



LESSON 25

God's glory fills the temple

1 KINGS 8:1-9:9



God is present to hear His people when they pray.



“And listen to the plea of your servant and of your people Israel, when they pray toward this place. And listen in heaven your dwelling place, and when you hear, forgive” (1 Kgs 8:30).

Supporting Truths

1. God is present with His people.
2. God is too great to be contained by anything in creation.
3. God chooses to dwell with His people.
4. God is present to hear and forgive when His people pray with sincere hearts.
5. God's presence should lead to godly prayer.

Objectives

1. Describe the glory of God's presence that filled the temple.
2. Recite 1 Kings 8:27.
3. Identify God's dwelling place with Israel.
4. Count how many times Solomon asks God to hear His people when they pray toward the temple.
5. Describe Solomon's attitude during prayer.

STUDY THE BIBLE LESSON

God's glory fills the temple • 1 Kings 8:1–9:9



Lesson Summary

After Solomon built the temple, God's glory filled it with a dark cloud. God's glory is a mystery far beyond our comprehension, but He chose to be present in the temple with His people. He willingly came down to earth in order to dwell among His people. So Solomon prayed that God would continue to hear Israel's prayers and rescue them from their sins. God answered that He would, so long as Israel kept His covenant.

Spotlight on the Gospel

Just as God was kind enough to come down and dwell among His people in the temple, so He has graciously come down to us in the person of Jesus Christ. Now, through Jesus, God is present in us, so that we also are God's temple. So as Solomon's temple was intended to do, may our lives honor God's name, draw many people to Him, and communicate God's presence to those around us.

LAST WEEK



God gives Solomon
wisdom

1 Kings 2:1–4; 3:3–15

THIS WEEK



God's glory fills the
temple

1 Kings 8:1–9:9

NEXT WEEK



God punishes Solomon

1 Kings 11:1–43

UNITED KINGDOM

Lesson Commentary

God is present to hear His people when they pray.

One of God's promises to David was that David's son would build a temple for God (2 Sam 7:13). After giving Solomon great wisdom (1 Kgs 3), rest from all his enemies (5:3–5), and access to precious building materials (5:6–18), God kept His promise and Solomon's laborers began temple construction. For seven years Solomon's men labored on the temple, which was large and beautiful (1 Kgs 6). The temple reflected the holiness, majesty, and beauty of God. Like the tabernacle, it was the place where God's presence could dwell among His people, where forgiveness of sin was provided, and where God's people could worship the true God in the correct way.

The LORD's glory filled the temple (8:1–21)

After the completion of the temple, Solomon called all Israel to be part of the temple's dedication (8:1). He waited 11 months after the temple was completed to dedicate it, so that the dedication would happen on the Feast of Tabernacles (8:2; 6:38). This feast was a time of spiritual renewal when all Israel gathered to remember how God ended their wandering in the wilderness by bringing them into the promised land. So it was just the right time to dedicate the temple. The completed temple would have been a stunning illustration of Israel's security in the land and their renewed devotion to God.

The dedication began with moving the ark, which represented God's presence, into the temple (8:3–9). God confirmed His presence by filling the temple with the cloud of His *glory, the thick darkness that served as a symbol of God's holy presence* (8:10–13; Exod 40:34–35). The dark cloud showed that God was present with Israel in a way they could know and experience. But it also showed that God was much more than they could understand or appreciate, for the cloud hid the fullness of His presence (1 Tim 6:16). This is the truth the temple teaches us: the

God who is too great for us to fully comprehend (Rom 11:33) is willing to be present with His people.

Solomon then told the people that this event proved that God is *faithful* (1 Kgs 8:14–21). God was *acting according to His promises* to David (2 Sam 7:13–14) and to all Israel (Lev 26:12; Deut 12:5–11). In fact, God's faithfulness was even bigger than Solomon perhaps realized. Both Solomon and his temple were just a preview of the greater Son of David, Jesus Christ. Jesus would Himself be God's temple (John 2:21; Col 2:9), and He would build up believers and the Church as temples of God (Eph 2:19–22; 1 Cor 6:19). So all believers can join Solomon and Israel in praising God for His faithfulness to build His temple through David's line.

Solomon asked the LORD to hear the prayers of His people (8:22–53)

After speaking to the people, Solomon stood before the altar and offered a prayer of dedication for the temple. First, Solomon praised God for His unparalleled glory (8:23–26). He specifically mentioned The LORD's covenant faithfulness and steadfast love (8:23). Everything God had spoken with His mouth He had fulfilled with His hand (8:24). He was totally unlike the pagan gods who—like our modern false gods of health and wealth—promised everything but delivered nothing. The LORD alone is faithful, as the temple proved, and His faithfulness in the past is always the ground for our hope in the future (Isa 46:4; Rom 8:32).

