Preschool–Grade 6

Solomon Builds the Temple

Sunday School Lesson for 3rd to 5th Grade, 45–60 minutes

Main point: God wants to dwell with His people, and He does not forsake those who walk in His ways, so we give Him our best.
Bible passage: 1 Kings 6 and 1 Kings 8:1–11. Read it before class.
Memory verse: "And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake my people Israel." *1 Kings 6:13 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible for each child (or one for every two children), a piece of string or yarn and scissors, a whiteboard or large paper, a marker, paper and pencils, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: write the memory verse on the board.

1. Opening game: Measure in Cubits (5–10 minutes)

Say: "In Bible times people measured with a **cubit**, the length from the elbow to the fingertips, about 18 inches." Each child measures the length of the room in their own cubits, walking along the wall arm over arm. Compare answers: why are they different? Then cut a piece of string one cubit long (18 inches) and measure the room with it together. Say: "Today we will read about a house that was sixty cubits long. Let's see how big that is."

2. Bible story: The House of the LORD (15 minutes)

Kids open their Bibles to 1 Kings 6. When you reach a **Look up** line, a child finds the verse and reads it out loud. Tell the rest in your own words.

When and how big. Look up 1 Kings 6:1. Solomon began to build the house of the LORD 480 years after Israel came out of Egypt, in the fourth year he was king, in the month Zif. **Look up 1 Kings 6:2.** The house was 60 cubits long, 20 wide and 30 high: about 90 feet long, 30 feet wide and 45 feet high. There was a porch in front (6:3), narrow windows (6:4), rooms called **chambers** built all around the walls (6:5), and winding stairs up to the middle rooms (6:8).

The quiet building. Look up 1 Kings 6:7. The stones were made ready before they were brought, so no hammer, axe or iron tool was heard in the house while it was built. He covered the house with beams and boards of **cedar**, a fine, sweet-smelling wood (6:9).

God's word to Solomon. While Solomon was building, the word of the LORD came to him (6:11). **Look up 1 Kings 6:12.** God said that **if** Solomon would walk in His **statutes** (laws) and keep all His commandments, **then** God would keep His word to him, the word He spoke to David, Solomon's father. **Look up 1 Kings 6:13.** God would dwell among the children of Israel and not forsake His people.

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Cedar and gold. Inside, the walls were cedar boards, carved with **knops** (round knobs) and open flowers. **Look up 1 Kings 6:18.** "All was cedar; there was no stone seen." At the back was the **oracle**, the most holy place, made ready for the ark of the covenant (6:19). **Look up 1 Kings 6:22.** Solomon overlaid (covered) the whole house with gold. In the oracle he made two **cherubims**, carved from olive wood, each ten cubits high, with wings that touched the walls and each other, and he covered them with gold (6:23–28). The walls were carved with cherubims, palm trees and open flowers (6:29), and the doors were carved and covered with gold too (6:32–35). Outside was the inner court, made of three rows of cut stone and a row of cedar beams (6:36). **Look up 1 Kings 6:38.** He was seven years in building it.

The ark comes home. Solomon gathered the elders and heads of the tribes to bring up the ark of the covenant from the city of David, which is Zion (8:1). The priests took up the ark (8:3), and Solomon and all the people offered sheep and oxen, more than anyone could count (8:5). **Look up 1 Kings 8:6.** The priests brought the ark into its place, the most holy place, under the wings of the cherubims. **Look up 1 Kings 8:9.** Nothing was in the ark but the two tables of stone that Moses put there.

The glory. Look up 1 Kings 8:10–11. When the priests came out, the cloud filled the house, and the priests could not stand to minister (do their work) because the glory of the LORD had filled the house of the LORD.

3. Questions to ask (10 minutes)

Thinking questions (no single right answer; let kids talk)

1. Why do you think God's house was built so quietly (6:7)? The Bible doesn't say why, so what do *you* think?
2. God's promise came with an "if" (6:12). What did God ask Solomon to do? What does walking in God's ways look like for you?
3. Solomon used cedar and pure gold. What does it look like to give God your best, not your leftovers?
4. When God's glory filled the house, the priests couldn't even stand to work (8:11). What do you think that was like?
5. Today God dwells in His people by His Spirit (1 Corinthians 3:16). How should that change the way we live?

Recall questions

1. How long did it take to build the house? *(Seven years, 1 Kings 6:38)*
2. What was in the ark? *(Only the two tables of stone, 8:9)*
3. What filled the house when the priests came out? *(The cloud, 8:10)*

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4. Memory verse: Erase a Word (5 minutes)

Explain the old words: **dwell** means live, the **children of Israel** are God's people, and **forsake** means leave alone or give up on. Read the verse on the board together. Erase two words and read it again. Keep erasing two words at a time until the board is empty and the class can say it alone. Then kids say it to a partner.

5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "God filled Solomon's temple with His glory. Then 'the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us' (John 1:14, KJV): God came to dwell with us as a man, Jesus. God loves you. The Bible says: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means all of us have done wrong, and none of us is as good as God. Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, which means God came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again the third day (1 Corinthians 15:3–4). How do we obey the gospel? 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) To **repent** means to turn away from sin; our old self dies (Romans 6:6). We are **buried with Jesus in baptism**, all the way under the water, in Jesus' name. **Remission** means our sins are washed away, and we come up to live a new life (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, and we speak with other tongues as the Spirit gives the words (Acts 2:4). The Bible calls this being born again (John 3:5). Then we are the temple of God, and His Spirit dwells in us (1 Corinthians 3:16)."
Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.
This week: "whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord" (Colossians 3:23, KJV). Do your schoolwork and chores as if you were doing them for God.

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6. Activity: Bible Look-Up Race (10–15 minutes)

Kids work in pairs with one Bible. Read a reference and a question. The first pair to find the verse and read the answer out loud wins the point.

1. 1 Kings 6:1: In which month did Solomon begin to build? *(Zif, the second month)*
2. 1 Kings 6:3: What was in front of the house? *(The porch)*
3. 1 Kings 6:8: How did they go up to the middle chamber? *(With winding stairs)*
4. 1 Kings 6:15: What kind of wood covered the floor? *(Planks of fir)*
5. 1 Kings 6:23: What were the two cherubims made of? *(Olive tree, olive wood)*
6. 1 Kings 6:29: What was carved on the walls? *(Cherubims, palm trees and open flowers)*
7. 1 Kings 8:2: In which month did the men of Israel gather at the feast? *(Ethanim, the seventh month)*
8. 1 Kings 8:9: Where did Moses put the tables of stone in the ark? *(At Horeb)*

For more, use the **word search, crossword, maze or worksheet** (vbshq.com/bible-stories/solomons-temple).

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You that You want to dwell with Your people and that You came to us in Jesus. Help us walk in Your ways and do everything heartily, as to You. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a child asks where the temple is now: many years later, enemies burned the house of the LORD (2 Kings 25:9). Today God dwells in His people by His Spirit (1 Corinthians 3:16).

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