be worthy of use in the Temple of the Most High God.

Many critics of the Bible suggest that there is no way that Solomon could have amassed so much wealth. Just the amount of gold needed to plate all of the walls and ceilings of the Temple is staggering, and that is not to mention the tables and lampstands. The amount of bronze for the pillars, tools, and other furnishings was so

vast that its weight was not even recorded (1 Kings 7:47). Skeptics reject the Bible as a source of truth and as a revelation from God, so they naturally discount things they think are absurd. But that is just the point—it is just their opinion. They have no evidence to support their claims apart from their own conjecture.

But those of us who believe the Bible is God's infallible Word can simply turn there and read that God gave Solomon both riches and honor that exceeded any other king (1 Kings 3:13). In addition to that, when we consider the friendship between David and Hiram of Tyre (2 Samuel 5:11; 1 Kings 5:1), the treasures that David intentionally stored up during his reign (1 Kings 7:51), and the opulent gifts given to Solomon by the Queen of Sheba (1 Kings 10:10–12), we see that there was enough wealth at Solomon's disposal to accomplish the task. God wanted the Temple built—and He orchestrated history so that the supplies would be available when the time came. His sovereign hand was at work to supply everything needed to fulfill His plans.

For more information on this topic, see the Online Resource Page.



BEFORE THE THRONE

Holy God, I worship you now as Savior and Lord. What a thrill to see your promise of the Temple fulfilled through Solomon in this lesson. What joy the Israelites must have felt as they watched your Spirit fill the Temple with glory. And now you dwell in every Christian. And rather than bringing my sacrifices and offerings to a priest, I may come directly to you! Help me to share this glorious truth to my class this week. I am your vessel. Glorify yourself in me.

► **Pace your lesson!** Use the clocks to mark the time you want to finish each section. This will help you stay on track and finish on time. You may need to shorten or drop sections as necessary.





COME ON IN

As students arrive ...

- They will mark their Bibles at 1 Chronicles 28 and 1 Kings 6 and 8 with strips of paper.
- They will recite the memory verse after they unscramble the words on the Memory Verse Review Sheet.

This time at the beginning of class should be used to review the memory verse. We have provided an activity sheet on the Resource DVD-ROM for you to use. Students should unscramble the letters of the missing words and then recite the verse to you or another student. Each week the verse will get harder to unscramble. You may have other ideas and ways to encourage your students to memorize the verse.



Review

Pass out the Scripture Strips to several students for use in the activity later.

If you recall from our last lesson, the Old Testament is organized into four different sections.

? Can anyone remember what those four sections are? Historical, Wisdom, Major Prophets, and Minor Prophets.

As we saw last week, the historical books are arranged in an overlapping fashion so that many of the accounts are recorded

two or more times. We also see some of the events in the prophetic books.

? How does this fact assure us of the accuracy of the copies of the Scriptures we have today? We can be sure of its accuracy because the accounts agree with one another, even though they have been copied independently. In the few cases where there are disagreements, we can compare the accounts and other information in the surrounding text to clarify any supposed contradictions or copying mistakes.

Today, we are going to continue looking at Solomon's role as king of Israel.



- Write on the board, "Where is the Temple today?"



Studying God's Word

READ THE WORD

FAITHFUL

As we think about our lesson today, we need to keep the faithfulness of God in our minds. A few weeks ago, we talked about David's desire to build a Temple for God. Second Samuel 7:12–13 says: "When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever."

Today, we will be studying the partial fulfillment of that promise. Before David's death, he assembled the leaders of Israel in Jerusalem and explained God's promise to establish his throne forever—what we refer

to as the Davidic Covenant. Those details can be found in the first part of 1 Chronicles 28.