Second, Solomon made a special request: he asked for the LORD's continued presence to hear when any Israelite turned to God and prayed toward the temple (1 Kgs 8:27–30). The LORD is so great that not even the highest heavens can contain Him (8:27), yet God graciously chose to reside among His creation in the temple. Solomon did not pray that God would

THINK ABOUT IT

God is too big for us to comprehend, but He comes down to our level so that we can know Him.



STUDY THE BIBLE LESSON

God's glory fills the temple • 1 Kings 8:1–9:9



actually be kept in the temple, but that God would graciously identify Himself with the temple (8:28–29) and hear from heaven when His people prayed toward the temple (8:30). There was nothing magical about

praying toward the temple. It represented God's presence and the worship of the true God, so praying toward the temple was a sign of dependence on God and devotion to God alone.



THINK ABOUT IT

God hears us when we call (1 John 5:14).

Third, Solomon sought God's forgiveness (1 Kgs 8:31–53). Most of the situations Solomon prayed about involved Israel's sin. The troubles Solomon mentioned are the curses God warned would come if Israel refused to keep God's commands, ultimately leading to exile (Lev 26; Deut 28). Solomon knew that Israel would sin, and he knew God would discipline them. So Solomon prayed for God's *mercy*, His *kindness to forgive*. Solomon prayed that God would hear from the temple and *forgive* all who repent. He asked God *to remove the charges against the sinner*. Even though Israel's sin would be very great, the temple gave hope to Israel—and to all sinners—by reminding that God's mercy is even greater. The God who wounds is also the God who heals (Deut 32:39; Hos 6:1). Solomon prayed humbly and reverently. He began his prayer by standing (1 Kgs 8:22), but by the end he was kneeling, humbled and overwhelmed by God's glorious presence in the temple (8:54). If the most glorious king of Israel humbled himself before the King of kings, shouldn't we?

Solomon blessed Israel (8:54–66)

As Solomon rose to his feet, he again spoke to Israel, praying for God to bless them. First, he asked again for God's presence with the people (8:54–57). God's presence empowered Moses (Exod 3:12), Joshua (Josh 1:9), and Gideon (Judg 6:12) to do amazing things for God. Second, he prayed that the LORD would draw the people near to Him, resulting in heartfelt obedience to

God's law. He prayed that the LORD would do this "as each day requires," recognizing that true obedience is a daily struggle, not a one-time experience (1 Kgs 8:58–59).

In these two blessings, Solomon's chief desire was for the LORD to be honored by all men as the one and only God (8:60–61). Finally, after many sacrifices, Israel went home with joyful hearts (8:62–66).

THINK ABOUT IT

The temple was the place of the LORD's presence among Israel, the center of Israel's worship of the LORD, and a testimony to all nations of the LORD's glory.



The LORD answered Solomon's prayer (9:1–9)

Years later, the LORD appeared to Solomon a second time to confirm that He had heard Solomon's prayer. He promised to be present in the temple (9:1–3) and to keep His covenant with David (9:4–5). But He warned that He would punish if Israel turned away from Him (9:6–9), setting the stage for the rest of Kings. Although He was always near and ready to bless from the temple, Israel repeatedly rejected God. So at the time the book of Kings was written, Israel was exiled and the temple destroyed, just as God had warned would happen.

In Christ, God came near to Israel again, but again they rejected Him (John 1:11). Yet in God's plan this led to Christ's death, which brings salvation to people from all nations (Acts 2:23, 38), just as Solomon prayed the temple would (1 Kgs 8:41–43; Gen 12:3). What the stone temple failed to do through Israel's disobedience, the fleshly temple of Jesus Christ has accomplished. Just as God promised to forgive the Israelites who repented and prayed toward the temple, so God now forgives those who repent and look to Christ for salvation (John 6:40). And just as God was present with Israel through the temple, so He is present with every believer through Christ living in us (Gal 2:20). May we respond as Israel did, with hearts full of joy.

Lesson Outline

God is present to hear His people when they pray.

AGES 3–5 LESSON OUTLINE



1. The LORD's glory filled the temple (8:1–21).
2. Solomon asked the LORD to hear the prayers of His people (8:22–66).
3. The LORD appeared to Solomon (9:1–9).

AGES 6–11 LESSON OUTLINE



1. The LORD's glory filled the temple (8:1–21).

- All Israel came to the temple's dedication (8:1–2).
- The priests carried the ark of the covenant into the temple (8:3–9).
- The glory of the LORD filled the temple (8:10–13).
- Solomon spoke of the LORD's faithfulness (8:14–21).

