

God Works through  
Prophets and Kings

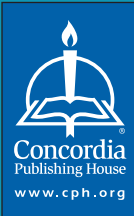
OLD TESTAMENT 4

Level  
2

EXPLORE

| CROSS EXPLORATIONS®: GOD WORKS THROUGH PROPHETS AND KINGS |                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| LESSON                                                    | TITLE/SCRIPTURE                                                                 | KEY POINT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 1                                                         | The Wisdom of Solomon<br>1 Kings 3                                              | Solomon, though wise, needed what we and all sinners need: Christ, Wisdom Himself, and the forgiveness He brings.                                                                                                                                                  |
| 2                                                         | Solomon Builds the Temple<br>1 Kings 5–6                                        | Though God resided within the Old Testament temple, He was hidden behind the veil in the Most Holy Place. Jesus is the unveiled Most Holy Place, accessible to all, enfolding believers in the arms of His Word and Sacraments.                                    |
| 3                                                         | God Provides for Elijah<br>1 Kings 17                                           | Just as God provided food and life for Elijah, the widow, and her son, so He provides food, forgiveness, and life eternal for us in Christ.                                                                                                                        |
| 4                                                         | Elijah and the Prophets of Baal<br>1 Kings 18:20–46                             | Just as the true God revealed Himself on the altar of Mount Carmel, so on the cross-shaped altar of Mount Calvary, Jesus revealed, once and for all, that He alone is the real God who loves us enough to die for us.                                              |
| 5                                                         | Elijah Is Taken to Heaven<br>2 Kings 2:1–15                                     | Elijah, like Enoch before him, was taken into heaven alive. Jesus, who is our great Elijah, ascended alive into heaven for us and our salvation.                                                                                                                   |
| 6                                                         | Naaman and Elisha<br>2 Kings 5:1–14                                             | The Word of God spoken by the prophet was in and with the water of the Jordan to restore the flesh of Naaman. The Word of God spoken by the pastor is in and with the water of Baptism to cleanse us of our sin and restore us as children of the heavenly Father. |
| 7                                                         | Jonah<br>Book of Jonah                                                          | Just as Jonah was swallowed up in the belly of the fish for three days, so Jesus, in His crucifixion, was baptized into the sea of death, drowned in our sin, devoured by the grave, and spewed forth alive again on the third day so that He might save us all.   |
| 8                                                         | Hezekiah Prays<br>2 Kings 18–19                                                 | Hezekiah prayed in faith to God and was delivered. Jesus, our mediator and advocate with the Father, intercedes for us, granting us deliverance from sin, death, and the devil.                                                                                    |
| 9                                                         | Jeremiah and God’s New Covenant<br>Jeremiah 1:4–10; 29:1–14; 31:31–34; 33:14–16 | God promised to restore His wayward people, pointing them to a new covenant and a righteous Branch of David. Jesus, the promised Branch, fulfilled this covenant of righteousness for Jeremiah, Israel, and all believers.                                         |
| 10                                                        | The Three Men in the Fiery Furnace<br>Daniel 3                                  | Just as Jesus was with the three men in the fiery furnace and saved them, so our Savior is with us in His Word and Sacraments, sustaining us when we suffer for His name.                                                                                          |
| 11                                                        | Daniel in the Lions’ Den<br>Daniel 6                                            | Jesus, who saved Daniel, would Himself be given over to the satanic lion to save the world.                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 12                                                        | God’s People Go Home<br>Ezra 1–3; 7:11–28; Nehemiah 2:1–8; 12:27–43             | God used unbelieving kings to restore His exiled people to Jerusalem according to His will. God sent Jesus, the King of kings, to Jerusalem to restore His wayward people to Himself forever.                                                                      |
| 13                                                        | Esther<br>Book of Esther                                                        | In the actions of Esther, we see the pattern of deliverance that God sketches throughout the story of Israel, a pattern that finds its fulfillment in Jesus, our Savior.                                                                                           |





