

General Church Education



# Building the Temple

1 Kings 5, 6

## Lesson 4

Jacob's Ladder Religion Lessons

Level 6: The Lord Is Our Prophet

For ages 11-12 years

## Building the Temple

1 Kings 5, 6

### Teacher Background

Building Solomon's temple was an enormous task that took eleven years. Although the temple was smaller than modern sports complexes and malls it was constructed without machines, vehicles, or man-made materials. This project can be considered on many levels. Physically, we can imagine thousands of people with various skills working together to complete the task. We can also think of the animals and carts that carried the cedars and stones to the top of a small mountain.

On a deeper level, we might consider Solomon's motivation for taking on this task. What might we do to enhance our own and others' worship of the Lord—from behaving respectfully to singing without embarrassment, decorating the chancel or helping during a work party?

On an even deeper level, we might think of making our minds temples for receiving the Lord. It can be difficult for the Lord and the angels to affect people if their minds are full of unclean or rebellious thoughts. Every good and true thing a person learns, feels and acts upon is like a new stone, a new piece of furniture, or a new decoration in the temple of our mind.

### Focus Points

- Solomon built a temple for the Lord in Jerusalem to replace the tabernacle.
- Solomon meticulously followed the Lord's plan.
- Our mind can be a temple for the Lord when we learn true ideas and lead a good life.

### Readings from the Writings

“The interiors of the Word are of such a nature that whatever is said of the church may also be said of every individual member of it, who, unless he were a church, could not possibly be a part of the church, just as he who is not a temple of the Lord cannot be what is signified by the temple, namely, the church and heaven.” *Arcana Coelestia* 82

“The Ten Commandments, being the starting-point of the Word and so of the church which was to be established among the Israelite nation, and being in short compass a summary of the whole of religion, making a link between God and man and man and God, were so holy that nothing holier could exist.... The Commandments were written on two stone tablets by the finger of God. The tablets were afterwards laid up in the ark, and this was at the center of the tabernacle. The ark was brought into Zion by David with sacrifice and jubilation. Later it was put by Solomon into the temple at Jerusalem, and he made its inner shrine there.” *True Christian Religion* 283

## Teacher Activity Overview

The lesson offers the following activity choices:

### Recitation

Learn the recitation by heart.

“Behold, I propose to build a house for the name of the Lord my God, as the Lord spoke to my father David, saying, ‘Your son, whom I will set on your throne in your place, he shall build the house for My name.’” (1 Kings 5:5)

### Projects and Activities (for answers, see back of lesson)

Answer Questions and Draw or Design a Church

Answer questions about the story and design something you might create for a church in which you would like to worship the Lord.

How Did They Build the Temple?

Building the temple required thousands of people and various materials. It took eleven years to complete. Brainstorm ways in which people might have done this without machines or motorized vehicles.

### Additional Project and Activity Choices for Parents and Teachers

Build a Model of Solomon’s Temple

Build a high quality scale model of Solomon’s temple that includes all the furnishings. You will need stiff paper for printing. Available at: <https://newchurchvineyard.org/file/project-build-a-model-of-solomons-temple-1-kings-5-6.pdf>

A Chart of the Kings of Israel and Judah

As you learn about the kings of Israel and Judah, complete a chart. As you fill in the spaces, think about whether the king is good or evil. Available at: <https://newchurchvineyard.org/file/activity-a-chart-of-the-kings-of-israel-and-judah-1-kings-2-kings.pdf>

# Building the Temple

## 1 Kings 5, 6

### Vocabulary

**intricate**—detailed or complicated  
**embellished**—decorated to make it attractive  
**cherubim**—a protective winged angelic being

### David's Wish Is Remembered

David wanted to build a house for the Lord, but the Lord had told him he was not to do so. His son, who would sit on the throne after him, would build the house or temple.

Solomon gave the reason in his words to Hiram, king of Tyre.

