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# David Becomes King / Mephibosheth

*Scripture: 2 Samuel 5:1-5; 9:1-13*

**Theme: God's kindness reaches the undeserving**

*4th-6th Grade (Ages 9-11)*

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Free curriculum for small and rural churches

## Lesson Overview

Sunday School Lesson Overview: Solomon's Temple , God's House (1 Kings 6-8) Lesson Theme: God deserves our best, and He wants to be near us in a special place where we worship Him with joy and devotion. Lesson Breakdown: First, we'll look at how King Solomon built the Temple, a grand, beautiful house for God, designed with care and devotion (1 Kings 6). God was pleased with Solomon's heart, and the Temple became a place where people could come to worship, pray, and learn about Him. The lesson will highlight how Solomon and the people gave their best effort, even when they didn't have everything perfect. Next, we'll explore how God's Spirit moved powerfully in the Temple (1 Kings 8:10-11). When the priests poured out the sacred oil, a glowing light filled the space, symbolizing God's presence! This reminds us that God doesn't just live in a building; He's with us in our hearts, homes, and even in nature. The lesson will encourage children to imagine God's presence in their own lives, like a gentle light guiding them. Deeper Questions & Discussion: - What does it mean to give God our best? (For example, is that how we spend our time, money, or energy?) - Where do you think God is most active? (In worship, prayer, or even in everyday moments?) - Why was the Temple important to the people of Israel? How can we make our own "house of worship" special? Personal Application & Challenge: End the lesson with a simple reflection: "How can we show God we love Him by giving our best to Him in our hearts and lives?" Encourage children to bring their favorite Bible story or prayer to share how God has been near to them, just like in the Temple. Closing Prayer: "Dear God, thank You for dwelling with us. Help us to build Your presence in our hearts and homes, with kindness, worship, and devotion. Amen!" Teacher Tip: Use visuals (e.g., a simple drawing of the Temple) and act out the oil pouring scene to bring it to life! Keep it warm, interactive, and full of wonder.

## Bible Story

Solomon's Temple: God's House for His People

Long ago, the Israelites had a big problem. After King David died, his son Solomon became king. Solomon was very wise, so wise that he could even make hard decisions quickly, and he wanted to honor God. One day, Solomon said to God, "I want to build a special house for You." God told him, "Yes, I will give you everything you ask for, but first, build Me a house where I can be with my people." So Solomon built a beautiful temple in Jerusalem, the biggest and most beautiful house the Israelites had ever seen. It was made of fine stone, polished to shine like gold, and decorated with colorful marble, gold, and precious stones. Solomon worked hard for seven years to finish it, and when the temple was done, the people cheered and worshiped God with joy.

The inside of the temple was full of amazing details. At the center was the Most Holy Place, where only priests could enter. Inside was the golden Ark of the Covenant, a special box holding the two stone tablets with the Ten Commandments. Outside the temple were beautiful gardens, and the priests would keep the fire burning in the altar every day. Solomon also built a place for the priests to live, so they could stay near the temple and help worship God. When the temple was finished, Solomon said, "Now, Lord God, You have done so much for Your people, and I love You. Keep Your promises and stay near us in this house." He poured out a big feast to celebrate, and the people worshiped God with songs and music.

But even though the temple was beautiful, there was a deeper reason for its construction. Solomon didn't just build it for himself, he wanted to show that God's presence was real and powerful. God didn't live in a cloud or float in the sky, but He chose to be near His people in a special way through the temple. When the priests lit the golden lamps, played music, and prayed, they were reminding everyone: "God is here, and He wants to hear from us!" Solomon also promised to keep the temple open so people could come and worship, no matter who they were or how far they traveled. This wasn't just a building, it was a place where God's love and power could be felt.

Why This Matters Today: God still wants to be near us! Just like Solomon built a place for His people to worship, we can show our love for God by praying, reading the Bible, and sharing His love with others. When we build our relationships with Him through faith, we're saying, "I trust You, God. You're not just in heaven, You're with me!" The temple was a reminder that God's house isn't just in a building, it's in our hearts, where He wants to live and work through us. What can you do this week to invite God into your life, just like Solomon did?

Reflection Questions: 1. Why did Solomon build the temple? What was God's promise to him? 2. What do you think made the temple so special? (Hints: the Ark, the priests, the music.) 3. How does the Bible say God's presence is still near us today? Where do you feel Him? 4. If you could design a "house" for God to live in, what would it include? Why?