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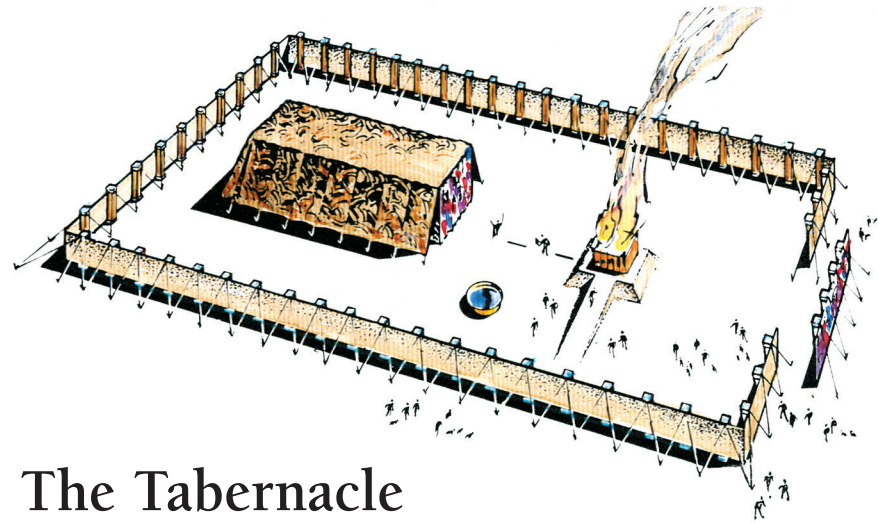
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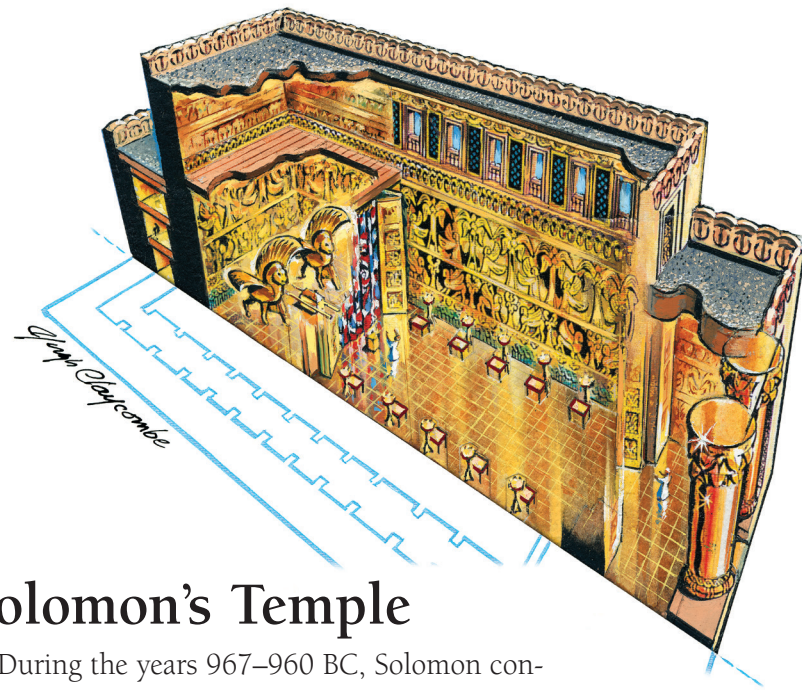
Teacher Leaflets  
Grades 4–6

# God's House



## The Tabernacle

God's first earthly dwelling was constructed near Mount Sinai in about 1446 BC, as the people of Israel began their forty years in the wilderness. It served as God's visible house on earth for more than five hundred years.



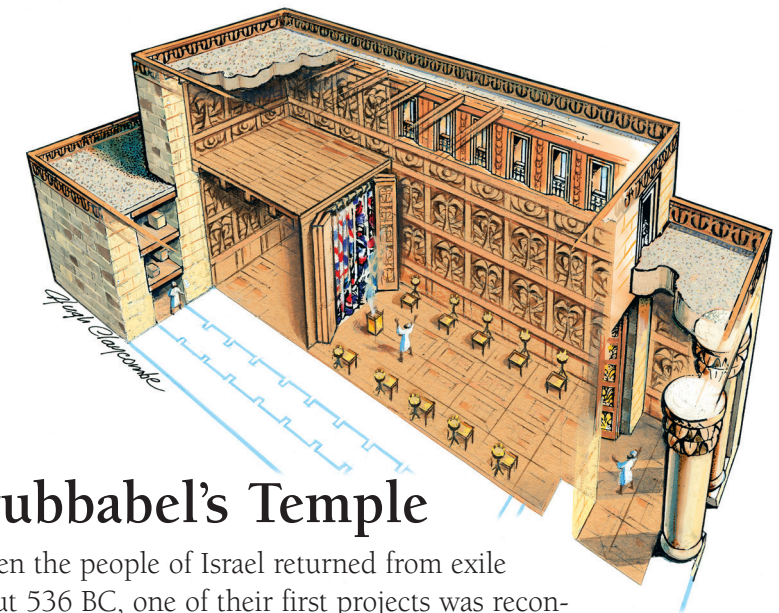
## Solomon's Temple

During the years 967–960 BC, Solomon constructed the first permanent house of the Lord. It served as the center of Israel's worship for more than four hundred years. It was destroyed in 586 BC when Babylon conquered Jerusalem.