“You know how my father David could not build a house for the name of the Lord his God because of the wars which were fought against him on every side, until the Lord put his foes under the soles of his feet?” (1 Kings 5:3)

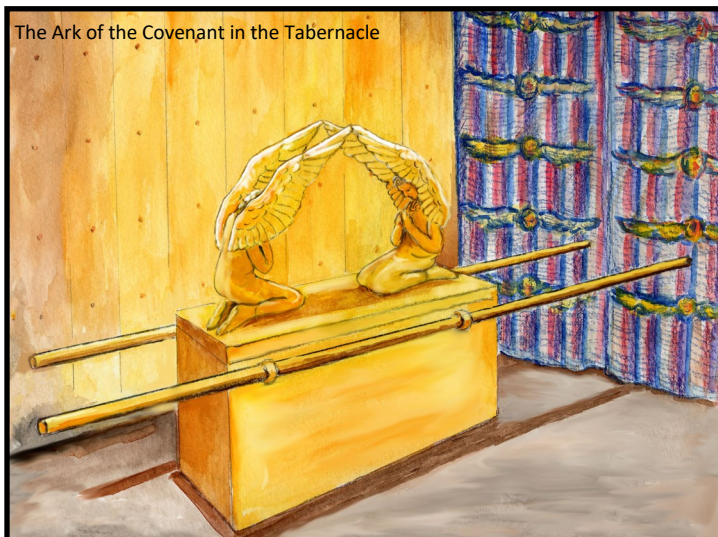
Solomon knew his father wished to build a temple, but he also knew the conditions that must be met first. Now that there was peace in the land, Solomon could fulfill David's dream.

### A Home for the Ark

Since the days when Moses led the children of Israel through the wilderness, the tabernacle was their only designated place to worship the Lord. The tabernacle was not large enough for all the

people to enter. Only the priests were allowed to enter it.

You might remember that the Lord had given very specific directions about how the tabernacle was to be built, what the furniture was to look like, and how it was to be used. He also gave clear directions for the intricate ritual that was to be performed during the worship of the Lord. Everything about the tabernacle and the worship there had special significance. The pieces and of furniture



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rituals represent spiritual ideas—ideas about the Lord and how people receive Him into their hearts and minds.

Although the children of Israel did not know these spiritual ideas, they regarded the tabernacle itself as sacred. They believed that God was present in the furnishings and rituals themselves. The most important piece of furniture in the tabernacle was the Ark, which housed the tables of stone on which the Ten Commandments were written. It was kept in a special place in the tabernacle—the Holy of Holies where only the high priest could enter at designated times of the year.

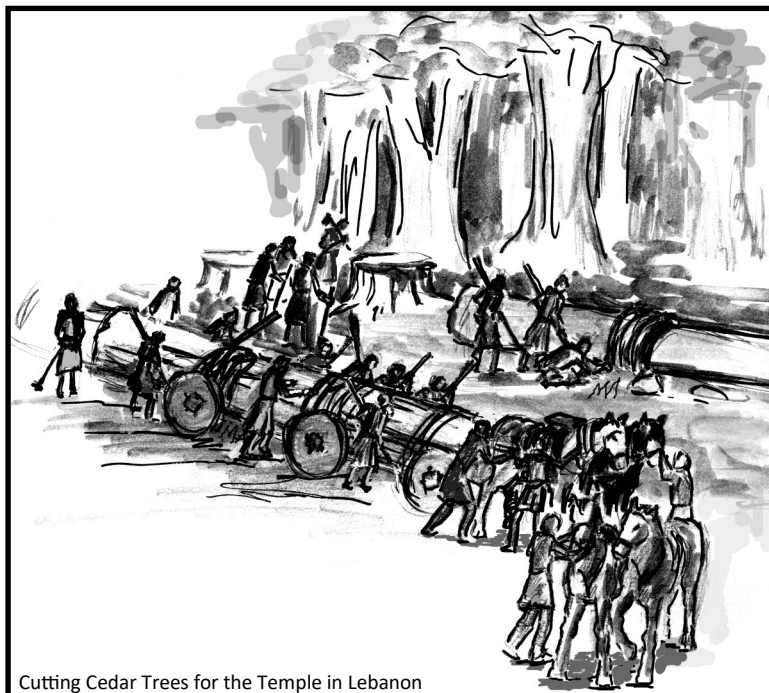
In a number of stories in the Word preceding the story of Solomon, the power of the Lord’s presence with the Ark is shown. Can you recall any of those stories?

