

Building the Temple

(1 Kings 5; 6; 7:13-51; 8;
1 Chronicles 17:1-15; 22; 28:10 – 29:20;
2 Chronicles 2:1 – 7:22)

Pre-Session Warm Up

Why do people give gifts to one another? (It's Christmas or someone's birthday; we want to show the other person we love them.)

What is the best gift you have ever received? How did you feel when you received that gift? Did you want to do something nice back to the person who gave you that gift?

Have you ever given someone a gift they weren't thankful for? How did that make you feel?

Today we'll talk about how important it is to be a cheerful giver.

Opening Prayer

Father, You are the giver of life; You created the whole universe and everything in it, including me! You have done great things, Lord. Teach us this morning how important it is for us to want to show you just how much we love You. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

God loves a cheerful giver. (2 Corinthians 9:7 NKJ)

Lesson

When King David died, his son Solomon became the king of Israel. When Solomon began his reign, God told him to ask for anything he wanted. King Solomon could have asked God for anything in the world – money, power, a beautiful palace. But instead, he asked for wisdom.

Because Solomon had asked God for wisdom instead of money or power or fame, God honored him by not only giving him the wisdom he asked for, but also riches and power and fame!

As king, Solomon could have done anything he wanted to with all his money. What do you think Solomon decided to do?

Solomon loved God so much and he was so grateful for all the gifts God had given him that he decided to give a gift to God. What kind of a gift do you think Solomon could give God?

He decided to use his riches to build a beautiful house for God. They called it a Temple and it would be the place where people could come to worship God and where God could come and minister to the people. We call this kind of place a "church" these days.

Building a beautiful house for God was a huge job. God gives you important jobs to do, too. What kinds of jobs do you have to do? (Clean room, do yard work or school work, run a paper route.) Have you ever been given a job that seemed too big for you to handle? Have you ever felt like your job would take too long to do? You may not always feel like doing the tasks before you, but God wants you to do your best.

It was a huge job for Solomon to build this temple. But, because his heart was filled with gratitude, Solomon wanted to honor God by building a beautiful temple. What a privilege to give back to God, the Creator of the universe! Solomon felt that nothing he could give to God would ever be too much.

You and I should feel the same way. Why? Because God has given us the most valuable gift in the world – His Son, the Lord Jesus, to die on the cross for our sins! Because of the "want to" in our hearts to do wrong, we cannot go to God's heaven the way we are. But because God loved us so very much, He sent Jesus to earth to take the punishment for your sin and mine. What a wonderful God He is! Nothing we could do for Him would ever be too much!

Solomon's heart was filled with gratitude toward God for all He had done for him. Building the temple would be his gift to God.

The people gave generously toward the work of the house of God, too. They gave gold, silver, precious stones, everything they had that was of value.

Before construction could begin, Solomon had to gather a huge work force together.

2 Chronicles 2:2

He enlisted a force of 70,000 laborers, 80,000 men to quarry stone in the hill country, and 3,600 foremen.

It took a lot of people to help build the Temple. Some of the people cut great big stones from the ground to use in building the walls. Other people made gold lamp stands; still others carved flowers, palm trees and angels in the wooden doors and on the walls of the Temple. It took seven years to build the Temple, not because it was a very big building, but because it was so beautiful! The people gave generously of their time and their labor to build this house for God.

1 Kings 7:48-49 [Teacher, read...]

Solomon had all the furnishings made for the house of the Lord: the altar of gold, and the table of gold...; the lamp stands of pure gold...

It was built on a hill so that everyone could see it. It was made of white stone that sparkled in the sunlight. Inside the Temple, the walls and floors were covered with pure gold. Cherubim, great angel-like statues with huge gold wings, were in a special room in the Temple. This room was called the Most Holy Place. The cherubim reminded the people of God's power. On the walls hung tapestries woven with gold and embroidered with silk thread dyed in rich colors. Everything was perfectly made; only the best was good enough for God.

When the Temple was finally finished, Solomon led a joyful parade to bring the Ark of the Covenant into the Most Holy Place in the Temple. (The Ark was a special box covered with gold that reminded people that God was with them.) A huge crowd of people joined in the parade. Everyone wanted to see the beautiful new Temple.

2 Chronicles 5:13-14

The trumpeters and singers performed together in unison to praise and give thanks to the LORD. Accompanied by trumpets, cymbals, and other instruments, they raised their voices and praised the LORD with these words: "He is good! His faithful love endures forever!" At that moment a thick cloud filled the Temple of the LORD. The priests could not continue their service because of the cloud, for the glorious presence of the LORD filled the Temple of God.

After the Ark was placed in the Temple, suddenly the whole Temple was filled with God's glory – a golden cloud filled the Temple.

Solomon stood in front of the Temple and prayed to God. He and all the children of Israel praised and thanked God for His goodness and mercy and for enabling them to complete such an important job.

What a happy day this was for King Solomon and all the people! Because God had given Solomon so many wonderful gifts, Solomon wanted to give something to God to show his love and thanks. And he built a beautiful Temple so that God could come and meet with the people. Solomon wisely gave what he had to build the Temple and show his love for God. Cheerfully giving is a wise way to live!

God has given you and me so many good things. What is something you are glad God has given you? (home, family) Have you ever received His free gift of everlasting life? Does remembering what God has done for you give you a grateful heart?