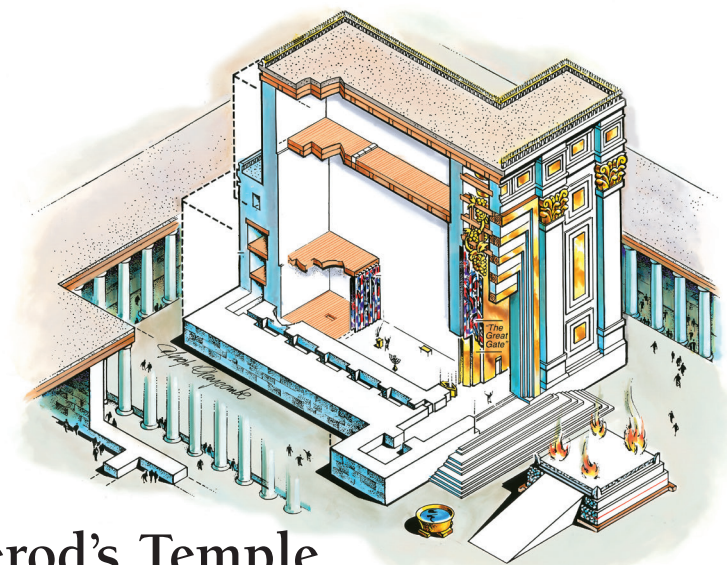
## Immanuel, God with Us

Jesus, God's Son, came to earth as the infant son of Mary in about 6 BC. He was called Immanuel, which means "God with us," for in Him, God dwelled bodily among His people. His suffering and death were the ultimate and final sacrifice for sin. In Jesus, God's people now have full access to the Father. He is our living temple.



## Zerubbabel's Temple

When the people of Israel returned from exile in about 536 BC, one of their first projects was reconstruction of the temple. In an effort led by Zerubbabel, a civic leader among the returning exiles, this more modest temple took twenty years to be completed. It remained in use until it was replaced by King Herod, more than five hundred years later.



## Herod's Temple

King Herod, though no friend of the Jews, funded a more elaborate replacement for the temple to win support among the people he ruled. Begun in about 20 BC, the construction of the sanctuary of the temple took eighteen months. The outer courts were not completed until AD 64. This temple was destroyed by Roman troops in AD 70 and was never rebuilt.



# Wisdom Is Ours

If you have time, use this section to explore more Bible verses about wisdom.

The missing words in James 1:5 are **wisdom, ask, and given**; in Proverbs 2:6 are **wisdom, mouth, and knowledge**; in Colossians 2:3 are **hidden and wisdom**; and in James 3:17 are **wisdom, pure, mercy, and sincere**.

## Say

Solomon saw his weakness and inability to do the job, so he prayed for an understanding heart. We, too, find ourselves unable to do the work God has for us. Like Solomon, we can pray, asking God for wisdom.

The missing words in Proverbs 9:10 are **fear, LORD, beginning, wisdom, and Holy One**; and in Psalm 111:10 are **fear, LORD, beginning, wisdom, and understanding**.

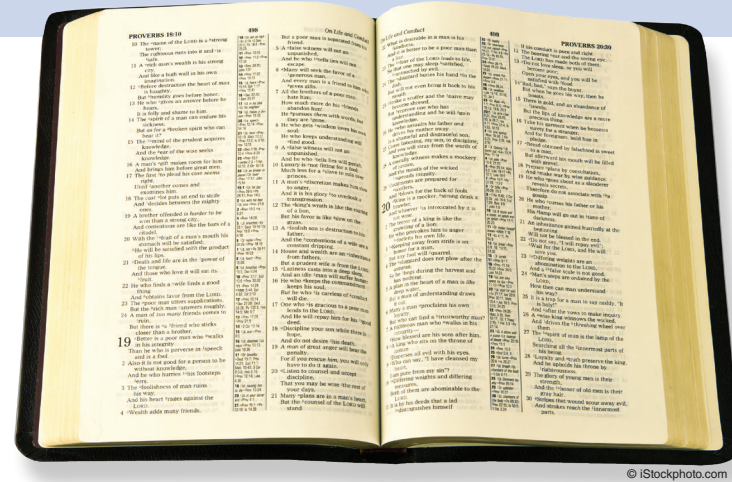
## Discuss

Sometimes we wish for money, for popularity with people around us, and for things that we don't really need. What did Solomon need that we and all sinners need? **Solomon and all sinners need Jesus Christ, Wisdom Himself, and the forgiveness He brings. Jesus is our Wisdom, our Righteousness, and our Salvation.**

Conclude your session by repeating this Key Point for the lesson:

## Say

Solomon, though wise, needed what we and all sinners need: Christ, Wisdom Himself, and the forgiveness He brings.



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# Explore

LESSON 1

## Preparing the Lesson

# The Wisdom of Solomon

1 Kings 3

Date of Use



## Key Point

Solomon, though wise, needed what we and all sinners need: Christ, Wisdom Himself, and the forgiveness He brings.