2. Solomon asked the LORD to hear the prayers of His people (8:22–53).

- Solomon praised God for His matchless glory (8:22–26).

- Solomon prayed knowing that God is too great to be kept in a temple (8:27).
- Solomon prayed that God would hear those who pray toward the temple (8:28–3).
- Solomon prayed that God would forgive those who repent (8:31–51).

3. Solomon blessed Israel (8:54–66).

- Solomon prayed that the LORD would be with His people Israel (8:54–57).
- Solomon prayed that the LORD would give Israel obedient hearts (8:58–59).
- Solomon prayed that the LORD would be honored as the true God (8:60–61).
- After many sacrifices, Israel went home with joyful hearts (8:62–66).

4. The LORD answered Solomon's prayer (9:1–9).

- The LORD heard Solomon's prayer and promised to be present in the temple (9:1–3).
- The LORD promised to keep His promises to David (9:4–5).
- The LORD warned that He would punish if Israel turned away from Him (9:6–9).



TEACH THE BIBLE LESSON

God's glory fills the temple • 1 Kings 8:1–9:9



Lesson Questions

Use these questions to teach or to review this week's lesson.



Ages 3–5 Lesson Questions

- 1. When the priests carried the ark into the temple, what did they see?**
They saw the dark cloud of God's glory filling the temple.
- 2. Could the temple hold God?**
No. He is too big for the whole world to hold Him.
- 3. What did Solomon ask God to do at the temple?**
Solomon asked God to hear Israel's prayers and forgive them at the temple.
- 4. What did the temple show Israel about God?**
The temple showed Israel that God was with them.



Ages 6–11 Lesson Questions

- 1. What did the ark of the covenant represent?**
The ark represented the presence of God.
- 2. What does the cloud of God's glory show us about how we can know God?**
It shows us that we can know something about God, but not everything about God.
- 3. How did the temple prove God's faithfulness?**
God had promised that David's son would build the temple, and now God kept His promise.
- 4. How could God be present in the temple if the whole world is too small to hold God?**
Solomon did not pray that God would actually be kept in the temple, but that God would graciously identify Himself with the temple.
- 5. What was so special about God's presence in the temple?**
God was present to be with His people, to hear their prayers, and to forgive their sins.
- 6. What can we learn about prayer from Solomon's prayer?**
Prayer is trusting God, praising God, confessing sin to God, asking God for forgiveness, asking God for things according to His will, and praying for God's people. Prayer must be humble.
- 7. How do we know that God heard Solomon's prayer?**
God appeared to Solomon a second time.
- 8. What did God require of Israel in order to be with them and hear their prayers?**
God required that they be committed to Him, obeying Him with their whole hearts.

Lesson Activities

Choose from the following ideas to introduce, illustrate, and apply this week's lesson.

AGES 3–5



INTRODUCE

DIFFERENT TYPES OF HOUSES

Bring in a few different types of houses: birdhouse, aquarium, hamster cage, etc. As you show each house to the children, ask them what type of animal lives there. Point out the differences between these types of houses and those lived in by humans. Then ask them what type of house God lives in. Tell them that God doesn't need a house like we do, but He allowed Solomon to build a house for Him. Today we're going to learn about the dedication of this house (temple).

BUILDING THE TEMPLE

Create a building center for the children. Bring in toys or safe tools that small children could build with. Ask the children to build the most magnificent house that they can think of. After the children are finished, discuss how they would build a house if they knew it was for God. Tell the children that in today's lesson we're going to hear about the dedication of the temple Solomon built for God.



ILLUSTRATE

WILLING TO DWELL

God is too great to be contained by anything in creation, but He chose to dwell among His people in the temple (1 Kgs 8:27). Illustrate this truth by choosing to sit in a tiny child's chair, or at a tiny child's table, or use crayons instead of a pencil or pen as you record attendance. Tell the children that even though you could use an adult size chair or sit at an adult size table or use something other than a crayon to write, you wanted to use something familiar to the children to show them how much you care about them.

TIN CAN TELEPHONE

Create a tin can telephone by connecting two tin cans with a piece of string. Bring this to class and show the children how it works. Then, ask the children how we can talk to God. Tell them that we don't need anything to talk to God. All we need to do is pray! And God is always ready to hear the prayers of His children (1 John 5:14).



APPLY

GOD'S FAITHFULNESS NECKLACE

See *Year 2 Craft Book, Book 2*.

Materials: Craft sheet, yarn, scissors, hole punch, glue, and crayons.

Directions: Pre-cut circles from craft sheet. Punch holes in the top of all circles. Have children color the circles. Then glue at least six pairs together. Put the circles on a piece of yarn and tie the yarn together to make a necklace.