It pleases God show Him our love and thanks! What are some things we can give God? You can give Him your time and your money. What are some ways you can give God your time? You can spend time with him reading the Bible or praying. You can spend time helping others, such as your mom or dad or a sick friend or neighbor. What are some things that God needs your money for? We need money to pay the rent here at church and for buying supplies for Sunday school. You can also give of your money to help people in need. What can you give to others to show your love and thanks to God?

It's important to be a giving person, but more important than what you give, is your attitude when you give it. God wants you to be a cheerful giver. What do you think that means?

Have you ever given with a grumbling or complaining attitude? What about when your mom or dad asks you to clean your room or do the dishes? How many of you cheerfully help clean up the Sunday school area after church?

What can give you a cheerful heart about giving of your time or money? (Remembering all that God has done for us. Having a thankful and grateful heart will give us the "want to" to give of ourselves to others.)

Let's thank God for all the great things that He was given to us.

Closing Prayer

Father, thank You for the wonderful way that You provide for us. We have food to eat and a warm bed to sleep in. We have families that love us. Lord, give us grateful hearts this morning, running over with the desire to show You how much we love You. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Learning Activities

Craft Corner

Wrapping Paper Gifts

On back of wrapping paper squares, children draw pictures of how they could show love to God by giving of their time or money. (Ideas: reading the Bible, praying, putting money in the offering box, cleaning the church, helping a neighbor, taking a meal to a sick person, etc.) Or, they may draw pictures of gifts they want to give to others. Make sure they draw themselves as cheerful givers! Children then fold their wrapping-paper squares to look like wrapped gifts.

Optional: Add stick-on bows and gift cards to folded papers.

Build a Replica of the Temple

Give each child a large index card on which to make a model of the Temple with sugar cubes. Provide gold foil wrapping paper to make door and other details.

Children glue sugar cubes 3 sugar cubes wide by 10 sugar cubes long by 3 sugar cubes high.

If your class is small, have children work together on one large Temple model built on a 12 x 18 inch piece of cardboard 7 cubes wide, 21 cubes long and 3 cubes high. Leave out the center cube on one end for the entrance.

As the children work talk about the beauty of the Temple or read to them passages out of the Bible that describe its splendor.

2 Chronicles 3:3-16 (Good News Bible translation)

The Temple which King Solomon built was 90 feet long and 30 feet wide. The entrance room was the full width of the Temple, 30 feet, and was 180 feet high. The inside of the room was overlaid with pure gold. The main room was paneled with cedar and overlaid with fine gold, in which were worked designs of palm trees and chain patterns. The king decorated the Temple with beautiful precious stones and with gold... He used the gold to overlay the Temple walls, the rafters, the entryways, and the doors. On the walls the workers carved designs of winged creatures. The inner room, called the Most Holy Place, was 30 feet long and 30 feet wide, which was the full width of the Temple. Twenty-five tons of gold were used to cover the walls of the Most Holy Place; twenty ounces of gold were used for making nails, and the walls of the upper rooms were also covered with gold. The king also had his workers make two winged creatures out of metal, cover them with gold, and place them in the Most Holy Place, where they stood side by side facing the entrance. Each had two wings, each wing 7 1/2 feet long, which were spread out so that they touched each other in the center of the room and reached to the wall on either side of the room, stretching across the full width of 30 feet. A curtain for the Most Holy Place was made of linen and

of other material, which was dyed blue, purple, and red, with designs of the winged creatures worked into it. The king had two columns made, each one 52 feet tall, and placed them in front of the Temple. Each one had a capital 7 1/2 feet tall. The tops of the columns were decorated with a design of interwoven chains and one hundred bronze pomegranates.

Help the children to imagine how beautiful the Temple was by asking them some of the review questions while they work on their models.

Game Center

Game idea: Put each of the following questions into a small gift box. Give each child a box to open and answer the enclosed question.

Or, use the following questions in another game of your choice:

1. In our lesson today, how did Solomon show his love for God? (He gave of his great wealth to build the Temple.)
2. Why did Solomon build the Temple? (To show his love for God.)
3. How did God feel about the gift that Solomon had given Him? (He was pleased.)
4. What do you think it was like for the people who were there on the first day of worship in that Temple? How do you think they felt? What do you think it was like to know that God was actually there among them?
5. What are some things you can give to God? (Give money to church. Give time to help someone else.)
6. Why do you think giving to God is a wise thing to do? (It pleases Him.)
7. What is the best gift you have ever given? How did you feel when you gave that gift?
8. What kind of attitude should we have when we give gifts to God and others? (Cheerful.)
9. What is the best reason people give money or time to church? (To express their love for God for all He's done.)
10. Who was a cheerful giver in our lesson today? (Solomon and all the people.)
11. How do you know that a person is giving cheerfully? (They don't gripe or complain.)
12. What are some ways we can give to show our love for God? (Give money for offering. Be kind to others. Help Mom and Dad.)
13. What is something you are glad God has given you? (Parents, home, eternal life.)
14. What are some ways you can give God your time? (Reading the Bible, praying, putting money in the offering box, cleaning the church, helping a neighbor, taking a meal to a sick person.)
15. Why do we give God money? (To pay the rent, pay for salaries, pay for utilities, buy supplies for Sunday school and to help people in need or to send to missions.)
16. What can give you a cheerful heart when you give your time or money to God? (Remembering all that God has done for us. Having a thankful and grateful heart will give us the "want to" to give of ourselves to others.)