## Law/Gospel

The fear of the Lord—reverence for God and trust in Him—is the beginning of wisdom, yet, in my sin, I am unwise, failing to trust in the Lord above all things. **Jesus, Wisdom personified, gives to me and all who believe in Him a share of His wisdom, that is, Himself.**

## Context

Solomon, the second child of David and Bathsheba, was Israel's third king. A "little child" when he assumed the throne (1 Kings 3:7), he reigned forty years (tenth century BC). Right after becoming king, he settled some old political scores from his father's reign (2:13–46); then "the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon" (v. 46).

The nation expanded its borders, there was money galore, the temple was built, and Israel was relatively at peace with its neighbors. But not all was well. Solomon, though "he was wiser than all other men" (4:31), foolishly overtaxed and overworked his citizens and contracted alliances with Gentile nations. Worst of all, his pagan wives "turned away his heart after other gods" so that he "did what was evil in the sight of the LORD" (11:4, 6). As a result, after his death the nation split into the Northern Kingdom (Israel) and the Southern Kingdom (Judah).

## Commentary

Wisdom has little to do with a person's IQ. There are high school dropouts with more true wisdom than the Ivy League intelligentsia. How can this be? Wisdom is not a human achievement but a divine endowment; it is received, not achieved. Wisdom is keeping one's thoughts, deeds, and words in sync with the divine will in all matters of life. The wise look down from heaven to earth; that is, they see life

through God's eyes. And this they do by having a listening heart.

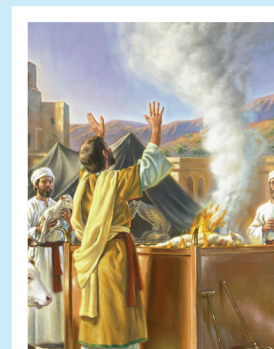
Young Solomon prayed for an "understanding mind" (3:9), which in the Hebrew is literally a "listening heart." And what do the ears of the heart listen for? The voice of wisdom—that is, the voice of Christ Himself—verbalizing His will and ways through the Sacred Scriptures.

Moses preached that when Israel was given a king, the king was to "write for himself in a book a copy of this law" (Deuteronomy 17:18). This Scripture was to "be with him, and he shall read in it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God" (v. 19). The divine Word creates the fear of the Lord, which in turn is the beginning of wisdom. And that Word is heard only by those to whom Christ has given a listening heart.

Sadly, even those with such a heart also heed other voices, as did Solomon—voices of lust or greed or malice, voices that lead astray even the wisest of men. This king who so wisely decided the case of the two prostitutes would himself go whoring after other gods in his twilight years (1 Kings 11:4).

Solomon, though a wise man, needed what all sinners need: Christ, Wisdom Himself, and the forgiveness He brings. This One who is greater than Solomon gives us more than a listening heart—He gives us His own heart, pulsating with love and absolution that knows no bounds.

To hear an in-depth discussion of this Bible account, visit [cph.org/podcast](http://cph.org/podcast) and listen to our **Seeds of Faith** podcast each week.



Painting by Greg Copeland © CPH

Level  
2

# Start

## Get Ready

Read 1 Kings 3; review the Key Point and Law/Gospel Points.

Read **Preparing the Lesson**.

Review and adapt the activities suggested in this leaflet to suit your students and the time you have available.

Pray that God blesses the students through His Word.

## Bible Memory Verse

The LORD gives wisdom. Proverbs 2:6

Welcome your students as they arrive. Organize them in pairs to talk about the biggest job they have ever had to do.

### Say

**With your partner, talk about the biggest, most important job you have ever had to do.**

### Ask

**What was it? How did you know what to do? Did you need help?**

Allow the students a few moments to share their responses with each other. Then give the students a personal example. Tell about a time you asked God to help you do a big and important job (such as teaching Sunday School).

### Say

**In today's lesson, someone has a job bigger than any of us can imagine. Let's find out what he did.**

Distribute Student Leaflet 1. Read, or have a student volunteer read, the introduction on page 1 of the leaflet. Take time to look at the painting of Solomon and his priests. Explain that "high places," the tops of hills, were often considered sacred places both for the Israelites and their pagan neighbors. In this painting, Solomon offers a sacrifice.

# Read

Direct the students to the inside of the leaflet. Organize the class into two groups. The boys can read 1 Kings 3:1–15, and the girls can read 1 Kings 3:16–28.

## 1 Kings 3:1–15

After the boys read this section, answer the following questions.

**What did Solomon ask for?**

Solomon asked for "an understanding mind to govern Your people, that I may discern between good and evil" (v. 9).

**What did God say He would give Solomon?**

God would give King Solomon a wise and discerning mind. He promised to give Solomon riches and honor.