The presence of the Ark could bring blessings or it could bring destruction depending on how the people who possessed it regarded the Lord and His commandments. You can imagine that Solomon would want to make the new home for the Ark wonderful. He believed its sacredness would ensure the Lord’s presence in Israel and bring prosperity for the people of Israel.

### The Temple Is Built

Solomon spared no cost to make the temple spectacular. To build it he used all the gold, silver, copper, precious stones, and beautiful cloth taken as spoil in the wars from the time of the exodus out of Egypt to his own anointing. Those things had been put aside as belonging to the Lord, to be used in repairing the tabernacle and its furnishings. Everything that was not used was saved for building the temple and making its furnishings.

The temple was larger and more expensive than the tabernacle. A great many men helped to build it. Solomon asked Hiram, the king of Tyre, who “had always loved David”, to help him by sending great cedar trees from the Lebanon mountains. The trees were cut down in forests and slid down the



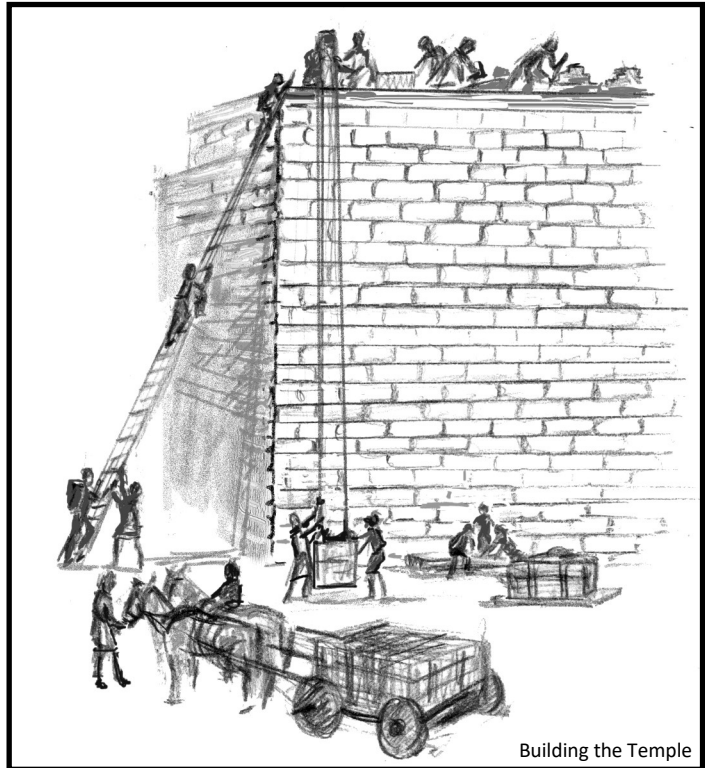
Cutting Cedar Trees for the Temple in Lebanon

mountains to the Great Western Sea. There, they were fastened together into rafts, floated down the sea to a place opposite the city of Jerusalem. Then they were then pulled 2700 feet up above sea level to the place where the temple was to be built. 183,300 men worked for seven years to build the temple. They did not do all the work on site in Jerusalem, nor did they work every day. Few of the men were skilled workers when the temple was begun. The only tools they had were hand tools—saws, axes, and chisels. But even with modern machinery, it would take many months to reproduce Solomon’s temple.

While Solomon was building the temple, the Word of the Lord came to him.

“Concerning this temple which you are building, if you walk in My statutes, execute My judgments, keep all My commandments, and walk in them ... I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake my people.” (1 Kings 6:12,13)

The Word does not tell us how Solomon received these words. We are only told that Solomon continued to have work done on the temple, having it embellished with wooden paneling and floors so that no stone was seen in the temple. He had two large cherubim carved for the inner chamber in which the Ark was to be placed. They faced each other and their wings touched so that they could reach over the Ark to protect it. Beautiful images of palms, cherubim, flowers and flower buds were carved in the wood of the doors and walls. Then Solomon covered everything inside the temple with gold, including the floors.