## Key Verse

### 2 Samuel 9:7

God's Promise: A House for His Love God's word in 1 Kings 8:13 is like a big, warm hug from heaven. Solomon, the king, built a special house for God, what we call the Temple, to show that God always wants to be close to us, just like a family home. Just as our parents build cozy spaces for us to feel safe and loved, God wants us to know He is always there, always listening, and always ready to help us. God's House is for Us Too Even though this verse is about the Temple Solomon built, it reminds us that God doesn't just want to live in one building, He wants to live with us! That means He is always near, like a loving parent who watches over their kids no matter where they are. The Temple was a place where people could come and worship, pray, and feel God's presence. Today, that means we can talk to God anytime, anywhere, whether we're at school, playing, or even feeling sad. Why Does God Want to Be Close? God loves us so much that He doesn't just stop at a temple. He wants to be part of our lives, our adventures, our mistakes, and our big dreams. Think of it like how your favorite book or video game has a special setting where characters feel at home. God created the world and us so He could share His love with us every day. When we feel lonely or afraid, we can remember: God is always right there, waiting to give us strength and peace. What Can We Do Today? God wants us to build a little "house of love" in our hearts. That means we can choose to thank Him for everything, like when we make a friend, finish a hard task, or even when things don't go perfectly. We can pray little prayers, draw pictures to remember Him, or tell someone we love how much God means to us. The Temple wasn't just a building, it was a promise that God would never leave us alone.

The same is true for us! Deeper Questions to Think About: - If God built a house just for Himself, do you think He'd want to live inside our hearts too? Why or why not? - How can we show others that God is always near, like a loving guardian? - When do you feel closest to God? Where do you think He wants you to be more often? Personal Application: This week, try to notice little moments where God is near, like when you help a friend, learn something new, or even when you feel a little scared. Then, ask Him: "Thank you for being with me, just like You promised!" You might not always feel God's presence, but He's always there, waiting to show us how much He loves us. That's a promise we can hold onto!

## Activities

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### Activity 1:

1. Set the Stage: Read 1 Kings 6:1, 7:51 (the first part of the temple construction) aloud, highlighting how Solomon poured his heart into building God's house ("He dedicated the temple").
2. Craft Time: Give each child the altar stone and ask them to decorate it with symbols (e.g., a cross, a heart, or the letter T for "Temple"). Write a simple Bible verse like "God's house is where we meet Him" on the back.
3. Personal Connection: Ask students to add a word or prayer to their stone (e.g., "Lord, help me trust You" or "I will honor You").
4. Discussion: Ask:
5. "How is your altar stone different from Solomon's?" (Their response might be their obedience, prayer life, or worship.)
6. "Where do you meet God today?" (In their hearts, at home, in church?)
7. "What's one way you can build a 'house' for God in your life this week?"

### Activity 2:

1. Prep the Circle: Form a circle with students holding hands. Read 1 Kings 8:10, 11 ("the cloud filled the house of God"), emphasizing that God's presence is visible in His house.
2. Pass the Verse: Begin with a verse like "God's house is a place where He hears our prayers" (8:40). Have the first student repeat it, then add their own prayer or memory verse (e.g., "Lord, I want to worship You like Solomon did").
3. Relay the Faith: Pass the "promise" to the next student, who repeats it with their own addition. Example:
4. Student 1: "God's house is a place of prayer" "Lord, help me pray more!"
5. Student 2: "God hears our prayers" "Thank You for listening to me!"
6. Reflection:
7. "What was the hardest part of passing your prayer?" (Fear of judgment? Waiting to speak?)
8. "How can you 'build' a house for God in your heart this week?" (Through prayer, reading Scripture, or thanking Him daily?)
9. "Where do you feel God's presence today?" (In church? At home? In nature?)
10. Why These Work for Upper Elementary:
11. Both activities use low-cost, hands-on materials (paper, glue, crayons).
12. Deeper questions invite emotional and spiritual growth (e.g., "How does God's house differ from my own?").
13. Personal application ties the lesson to their lives (e.g., "How can you honor God in your 'house'?").