**What final promise did God give to Solomon?**

He also promised Solomon a long life if Solomon would keep His Commandments and walk in His ways.

### Say

A discerning mind could also be called a "listening heart," a heart that listens to God's Word. Find the first heart on your leaflet. Draw some ears on the heart to help you remember. Only a heart that listens to God's Word could make wise decisions. We do this imperfectly and often sin, but our Savior did it perfectly for us. He is true Wisdom. He is our Savior.

## 1 Kings 3:16–28

### Say

God kept His promise, giving Solomon wisdom. In 1 Kings 3:16–28, we find an example of Solomon's ability to govern.

Invite the girls to read this section. Then answer the questions.

**What argument did Solomon resolve?**

Two women came to Solomon with a baby. They both claimed to be the mother.

**How did he do this?**

The king said he would cut the baby in two pieces and give each mother half of the child. He knew the real mother would not want her child to be killed. True wisdom is not just getting the facts. Solomon revealed which woman truly cared for the child.

### Say

**Our Bible Memory Verse for this week is short, but it is a good reminder of where we can go for wisdom.**

Read the words with the students.



# Look

Read to the students the information (reprinted here from the student leaflet) under "Solomon, Man of God." Ask the students to fill in the missing words.

## Solomon, Man of God

Scripture records much of the wisdom of Solomon. The Bible credits him with writing three thousand proverbs and more than one thousand songs (1 Kings 4:32). He is also the author or coauthor of **three** books in the Bible—Proverbs, Song of Solomon, and Ecclesiastes. In addition to his literary works, Solomon extended the borders of Jerusalem. He appointed chief officials including secretaries, recorders, priests, personal advisers, and labor managers. He also named twelve governors to help administer the kingdom.

Israel thrived under Solomon's reign. As Solomon's kingdom expanded, so did his wealth. His household alone used 180 bushels of **flour**, 360 bushels of **meal**, ten head of stall-fed **oxen**, twenty head of pasture-fed **cattle**, a hundred **sheep** and **deer** and other meats each day, all to support his own family and his servants, officials, and their families (1 Kings 4:22–23). He had 40,000 stalls of **horses** for his chariots and 12,000 **horsemen**, as well as chariots, a fleet of **ships** (1 Kings 10:26), and a huge amount of **gold** (1 Kings 4:26). In fact, his yearly revenue was more than 666 talents of gold—about 25 tons—as he did business with merchants, kings, and other traders (1 Kings 10:14–15).

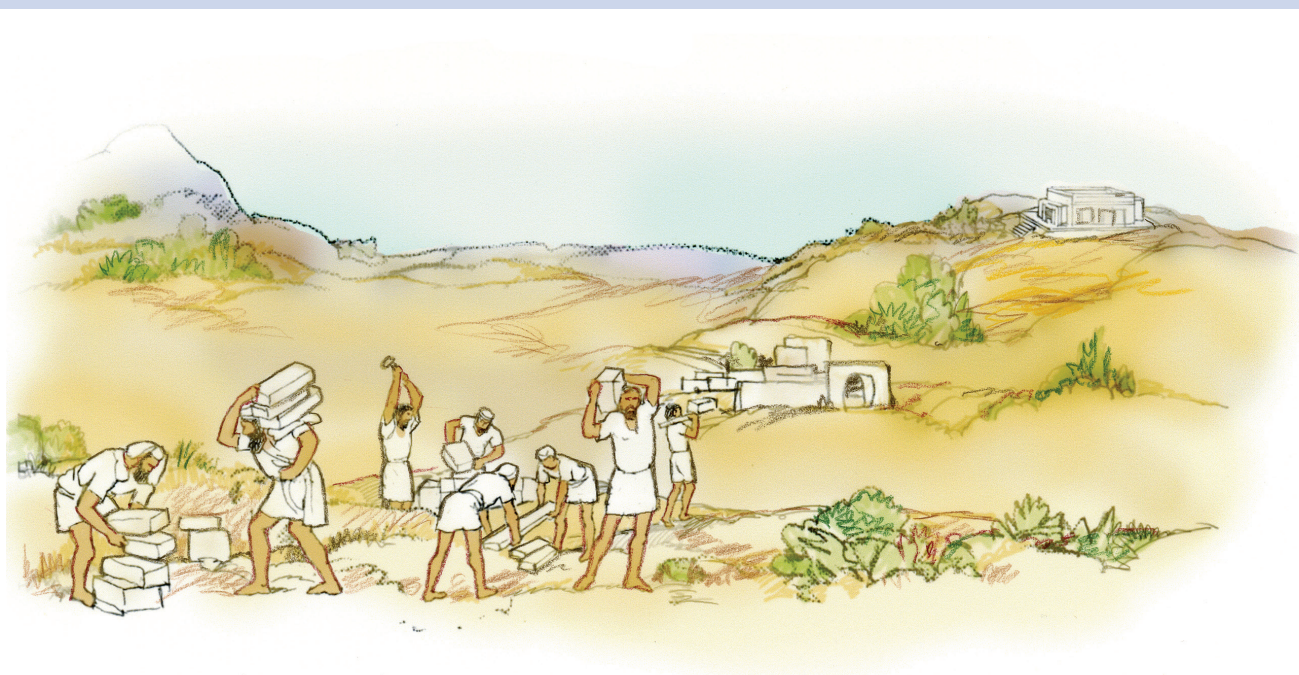
Indeed, Solomon had many blessings from God. He was known throughout the world. His reign was one of peace and prosperity for Israel as he followed in the footsteps of his father, David. God's greatest gift to Solomon was faith in the promise of a Savior from sin, One who would be a descendant of both David and Solomon—Jesus! Jesus is our Savior too.

