

This guide is to help you facilitate discussion with your Small Group. Use it as a resource to lead your group in discovering and owning the truths of God's Word. There may be questions you do not want to use and there may be instances where you just want to focus on a particular point or truth. Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on their relationship with God. Your role is to facilitate this experience not to complete the discussion guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool not a rigid teaching task list.

## **1 Kings 8**

The dedication of Solomon's Temple was a major event in the nation of Israel. The ark of the covenant was brought into the Temple and the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord. Here the unapproachable Lord becomes approachable and ready to help those who worship, sacrifice and pray. Few moments in biblical history surpass this scene in hope, gladness and glory as God reveals his presence and the people worship him with praise and thousands of sacrifices. The entire event served to unify Israel as one people, under one king, serving the one true God.

### ***Study the Text . . .***

**1 Kings 8:1-11: The ark of the covenant is transported with the support of the leaders of Israel into the Temple.**

- Who supports moving the ark from the city of David into the Temple?
  - Elders (older, respected leaders who advised the king of various national matters)
  - Heads of tribes (mature, older men who were to clans and villages what the elders were to the nation as a whole)
  - Common men (v. 2)
- Describe the ceremony that preceded the ark as it was transferred from the city of David into the Temple (Compare to 2 Samuel 6).
- What does the cloud represent in verse 11? Where have we already seen this cloud in Scripture? Is it possible that the cloud demonstrates divine approval of Solomon's Temple?

### ***Group Discussion . . .***

Approaching the presence of God is not to be done lightly. In 2 Samuel 6, Uzzah touched the ark and was immediately killed. As the priests carried the ark to the Temple, Solomon and all the congregation sacrificed many sheep and oxen. Sacrifices were offered in recognition of national sin and individual sin, as well as praise to God.

- Begin by asking people to share about how they approach God. God dwells in all of his children. Do we approach Him with a repentant heart that is lifted in praise to God?
- Discuss how we today should approach the presence of God in worship as a small group or a church gathering. What can we learn from 1 Kings 8:1-11?

### ***Study the Text . . .***

#### **1 Kings 8:12-21: Solomon praises God for his covenant faithfulness to Israel.**

Solomon begins by reminding the people of God's faithfulness to David and the whole nation. He starts with their deliverance from Egypt (v. 16) and ends with their deliverance from Egypt (v. 21).

- List how God has been faithful to Israel (according to Solomon's praise).

### ***Group Discussion . . .***

How often do we look back and remember the faithfulness of God in our lives, in the life of our small group, and in the life of our faith family? As we remember God's faithfulness, we praise Him, and we trust that He will always be faithful.

- As a group review God's faithfulness to His people, to our faith family, to our small group, and to each of us as individuals.
  - What are some examples of God's faithfulness in the Old Testament?
  - What are some examples of God's faithfulness in the New Testament?
  - What are some examples in our faith family of how God has been faithful to His promises?
  - What are some examples in our small group of how God has been faithful to His promises?
  - What are some examples in your life of how God has been faithful to His promises?

### ***Study the Text . . .***

#### **1 Kings 8:22-53: Solomon dedicates the Temple as a house of prayer.**

The prayer begins with a confession of who God is similar to Deuteronomy 7:7-9. Then Solomon turns to ask the Lord to bless certain kinds of people and to judge others. This prayer is grounded in Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 27-28. Solomon understands the greatness of God as well as how small this magnificent temple is in the eyes of God. He also realizes that God alone is judge and that all nations will be judged. He prays for the foreigners and prays that Israel will teach the nations God's will.

- List the different requests that Solomon makes of God (separate the blessings and curses or judgment).
- What does Solomon ask God to do for the foreigners?
- According to this prayer, what is the purpose of the temple?
- Read Mark 11:15-19. Does 1 Kings 8 provide clarity for why Jesus was so upset about how the Temple was being misused?

### ***Group Discussion . . .***

Solomon calls on God to hear from heaven the prayers of his people.

- Do we believe God hears our prayers (all of them)?
- Do we take all of our requests and concerns to God? When the land is dry, do we pray for rain? Do we confess our sins?
- How can Solomon's prayer guide how we pray?

### ***Study the Text . . .***

#### **1 Kings 8:54-61: Solomon concludes by turning and blessing the people.**

This blessing is prefaced with an expression of God's faithfulness, and there are three parts to the blessing. Solomon encourages the people to recognize the importance of God's presence in their lives. He hopes that God will turn their hearts to him, and he desires for God to uphold the cause of Israel so that all the people may know that the Lord is God and there is no other.

- Verse 58 calls on the Lord to incline the hearts of His people to Him? Is it possible for the people to turn their hearts to God? (Deut. 6:4-9, 30:6, 14, 32:46)
- Why does Solomon ask God to maintain the cause of Israel? Is it for the sake of Israel alone? (vv. 59-60)

### ***Group Discussion . . .***

- How are the hearts of God's people turned to him? How are God's people enabled to obey God's statutes and laws? See Romans 3:21-31.
- Why has God provided salvation to His children? Is it for their sake alone?
- When we pray for God to bless us and to maintain our cause, what should be our ultimate purpose in making this request? (v. 60)

### ***Study the Text . . .***

#### **1 Kings 8:62-66: The nation of Israel celebrated the dedication of the Temple by worshipping the Lord with sacrifices.**

Solomon spared no expense when it came to dedicating the temple. These sacrifices were fellowship offerings or peace offerings. The goal of this offering was to unite the people with their leaders and their God. This scene concludes with the people going to their homes with joyful and glad hearts.

- How rich must God have made Israel for them to be able to offer such extravagant numbers of animals in sacrifice to God?
- What was the mood of the people because of the feast? What was their view of God?

### ***Group Discussion . . .***

- When is the last time you have given generous free will offerings to God out of praise and thanksgiving to God because of His faithfulness?
- Can we imagine being joyful and glad of heart after watching our country sacrifice so much of our resources in worship to God? What about possible famine, pestilence or war? Is it not necessary to keep reserves?
- Can we imagine being joyful and glad of heart if our church sacrifices a large part of our resources in worship to God?
- How can we today worship God in a way that is similar to 1 Kings 8? Read 2 Corinthians 8:1-5. Did the Macedonians give out of joy like Israel?