Let's read 1 Chronicles 28:9–19 together and look at David's charge to Solomon. *Have someone read the passage aloud.*

1 Chronicles 28:9–19

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

- ? Who is speaking in the passage? *David.*
- ? What command regarding God did David give to Solomon? *David commanded Solomon to know God and to serve and obey Him with his whole heart and mind.*
- ? What was the condition of the promise given to Solomon in verse 9? *If Solomon would seek God, he would find God; if he forsook God, he would be cast off forever. A similar statement was made to the nation in verse 8.*
- ? How was Solomon to know how to build the Temple? *David passed the plans on to Solomon.*
- ? Where were the materials going to come from? *David had been gathering the supplies throughout his reign, knowing that Solomon would use them to build the Temple. Many of these were gifts from foreign nations.*
- ? Where did David get the plans for building the Temple? *God made him understand the plans and write them down—they were divinely inspired.*
- Let's look at another event that was very similar to this in Exodus 25:8–9.
Have someone read Exodus 25:8–9.
- How are these two events similar? *The manner in which Moses received the plans from God for the Tabernacle parallels the way David received the plans for the Temple.*

Exodus 25:8–9

Discover the Truth

Just as God had delivered plans to Moses for the building of the Tabernacle in the wilderness, God also delivered plans for the building of the Temple to David. We will draw some more comparisons in just a minute.



READ THE WORD

Now turn back to 1 Kings 6 and let's read verses 1–14. *Have someone read the passage aloud.*

1 Kings 6:1–14

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

- When did the Temple construction begin? *Construction began 480 years after the Exodus. This places the beginning of the construction at 1012 BC since the Exodus was in 1491 (One year must be added since it was in the 480th year after, not 480 years later.).*

Exodus 29:45

► Use the Temple Diagram to show the general dimensions and layout of the Temple.

? What other date can we determine based on the information here? Solomon must have begun his reign in 1015 since the construction began in the fourth year of his reign.

? What was the building material for the Temple? The structure was built of stone, and there were beams of cedar as well as planking of cedar and cypress.

? Looking at 1 Kings 6:13, what was the purpose for the Temple? God would dwell among His people in the Temple. This is very similar to Exodus 29:45.

? Looking at this picture of the Temple, what were the dimensions? It was 60 cubits (100 feet) long, 20 cubits (34 feet) wide, and 30 cubits (50 feet) high. There was also a vestibule that extended 10 cubits (17 feet) out the front.

Surrounding the Temple were rooms in three levels for storage and housing. In the front were two bronze pillars that are described in chapter 7. In verses 15–17, we also learn that the interior was divided into the Sanctuary (Holy Place) and the Inner Sanctuary (Most Holy Place). If time allows, read the rest of chapter 6 to describe the ornate interior of the Temple.

The rest of the chapter goes on to describe the intricate details of the interior of the Temple. There were detailed carvings, and the entire interior was plated with gold. Now you know why David gathered so many riches for the Temple. 2 Chronicles 3–5 gives the parallel account of the building, and there are even more details there.

Discover the Truth

It took seven years to complete the construction, so the dedication of the Temple came roughly 500 years after the Tabernacle had been built.

? What similarities do you see between the Temple and the Tabernacle?

Plans from God delivered to the leader of Israel; two sections in each; materials gathered from foreign nations; where the Ark of the Covenant would reside; the place of sacrifice; services performed by priests; a place of gathering; freewill offerings from the people for the construction.

? What are the fundamental differences between the two?

The Temple was permanent while the Tabernacle was mobile; the Temple was much larger; the Temple was made of stone rather than skins and cloth.

The Temple was the place where God was to dwell and where the Israelites were to come to worship. It was the center of their religious lives. It was a glistening stone beacon set on a mountain to proclaim the glory of the only true God.

As the Israelites gathered together to dedicate the Temple, they brought the Ark of the Covenant to the new Temple and placed it in the Most Holy Place. As the priests were continuing their ministry in the Temple, here is what happened. Read 1 Kings 8:10–11.

Just as He had dwelt among the people while they were in the wilderness, God's glory descended in a cloud filling the entire Temple. Can you even imagine seeing that sight?