To conclude, ask students to share what fact about Solomon surprised them the most.

## At Home

Briefly point out the "At Home" section of the leaflet, and encourage the students to share with their families the leaflet and what they have learned in this lesson, especially the questions printed there.

If you have extra time, review this activity with your students; otherwise, encourage them to complete it at home.



## Solomon's Construction Workers

Look again at 1 Kings 5:9–18. Direct the students to “Solomon's Construction Workers” so they can find out how many workers were needed to build the temple.

Provide calculators, if necessary, for the wheat and oil calculations.

30,000 men drafted by Adoniram to work on the temple

10,000 number of laborers in each one-month shift

70,000 burden-bearers

80,000 stonecutters

3,300 chief officers

The figure of 20,000 cors of wheat equals 120,000 bushels, and 20,000 cors of oil equals 4,400,000 liters.

The bushel basket and two-liter soda bottle may help students visualize the payment Solomon made each year (for three years) for the timber.

## Preparing the Lesson

# Solomon Builds the Temple

1 Kings 5–6

Date of Use



### Key Point

Though God resided within the Old Testament temple, He was hidden behind the veil in the Most Holy Place. Jesus is the unveiled Most Holy Place, accessible to all, enfolding believers in the arms of His Word and Sacraments.

### Law/Gospel

In my sin, I want to keep God at a distance; I don't want Him to see who I really am. **God, in His love, draws me near to Him through His Son, Jesus, the Word made flesh. He tabernacles (dwells) with me and all believers through Word and Sacrament, forgiving my sin.**

### Context

David desired to build a “house of cedar” for God, to replace the tent in which his Lord had been residing (2 Samuel 7). But the Lord declared that Solomon would be the one to build such a house. Work on the temple was begun 480 years after Israel left Egypt, around 967 BC (1 Kings 6:1), and was completed seven years later (v. 38). It consisted of two main parts: the Most Holy Place (Holy of Holies) and the Holy Place. It was a sight so dazzlingly beautiful that it was deemed an “exalted house” for the King of kings (8:13). Yet it was only temporary. The Babylonians destroyed it in 587 BC.

### Commentary

In his prayer at the dedication of the temple, Solomon asked, “But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain You; how much less this house that I have built!” (8:27). The purpose of the temple was not to put a structural straitjacket on God. He would remain omnipresent, but at the temple, He would be omni-accessible, as it were. One might say there is a continuum of God's presence in the Old Testament.

At one end, He is “most present” in a theophany, or visible manifestation (as at Sinai; see Exodus 20). At the other end, He is “least present” in that He

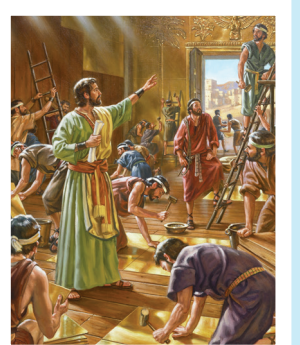
is everywhere. Between these two extremes lies His presence in the temple. He is more readily accessible there, and more constantly present in an explicit manner, than in the rest of creation.

The temple was God's earthly palace. Most important for Israel, it was also a hospital of sorts. Those sick with sin or ill with uncleanness would come there to be healed by their Doctor. His medicine was the sacrificial blood of animals, the benedictions of priests, the oil of anointing, the incense of prayers, the hymns of the Levitical choirs. The divine Word was in, with, and under each of these, working healing for those impaired in body or soul.

But, gift of God though it was, the temple was too little, too early. It was too little because something greater than the temple was still needed. And it was too early, for on the horizon was a new and better temple in which God would be even more present than in the sanctuary of old.

