

Explore It

FOR LEADERS



CREATING AN AMAZING SPACE TO CONNECT WITH GOD

 **1 Kings 6:11,29-35; Exodus 25:10-22**

In today's session we are thinking about the special places where we go to worship God and how these places are designed to connect us with him. We'll learn all about the splendour of King Solomon's Temple and consider places of worship in our local area.

Each child will need:

- Resources to create their ideal place to worship God, eg pens/paper, Lego, plasticine, paint ... – see Action It section

You will need:

- Pictures of a local church or cathedral
- Research about the local church or cathedral – see Start It section

Start It

Before this activity you will need to find pictures of a local church or cathedral and the answers to the questions below. It would be nice if the church was one that the children could potentially visit.

- **Say:** Just like last week, today's Bible story is all about King Solomon. God gave Solomon the important task of building the Temple and we'll discover more about the grand building he created later.

Ask:

- What's the most impressive building you've seen or been in? It could be a palace or castle, a sports stadium, or even a cathedral.
- What were you most impressed with?

- **Say:** We are going to start today by seeing how much you know about a local building.

Show the children a picture of the local church or cathedral.

Ask:

- What is this building?
- Have any of you visited it?
- What was it like?

- **Say:** Let's see how much you know about the building.

Perhaps you can provide multiple choice answers for the following questions.

Ask:

- How old is the building?
- How long did it take to build?
- How many people were involved in building it?
- Who designed the building?

If your building has any interesting quirks or stories linked to it, then incorporate these into the questions.

Sing It

- **Say:** We may not be building a physical temple here on earth, but we are definitely involved in building God's Kingdom. Today we're going to sing a song that talks about God building his Kingdom here on earth.

'Build your kingdom here' by Rend Collective (4 mins 16 secs)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=DqZX08DDWiA

Tell It

- **Say:** In the book of Exodus we read about the laws God gave to the people of Israel. These laws were known as the Ten Commandments, and they helped the people to understand how to live in a way that honoured God. The laws were written on large stone tablets that were special and sacred to the people. God wanted the people to keep the tablets safe and gave specific instructions on where they should be kept.

Ask:

- What do you think God asked the people to build, to hold the stone tablets?
- What do you think it looked like?

- **Say:** God's laws needed to be kept safe in a wooden box called the Ark of the Covenant. We can read in Exodus 25:10-22 to find out exactly how the box should be built.

Read:

'Use acacia wood and build an Ark. It must be [110 cm] long, [70 cm] wide and [70 cm] high. Cover the Ark of the Covenant inside and out with pure gold. And put a gold strip all around it. Make four gold rings for the Ark of the Covenant. Attach the gold rings to its four feet, two rings on each side. Then make poles from acacia wood and cover them with gold. Put the poles through the rings on the sides of the Ark. Use these poles to carry the Ark of the Covenant. These poles must always stay in the rings of the Ark of the Covenant. Do not take the poles out. Then put the two flat stones in the Ark of the Covenant. I will give you these stones on which the commands are written.'

'Then make a lid of pure gold for the Ark of the Covenant. This lid is the mercy seat. Make it [110 cm] long and [70 cm] wide. Then hammer gold to make two creatures with wings. Put one on each end of the lid. Put one creature with wings on one end of the lid. And put the other creature with wings on the other end. Attach the creatures with wings to the lid so that they will all be one piece. The creatures' wings should be spread out over the lid. The creatures are to face each other across the lid. Put this lid on top of the Ark of the Covenant. Also put in this Ark of the Covenant the agreement which I will make with you. I will meet with you there, above the lid between the two creatures with wings. These are on the Ark of the Covenant. There I will give you all my commands for the Israelites.'

— (Exodus 25:10-22 ICB)

Ask:

- What do you notice about the instructions?
- Are they more detailed than you imagined them to be? If so, how?

- **Say:** For the Jewish people the Ark of the Covenant was sacred. When he came to the throne King David decided to build a Temple so that the people could worship God there and the Ark of the Covenant would be safe. God had different plans, however, and the job of building the Temple was given to Solomon.