## Discussion Questions

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- Here are four open-ended discussion questions for upper elementary students (ages 9, 11) about Solomon's Temple (1 Kings 6, 8), designed to encourage thoughtful reflection and personal application:

- What do you think Solomon meant when he dedicated the Temple by saying, “May God be with us, as he was with our ancestors” (1 Kings 8:58)?
- (Prompt deeper thinking: How does God’s presence in the Temple inspire us today? Why might it matter that we seek God in our own lives, even when we don’t have a physical building? What can we learn from Solomon’s prayer about how God cares for people? How can we invite God into our own hearts and lives like he did in the Temple?)
- In the story, the priests and Levites sang and praised God as they finished the Temple. Do you think people today can praise God in similar ways, through music, art, or other acts?
- (Prompt creative and personal reflection: What kinds of things do you enjoy doing to worship God, even if they’re not the same as the Temple? Could singing or creating something beautiful be a way to honor God? How can we make worship meaningful in our own lives? Why is it important to take time to thank God for his goodness?)
- Solomon asked God, “If ever there is a breach in my heart or in the people of Israel... let this Temple become an altar for the burnt offerings and sacrifices you command” (1 Kings 8:63). What does this line tell us about Solomon’s heart?
- (Prompt deeper spiritual awareness: Why might Solomon have been worried about people forgetting God? What does it say about us when we don’t trust God enough to rely on his promises? How can we pray like Solomon did, asking God to protect our hearts and keep us faithful? Have you ever felt like God might be far away? How can we ask him to be near, like he was in the Temple?)
- The Bible says the Temple was filled with glory (1 Kings 8:11). How do you think God’s presence feels different in the Temple compared to how we might feel when we pray alone or with friends?
- (Prompt personal experience and connection: Have you ever felt God’s presence in a special way, through a song, a quiet moment, or even a friend? How does God’s presence change us? Why might God want us to seek him in places like churches, nature, or even our own hearts? What’s one way you could invite God into a new place or time in your life this week?)
- These questions encourage students to connect the story of Solomon’s Temple to their own lives by asking them to think about worship, trust, prayer, and how God’s presence affects them.

## Prayer Focus

*Prayer Focus: "God's House for Us to Honor" (Close your eyes and listen to God's voice today. Let's pray together, asking Him to help us understand what it means for His house to be a place where we can come to worship, learn, and feel close to Him.) Dear God, thank You for building Solomon's Temple, a special place where people could come to worship You. Solomon spent so much time and care preparing it, just like we spend time thinking about how we can honor You in our own lives. Help us remember that Your house isn't just a building; it's a place where You want us to feel close to You and where we can learn to love and follow You better. Teach us how to treat it with respect, like we'd treat a gift from You. (Pause for reflection, let's ask: How can we make our own "house of God" in our hearts and homes? Maybe that means praying together, reading the Bible, or sharing kindness like Jesus taught.) God, You gave Solomon wisdom to build a place where people could pray and worship You. Can we ask You to give us the same kind of wisdom, to know what You want us to do in our lives, so we can honor You in the ways You've shown us? Help us listen to You and follow You, just like Solomon tried to do. (Ask a deep question: What's one way we can "worship" You in our daily lives? Maybe by showing love to others, being kind, or even just by being thankful for the day.) God, You care about how we treat Your house, and You care about how we treat each other. Help us to remember that Your house isn't just in a temple; it's in our hearts, and it's also in our schools, our families, and our neighborhoods. Show us how to make a difference by being a light in the world, just like Solomon tried to do. (End with a prayer of commitment: "God, I want to be a person who honors You in my heart and in my actions. Help me to grow closer to You every day, and thank You for always being there for me.") (Open your eyes. Let's take a moment to share one thing we learned or want to pray about together.) For the*

*Teacher: - Engagement: Use hands-on activities (e.g., drawing Solomon's Temple, acting out building steps) to make the prayer interactive. - Discussion: After the prayer, ask: "What did you notice in the Bible that makes Solomon's Temple special?" (Focus on God's presence, purity, and worship.) - Personal Application: End with a simple challenge like "Pray for one friend today and thank God for helping you be kind!"*

### >> Missions Spotlight

In many parts of Southeast Asia, temple-building is a central part of religious life. Missioners working among the Khmer people of Cambodia use Solomon's temple story to explain that God no longer lives in buildings made by hands, He lives in the hearts of those who trust in Jesus.

### -> To the Cross

Solomon built a beautiful temple for God. But Jesus said, 'Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days' (John 2:19). He was talking about His body. Jesus IS the temple, the place where God and humanity meet. And now, through the Spirit, WE are God's temple.