“Will God indeed dwell on the earth?” Solomon asks. “Yes,” we respond, as we gaze at the swaddled infant lying in the manger. For Jesus is our sanctuary—not merely the place in which God dwells, but God Himself dwelling as a flesh-and-blood man. Though God resided within the Old Testament temple, He was hidden behind the veil in the Most Holy Place. But not Jesus. He is our unveiled, human Most Holy Place, truly accessible to all, enfolding us in the arms of His Word and Sacraments.

To hear an in-depth discussion of this Bible account, visit [cph.org/](http://cph.org/) podcast and listen to our Seeds of Faith podcast each week.



Painting by Greg Copeland © CPH

# Start

## Get Ready

Read 1 Kings 5–6; review the Key Point and Law/Gospel Points.

## Preparing the Lesson.

Review and adapt the activities suggested in this leaflet to suit your students and the time you have available.

Pray that God blesses the students through His Word.

## Bible Memory Verse

It is good to be near God. Psalm 73:28

Welcome your students.

Display a box containing a Bible, but don't reveal the contents in the box. Gift-wrap the box in front of the class, using ribbons and bows to make it special. As you're doing so, ask the students to guess what's in the box that has now become a present. Suggest that a beautiful gift deserves beautiful wrapping.

## Say

**You wouldn't use wrapping like this to wrap an old used sneaker, would you? No. You use packaging that reflects the importance of the gift that's inside. Today's lesson concerns the packaging of an important gift, a gift from God Himself.**

Save the package to open when you teach the Bible Memory Verse.

Distribute Student Leaflet 2. Read, or have a student volunteer read, the introduction on page 1 of the student leaflet.

# Read

Direct the students to the inside of the leaflet. You may also want to display the poster found on the inside of the cover leaflet.

Invite two capable readers to read aloud two letters from 1 Kings 5. The first letter in 1 Kings 5:3–6 is from Solomon to King Hiram. The other letter is Hiram's response, found in verses 8–9.

Before the readings, ask a student to read the questions.

## Say

**As you listen to our readers, watch for the answers to these questions.**

Have the student volunteers read the two letters. Then have all students skim verses 10–18 and discuss the questions.

## Ask

**What kind of wood did Hiram provide?** Cedar and cypress

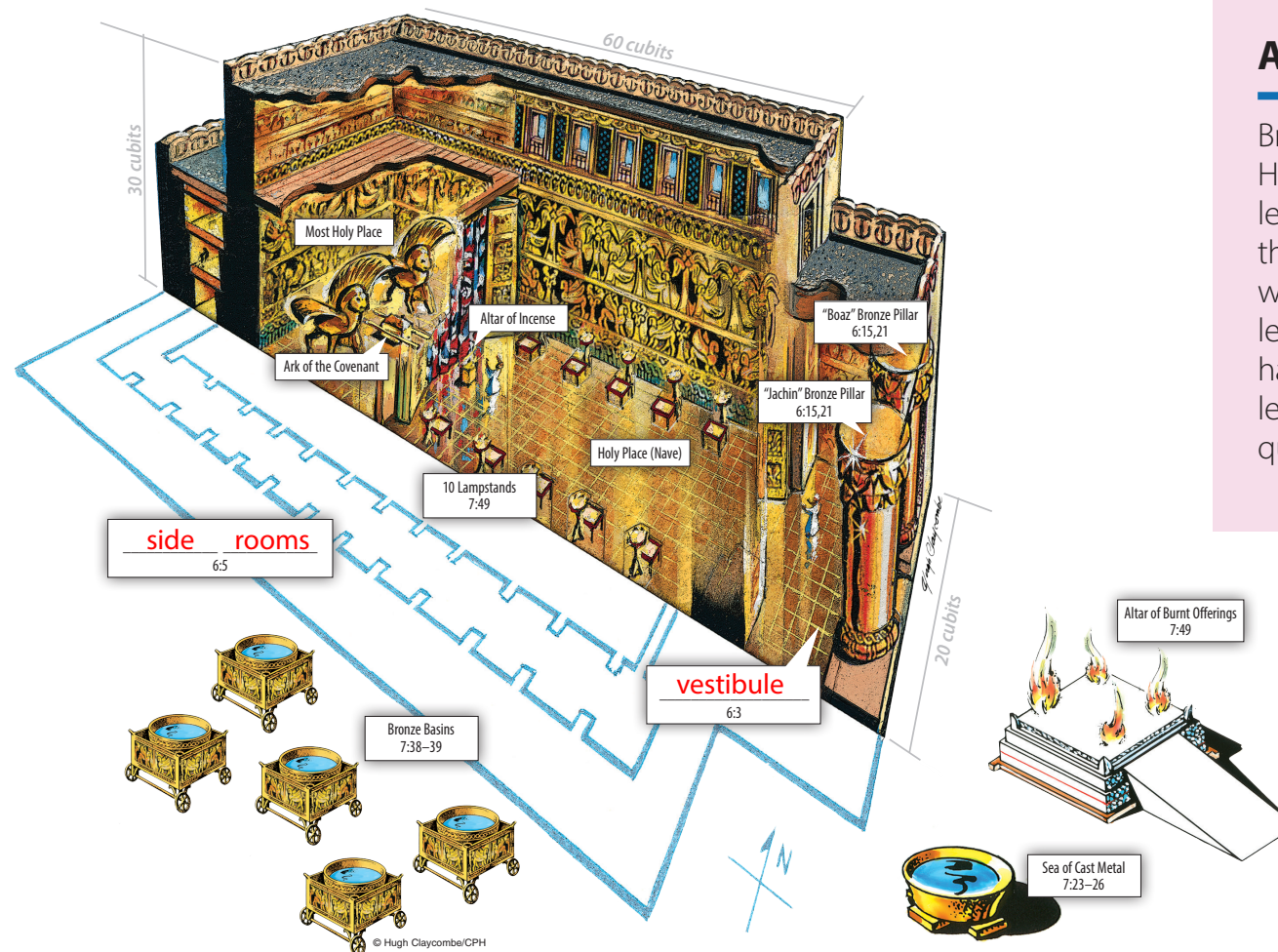
**What did Solomon give Hiram in return?** 20,000 cors of wheat and 20,000 cors of beaten oil. A cor was around 6 bushels or 220 liters.