1 Kings 8:10–11

The rest of chapter 8 records the prayer Solomon offered to God to dedicate the Temple and records his exhortation to the people to follow God so that they might receive His blessing. And then they offered sacrifices to God—22,000 bulls and 120,000 sheep—as a dedication offering. After that, the Temple filled the same role in Jerusalem that the Tabernacle had filled in the wilderness.

► If time allows, read 1 Kings 8:1–13 and 8:54–61.



The Temple Today

MATERIALS

- Student Guides
- Pencils

INSTRUCTIONS

So, why don't we go to the Temple to worship and offer sacrifices? Ask this rhetorically. One obvious reason is that there is not a Temple in existence today. Solomon's Temple was destroyed in 588 BC, and the later Temple (Herod's Temple) was destroyed in AD 70.

I passed out some Scripture Strips to several of you earlier. I would like each of you to read those. In your Student Guides, you will find a place to record your answers in **The Temple Today** activity. Have the students read the passages from the Scripture Strips: 1 Corinthians 3:16; 2 Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 2:20–22; 1 Peter 2:4–5; Hebrews 3:4–6; John 4:19–24.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

From these passages, there are two ways to understand the Temple in the New

Covenant. But we can't ask, "What is the Temple?" Instead, we must ask, "Who is the Temple?"

Who is the Temple according to these passages? Every believer is a temple of the Lord with God the Holy Spirit dwelling within him. And all believers are being built together as a temple of the Lord and a dwelling place for God.

Where are we to worship God? It is no longer a matter of where we worship—the Temple is gone—but of how we worship. We can worship God anywhere as long as we worship in spirit and truth. Passages such as Hebrews 4:16 and Ephesians 2:18 and 3:12 speak of our free access to God without approaching a temple of any kind. But that does not mean that we are to forsake the assembling in the local church.

In Christ, we are the temple of God. He has chosen to dwell in us rather than a magnificent Temple building. If that thought doesn't cause you to praise God for His goodness and kindness, there is nothing in the Bible that will.



Applying God's Word

WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

There is no doubt that Solomon's Temple was a magnificent place—a place where the glory of God dwelled. It served as a place where the

1 Peter 2:9–10

Israelites could offer their sacrifices to God and honor Him as they assembled for the festivals. While we do not have a Temple where we go to worship and offer sacrifices, we are blessed to be the temples of God—as individuals and as the body of Christ.

To help us think about the richness of that blessing, listen as I read 1 Peter 2:9–10: “But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.”

GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

- ? What do the similarities in the Temple and the Tabernacle tell us about the character of God? *God is immutable (He does not change), so it makes sense that the basic structure and function of the Temple and Tabernacle would be similar.*
- ? Many skeptics doubt the details of the building of the Temple based on the amount of wealth involved. Is this a reasonable objection to trusting the Bible? *It is based on man's opinion rather than the truthfulness of God's Word. These objections are likely only one layer of many, as people reject the authority of God and His Word.*
- ? If you have never thought of yourself as a priest or a temple, how might adopting that perspective help you to honor God more with your life? *Knowing what God has done for us should give us a great motivation for serving God and honoring Him with our lives. Knowing that God has made us His people, how could we help but seek to glorify Him?*
- ? God set out a very specific pattern of worship for the Israelites, involving many details. Would following that type of pattern make you a more fervent worshipper of God? *Discuss various answers, calling attention to the issue of the heart. Regardless of what formula we might follow to worship, we are not truly worshipping unless it is in spirit and truth—with a right heart attitude toward God and in accordance with His Word.*



MEMORY VERSE

1 Chronicles 29:10–11 Therefore David blessed the Lord before all the assembly; and David said: “Blessed are You, Lord God of Israel, our Father, forever and ever. Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, the power and the glory, the victory and the majesty; for all that is in heaven and in earth is Yours; Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and You are exalted as head over all.”



GROUP PRAYER TIME

Be sure to pray with your class before you dismiss them.

- Thank God for sending Jesus as a perfect sacrifice and for making us His temple.
- Praise God for His faithfulness.
- Ask God for help in worshipping Him in spirit and truth.