### The Temple Is Completed

It took eleven years to finish the temple. Like the tabernacle, it had three areas for worship—the outer court, the outer sanctuary, and the inner sanctuary or the “Holy of Holies.” You can imagine how magnificent it must have been!

### We Can Be a Temple

Solomon took great care when building the temple because the Lord led him in every detail. Every aspect of the temple had a special meaning in heaven, just like the tabernacle. The tabernacle and the temple represent the Lord’s church and His heavens. The Lord’s church is wherever people know and love and obey Him. You too can be like the tabernacle and the temple when you receive the Lord’s truths into your mind, love them and do them. Your mind is where you choose loving feelings, wise thoughts, kind words and deeds. It is the center of your existence, just as the tabernacle and the temple were to be the center of the Israelites’ existence.

However, just as the tabernacle and the temple had to be built, you have to build the temple within your mind. You do this a little bit every day as you make the daily decision to follow the Lord’s commandments, to take the time to learn how to do that, and then consciously make your body do the work that is necessary to live a good life. You become more and more like the tabernacle of the Israelites or the temple Solomon had built to receive the Lord and His blessings. To the Lord there is nothing more magnificent than a person who chooses to live a good life on earth and in heaven.

## Activity Overview

### Recitation

Learn the recitation by heart.

“Behold, I propose to build a house for the name of the Lord my God, as the Lord spoke to my father David, saying, ‘Your son, whom I will set on your throne in your place, he shall build the house for My name.’” (1 Kings 5:5)

### Projects and Activities (for answers, see back of lesson)

Choose one or two.

Answer Questions and Draw or Design a Church

Answer the questions and draw or design something you might create for a church in which you would like to worship the Lord.

How Did They Build the Temple?

Building the temple required thousands of people and various materials. It took eleven years to complete. Brainstorm ways in which people might have done this without machines or motorized vehicles.

## **Answer Questions and Draw or Design a Church**

1 Kings 5, 6

1. What king had “always loved David”?
2. What did Solomon now “propose to build”?
3. To what king did Solomon ask for cedar and fir trees?
4. On what high mountains did those cedar and fir trees grow?
5. How were the cedar and fir trees brought to Jerusalem?
6. What did Solomon give in return to the king who sent him the trees?
7. What was unique about the way the stones for the temple were finished? (See chapter 6, verse 7.) Why do you think Solomon wanted it done that way?
8. What part of you is like the tabernacle and the temple? Why is that part of you like the tabernacle and the temple?
9. Using the descriptions of the temple in 1 Kings 5, draw a picture or a design of something you might create for a church in which you would like to worship the Lord.



## How Did They Build the Temple?

The building of the temple required thousands of people, many different materials, and eleven years to complete. How did they build such a magnificent structure without machines, man-made materials like steel and plastic, or motorized vehicles? What tools did they use? How did they transport materials? How did they move everything to the site of the temple AFTER it had been hewn and carved? How did they attach things to each other?

Listed below are some of the activities involved in building the temple. After each one, give your idea of how it was achieved. Get creative, but try to keep your ideas realistic. You might find some ideas on the internet.

Activity	Possible Methods and Tools
Transport the cedar trees from the mountains to the rafts and from the rafts to Jerusalem.	
Quarry “large stones, costly stones and hewn stones.” (I Kings 5:17)	
Pile the hewn stone to form the 30 cubit (45 feet) high walls.	
Panel all the walls of the temple with “beams and boards of cedar.” (I Kings 6:9)	
Overlay the whole temple with pure gold.	
Carve <b>every</b> wall with figures of cherubim, palm trees and flowers.	

# Answers

## Lesson 4

Answer Questions and Draw or Design a Church

1. Hiram, king of Tyre, 2. A Temple, 3. Hiram of Tyre, 4. Lebanon, 5. Floated down the Great Western Sea and pulled up the mountains, 6. Wheat and oil, 7. The stones were shaped at the quarry so there would be no noise in the temple, 8. Your mind.