Preschool–Grade 6

Solomon Builds the Temple

Sunday School Lesson for Preteens (Ages 11–12), 45–60 minutes

Main point: God wants to dwell with His people. His promise came with a call to walk in His ways, and the right answer is to give Him our best.
Bible passage: 1 Kings 6 and 1 Kings 8:1–11. Students read 1 Kings 6:1–14 and 8:1–11 out loud themselves.
Memory verse: "And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake my people Israel." *1 Kings 6:13 (KJV)* and "Concerning this house which thou art in building, if thou wilt walk in my statutes, and execute my judgments, and keep all my commandments to walk in them; then will I perform my word with thee, which I spake unto David thy father:" *1 Kings 6:12 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible for each student, paper or a notebook and a pen for each student, a whiteboard and a marker, and one take-home sheet for each student.
Before class: read 1 Kings 6 and 1 Kings 8:1–11. Write both memory verses on the board. Decide who reads which verses, or go around the room a few verses each.

1. Opening game: Best or Leftovers? (5–10 minutes)

Read each situation. Students point up if it is giving God their best, or down if it is giving God the leftovers. 1) You practice your song for church all week. 2) You pray only when you need something. 3) You give some of your birthday money in the offering before you spend any. 4) You read your Bible only after everything else is done, if there's time. 5) You help set up chairs at church before anyone asks. Ask: *What makes the difference between "best" and "leftovers"? Is it the size of the gift or the heart?* Say: "Today we will read about a house built for God with the finest things."

2. Bible story: Students Read It (15 minutes)

Read out loud: 1 Kings 6:1–14. Students take turns, a few verses each. Old words in this passage:

- **threescore** (6:2): sixty; a **cubit** is about 18 inches, so the house was about 90 feet long, 30 wide and 45 high
- **porch before the temple** (6:3): an entrance hall across the front
- **windows of narrow lights** (6:4): narrow windows
- **chambers round about** (6:5): rooms built all around the outside walls; **nethermost**: lowest
- **stone made ready before it was brought thither** (6:7): cut and shaped before it was brought there
- **cedar** (6:9): a fine, sweet-smelling wood
- **statutes** and **judgments** (6:12): God's laws and rulings; **perform my word**: keep My promise
- **forsake** (6:13): leave alone, give up on

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Tell the middle part in your own words: Solomon lined the walls inside with cedar, carved with knops (round knobs) and open flowers: "all was cedar; there was no stone seen" (6:15, 6:18). He prepared the oracle, the most holy place, to set the ark of the covenant there (6:19), and he overlaid the whole house with pure gold (6:21–22). In the oracle stood two cherubims carved from olive wood, ten cubits high, their wings touching the walls and each other, covered with gold (6:23–28). The walls and doors were carved with cherubims, palm trees and open flowers (6:29–35). He built the inner court with three rows of hewn stone and a row of cedar beams (6:36), and he was seven years in building it (6:37–38).

Read out loud: 1 Kings 8:1–11. Old words in this passage:

- **assembled** (8:1–2): gathered; **the city of David, which is Zion** (8:1): the stronghold in Jerusalem that David took (2 Samuel 5:7)
- **Ethanim** (8:2): the seventh month
- **could not be told nor numbered for multitude** (8:5): too many to count
- **oracle** (8:6): the most holy place, the inner room
- **staves** (8:7–8): carrying poles; **tables of stone** (8:9): the stone tablets of God's law; **Horeb** (8:9): Mount Sinai
- **minister** (8:11): serve, do their work

3. Questions to ask (15 minutes)

1. God's promise in 6:13 comes after an "if" in 6:12. Why does it matter to read the whole promise? What does walking in God's statutes look like for a 12-year-old?
2. "There was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard" (6:7). The Bible doesn't say why. What could this careful, quiet work teach us about how we serve God?
3. The cedar and the gold were on the inside of the house (6:15, 6:21). What does it mean to give God your best when no one is watching?
4. Solomon gave seven years to the work (6:38). What are you willing to give time to for God?
5. When the glory of the LORD filled the house, the priests could not stand to minister (8:11). How do you think they felt? Have you ever felt God's presence strongly?
6. Read 1 Corinthians 3:16. If we are the temple of God, how should we treat our bodies, our words and our choices?

4. Memory verse (5 minutes)

Old words: **dwell** means live; **forsake** means leave alone; **statutes** and **judgments** are God's laws; **perform my word** means keep My promise. Point out that 6:12 says "if" and "then": God's promise and our walk with Him go together.
Read both verses together. Then students cover one phrase at a time and quiz a partner. Say 1 Kings 6:13 this week; keep working on 1 Kings 6:12 next week too.

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5. What this means for us (5–10 minutes)

Say: "Solomon built a house where God's glory dwelt. Then God came Himself: 'the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us' (John 1:14, KJV). God loves you, and 'all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, God who came as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). 'Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures' (1 Corinthians 15:3–4, KJV). We obey the gospel the way Peter preached it: '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) We **repent**, turning from sin, and our old self dies (Romans 6:6). We are buried with Jesus by baptism in His name, all the way under the water. **Remission** means our sins are washed away, and we rise to walk in newness of life, a brand-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 utterance, which means as He gives the words (Acts 2:4). Jesus called this being born of water and of the Spirit (John 3:5). Paul wrote, 'Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?' (1 Corinthians 3:16, KJV)"
Pray with the students, 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.

6. Activity: Journal (10 minutes)

Each student writes privately. No one has to share. Write these three prompts on the board:

1. Where am I giving God my leftovers instead of my best?
2. What is one "inside" thing, something no one else sees, that I can give God my best in this week?
3. Write a short prayer asking God to help you walk in His ways.
   If there is time, invite a few volunteers to share one sentence.

This week: "whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord" (Colossians 3:23, KJV). Pick one thing and do it as if it were for God Himself.

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, give You our best, and live as Your temple. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a student asks about the cherubims: in this chapter they are figures Solomon carved from olive wood and covered with gold, each with two wings (1 Kings 6:23–28). Stay with what the text says.
If a student asks where the temple is now: many years later, the Babylonians burned the house of the LORD (2 Kings 25:9). God's promise was tied to walking in His ways (1 Kings 6:12). Today God dwells in His people by His Spirit (1 Corinthians 3:16).

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