Video

Solomon built the Temple (2 mins 48 secs)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=T27x1r1R5qA

- **Say:** The Temple Solomon built for worshipping God was pretty impressive.

Ask: What did you notice about the way it was built?

🗨️ **Say:** The Temple was made from stone pillars, huge wooden doors, jewels and gold, but all this luxury wasn't the most important thing about it. The Temple was created for God, to worship God, and God was the focus of everyone who went into that building. God is always with us, but there is something special that happens when we gather together to worship him. The Temple was a special place for the Hebrew people to gather together and be in the presence of God's word.

Ask:

➔ Now you have discovered more about the Jewish Temple, what do you think of the cathedral/church that you looked at in the starter?

➔ Why do you think the people in your local area put so much effort into building a place of worship?

🗨️ **Say:** Just as people visit cathedrals today to look at their splendour, people heard about the amazing Temple Solomon had built and came to see it. The Queen of Sheba travelled 1,500 miles through the hot desert to visit Solomon and ask how he ran his country so wisely.

🗨️ **Say:** So, the next time you get to visit a large cathedral or church, think of Solomon's story. It's OK to be impressed by the stained-glass windows and ornate stonework, but make sure your all your focus is on the amazing God who inspired it to be built.

Action It

🗨️ **Say:** Today we have looked at special places of worship that were built to connect us with God and with those around us. We can obviously worship anywhere, but there's something special about being in a place that has been specifically designed to worship God.

Ask the children to design/create their ideal place to worship and connect with God. It doesn't have to be a building; it could be a place in nature like a waterfall or a forest. The important thing is that, just like Solomon, the children have thought carefully about the best way to honour God in their design.

This activity can be completed in a number of ways depending on the resources you have available. The children could use paint, Lego, plasticine or simply felt-tips to create their design. They can work together or individually. Once the children have created their place of worship, they can share their ideas with the rest of the group.

🗨️ **Say:** You have shared some amazing ideas today for places to worship and honour God.

Ask:

➔ Do you have a special place at home where you can spend time focusing on God?

➔ If not, then why don't you create one this week?

🗨️ **Say:** Your worship space doesn't have to be anything grand or permanent. It could be something simple that you set up each time you spend time in prayer and worship.

Memory verse

🗨️ **Say:** Throughout these sessions we have been learning a memory verse that reminds us how important it is to focus on God.

Share the memory verse together. Remind the children that focusing on the lovely and admirable things of God is a lot easier when we create time and space to be with him.

Pray It

🗨️ **Say:** Today we are going to take some time to follow the advice of Philippians 4:8.

Read:

'Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things.'

— (Philippians 4:8 NIV)

As we have done in previous sessions, ask the children to find a place to lay down and relax. As the music plays, ask them to focus on God and all the positive things mentioned in Philippians 4:8.

'Think about such things' Philippians 4:8 by Truth Songs (3 mins 7 secs) Stop the clip at 1 min 34 secs.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=FKC5sXu84Mg

Explore It

Remember to send home the *Explore It Ideas* for children and families.

Explore It

IDEAS

Here are some ideas for you to explore at home.

NOVEMBER
SESSION 04

CREATING AN AMAZING SPACE TO CONNECT WITH GOD

 1 Kings 6:11,29-35; Exodus 25:10-22

FOR ME

TOGETHER



Draw

Have a look on the internet for pictures of amazing places of worship or watch the clip below.

15 beautiful churches and cathedrals by Top Fives

www.youtube.com/watch?v=STh9eyd7JIE

Spend time drawing one aspect of the building. Perhaps you could recreate a stained-glass window or draw the intricate stonework.



Explore

If possible, try and visit the church or cathedral that you learned about in this week's 'Explore It' session. Take some pictures to share with the rest of the group.



Song for the week

'Build your kingdom here' by Rend Collective
(4 mins 16 secs)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=DqZX08DDWiA



Memory verse

'Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things.'

— (Philippians 4:8 NIV)

KIDS ALIVE! ONLINE

<https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/kidsalive>

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