**How did Solomon get the manpower to build the temple?** He drafted forced labor of around 30,000 men, with an additional 70,000 burden-bearers, 80,000 stonecutters, and 3,300 officers. In addition, Hiram provided labor, as did the men of Gebal.

**How was the temple a blessing to God's people?**

At the temple, priests would offer sacrifices, reminding the people that God forgave their sins. The temple would be a reminder also that God was always with His people. God announces forgiveness of sins to us in our church and promises to be with us always too.

# Look



## 1 Kings 6:1–13

As you read aloud 1 Kings 6:1–13, point out specific parts of the temple that the students can label. Include the following:

Verse 2: dimensions of the temple (30 x 60 x 20 cubits)

Verse 3: the location and dimensions of the nave and vestibule, a room through which the priests would enter between the outside and the Holy Place

Verses 5–6, 8: the side rooms in three stories

Note that verse 7 states that hammers and axes were not heard during the construction. This portion of the work occurred at the quarry.

## Say

**Once the temple was built, it was time to finish the inside in order to prepare it for the ark of the covenant.**

**Note:** If needed, explain to the students the significance of the ark of the covenant. The chest of acacia wood overlaid with gold held the stone tablets with the Ten Commandments, a golden jar of manna, and Aaron's staff that had budded. When the ark was brought to the temple, it contained only the stone tables with the Ten Commandments.

Read 1 Kings 6:11–38. As you read, invite the students to add appropriate drawings around the temple plan.

They might wish to include the carvings of gourds and flowers that decorated the walls of the nave, the chains of gold that graced the front of the inner sanctuary, the cherubim of olive wood that were placed in the inner sanctuary, or the engravings of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers in the inner and outer rooms and on the doors.

## At Home

Briefly point out the "At Home" section of the leaflet, and encourage the students to share with their families the leaflet and what they have learned in this lesson, especially the questions printed there.

If you have access to the internet, you might want to locate examples of these decorative elements. There are also helpful drawings on page 544 of *The Lutheran Study Bible* (© 2009 Concordia Publishing House).

Display the package you wrapped at the beginning of class, containing the Bible (still wrapped).

## Say

**God dwelt with His people in the temple. Find the Bible Memory Verse, Psalm 73:28, on the front of the leaflet or in your Bible. What does it say about God? It is good for us to be near God. How does God come to be near us? In His Word and Sacraments**

Invite a student to open the gift you wrapped. Review the Gospel Point for this lesson.

**God, in love, draws us near to Him; in Jesus, He dwells among all believers in His Word and Sacraments.**

# Our Giving God

## Say

Surely the widow in Zarephath appreciated the gifts God bestowed upon her—especially having her son restored to life. But she may have failed to appreciate all the everyday gifts in her life. Often we do the same thing.

Direct the students to the back of the leaflet. Ask a volunteer to read the text. Set a timer for three minutes and ask the students to jot down as many gifts from God that they can find in the picture. Assure them that spelling doesn't count for now! There is space around the picture for the students to write. When the time is up, ask all

students to name things that were found, writing them on the board.

Sample answers, in general terms, are house, food, family, animals, plants, and the like. Your students may be far more specific. Did anyone say anything about the day belonging to God? What about life itself?

## Say

You found a lot of gifts from God, and you're right. He provides for us much more than we'll ever know. He loves to give to us, His children. In fact, you could call Him the Giver God.