God's Faithfulness Necklace
See *Year 2 Craft Book, Book 2*



TEACH THE BIBLE LESSON

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AGES 6–8



INTRODUCE

SOLOMON REMEMBERS HIS DAY

Use this monologue to introduce the lesson. Wearing the clothing of a king, walk into the room, sit down, and begin talking with yourself about your day. Talk about all the preparation that went into the day (11 months!), all the animals that were brought for sacrifice, and your prayer of dedication. Most importantly, talk about how incredible it was to see the Lord's glory fill the temple. Tell the children that today we're going to learn about the dedication of the temple Solomon built for God.

THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD

The faithfulness of God means that He always keeps His promises. Bring yarn of varying thicknesses into the class. Select some children to try to break the yarn. Our promises are like the pieces of yarn that sometimes get broken. But not God's. Bring out a very thick rope or towing chain—the bigger the better! God always keeps His promises. In today's lesson, Solomon praises God for His faithfulness in keeping the promises He made to his father David (1 Kgs 8:24).



ILLUSTRATE

WILLING TO STOOP

Bring a youth or child size baseball glove to class. Try to fit the glove on your hand. Ask the children how they think you'll do with this equipment. Then tell the children a potential reason for deciding to use such a small glove: wanting to show a young boy or girl how to use their new glove for the first time. Even though God cannot be contained by anything in creation (1 Kgs 8:27), He was willing to dwell among His people in the temple they had built for Him.

"TOO BUSY TO TALK"

Before class, make arrangements with another adult to call your cell phone multiple times during the lesson. When the phone rings, look at the number and say to the class, "I'm too busy to talk with this person right now." "Don't they know I'm in the middle of a lesson?" You might also give the phone to a child and tell them to answer it and tell the person that you're too busy to talk. Use this to talk about God's willingness to hear our prayers and forgive those who repent at all times—night or day (1 John 1:9; 5:14).



APPLY

BUILDING THE TEMPLE

See Year 2 Craft Book, Book 2.

Materials: Craft sheets, cotton balls, scissors, glue, and crayons.

Directions: Have children color and cut out the picture of the temple and all the temple pieces. Glue temple pieces to the appropriate locations on the temple. Make sure the doors are only glued on the outside edges so that they can still open. Glue cotton balls inside the doors to symbolize the glory of the LORD filling the temple. Glue the verse to the bottom of the temple.

Building the Temple
See Year 2 Craft Book, Book 2



AGES 9–11



INTRODUCE

NATIONAL MONUMENTS

Ask the children to describe some national monuments and tell why they are significant to this country. Ask what monuments they have visited and what made them go there. Or bring in pictures of various monuments, churches, and cathedrals and talk about how people visit these places. Then read 1 Kings 8:41–43 and talk about how God’s temple that Solomon built would be visited by many people who had heard about God and desired to know Him as Savior.

FOR YOUNG EARS ONLY

There are sound frequencies that only young people can hear. For example, anyone over the age of 18 will have a hard time hearing anything at 17,400 Hz. Try this with your class by playing this high-pitched sound and seeing if anyone (children and teachers) can hear it. These sounds can be downloaded on the internet (some phones may even have a special ringtone set to this frequency for teenagers). However, there is no frequency that escapes God’s notice. In today’s lesson, we’ll see that God is present to hear His people when they pray.



ILLUSTRATE

REFRIGERATOR ART

Have the children ever seen parents gush with joy over the coloring of a small child? The child might not have managed to color between the lines, but this didn’t stop mom or dad from praising their work. They may have even hung this picture on their refrigerator. This is the love of a parent who understands where their child is at and meets them at their level. This is also the love of God when He chose to dwell in the temple Solomon built for Him. The highest heaven cannot contain God (1 Kgs 8:27), but He still allowed His people to build a house for Him.

THE WORD BECAME FLESH

In the Old Testament God filled the tabernacle and temple with His presence (Exod 40:34; 1 Kgs 8:10). However, in the New Testament, God chose to reveal Himself in a much more personal way through becoming a man—Jesus (John 1:14). Jesus, while uncreated and eternal, took on humanity. In the incarnation, the infinite One became finite; the eternal One was conformed to time; the invisible One became visible; and the supernatural One became natural. Yet in all this Jesus did not cease to be God.



APPLY

THE TEMPLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Read 1 Corinthians 6:19–20 as a class. Explain that God now dwells within each individual Christian. This is an important truth to think about and understand. It means that the Holy Spirit is present with the Christian each and every time they sin. Ask the children to think through what they’ve done in the last day, week, and month. Explain that any sin was committed in the presence of God’s Spirit. Remind the children of God’s willingness to hear their prayers, and His willingness to forgive all those who repent.