

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

Turn your bibles with me to 1 Kings 8

We are continuing our verse-by-verse study through 1 Kings

And we have been studying closely and learning from the transition from King David to King Solomon.

And for over a month we have been looking at King Solomon be obedient to the charge of David and knowing that it was God's will for him to construct the temple.

So this evening, we are going to see the dedication of the temple – we are going to see God's presence enter the temple and be filled with His glory.

Let's pray...

[1Ki 8:1-66 NKJV] 1 Now Solomon assembled the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes, the chief fathers of the children of Israel, to King Solomon in Jerusalem, that they might bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD from the City of David, which [is] Zion.

We saw a few weeks ago that the construction of the temple was completed in seven years.

However, the temple wouldn't be the temple without God's presence in it.

What good would the temple be without His presence?

And that is exactly what the Ark of the Covenant represented – God’s presence.

This is the place where God met His people.

Remember, under the Old Covenant – only the High Priest had access to Him, once a year – on the day of atonement to sprinkle the blood on the mercy seat / the place where God met His people - the cover of the Ark of the Covenant.

So the temple without God’s presence would be of no good.

We all agree with that?

Here is the application for us –

Under the New Covenant – because of the work of Jesus Christ upon the cross – we are His temple.

But in the same – without His presence inside of us and ruling over us – what good are we?

Before the Ark of the covenant was brought into the temple – as we have studied already, the temple looked good from the outside, the pillars, the wood, the gold, the jewels

And for the believer, sometimes we spend so much time on the outside trying to look the part of the Christian (through religion) instead of simply yielding to the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives and giving Him full control of our lives.

We need to be temples that are filled with God's Spirit.

2 Therefore all the men of Israel assembled with King Solomon at the feast in the month of Ethanim, which [is] the seventh month.

At the end of chapter 6 – we are told that Solomon finished the temple in the month of Bul – that was the 8th month.

Here we see the temple dedication taking place on the 7th month.

Meaning that this takes place 11 months after the temple was completed.

3 So all the elders of Israel came, and the priests took up the ark. 4 Then they brought up the ark of the LORD, the tabernacle of meeting, and all the holy furnishings that [were] in the tabernacle. The priests and the Levites brought them up. 5 Also King Solomon, and all the congregation of Israel who were assembled with him, [were] with him before the ark, sacrificing sheep and oxen that could not be counted or numbered for multitude.

Solomon spares no expense in honoring God.

He brings so many sheep and oxen to be sacrificed at the dedication – that they couldn't keep count.

This is the same thing we saw last week with the bronze – it says the same thing. It could not be measured because there was so much.

So Solomon spares no expense – but as we will see in the next few weeks, the one thing that Solomon did spare was himself.

Which is really what God desires.

David – in one my favorite Psalm (51)

[Psa 51:16-17 NKJV] 16 For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give [it]; You do not delight in burnt offering. 17 The sacrifices of God [are] a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart--These, O God, You will not despise.

God wants our hearts

And if our heart is not right – our sacrifice doesn't mean anything.

It is empty. It becomes religion.

I believe that this is why Jesus in the Beatitudes -

Matt 5 -

[Mat 5:23-24 NKJV] 23 "Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24 "leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.

Why is this important –

Because that is a heart of submission to God

That is saying – it is not about me – it is about what you want Lord.

And the Lord wants us to be reconciled with people because that is important to Him.

It is not even about the other person – it is about our relationship with God.

So what Jesus is saying is – until we do that – what good is the other stuff we are bringing to Him.

So here, Solomon is giving sacrifices that are too numerous to be counted but at the end of the day – there is a part of Solomon that God wants that Solomon is not willing to give – just like many today.

6 Then the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD to its place, into the inner sanctuary of the temple, to the Most Holy [Place], under the wings of the cherubim. 7 For the cherubim spread [their] two wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubim overshadowed the ark and its poles. 8 The poles

extended so that the ends of the poles could be seen from the holy [place], in front of the inner sanctuary; but they could not be seen from outside. And they are there to this day.

One of the things that we see here with Solomon – is that he is very careful to make sure to focus on the details of how the Ark of the Covenant was supposed to be transported.

David – in 2 Sam 6 – he wanted to do it his way. He put it on a cart and the cart was about to tip over – and Uzzah put his hand on the Ark to keep it from falling – and the Lord struck him dead.

Solomon brings it in the way God wanted it to be brought in.

9 Nothing [was] in the ark except the two tablets of stone which Moses put there at Horeb, when the LORD made [a covenant] with the children of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt.

Initially when they first set up the Ark of the Covenant – we are told that it also contained a jar with manna and Aaron's rod – but somehow, they are no longer there.

10 And it came to pass, when the priests came out of the holy [place], that the cloud filled the house of the LORD, 11 so that the priests could not continue ministering because of the cloud; for the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD.

So – here we see God’s shekinah glory filling the temple in the same way that it filled the tabernacle (Exodus 40)

It was the manifestation of His presence inside the temple.

And notice that it happened once the priests left.

And sometimes, I think that we can get in the way of things – when we make it about us, what we do – rather than just letting it be about the Lord.

[2Co 4:7 NKJV] 7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.

What Paul is saying is that when we minister for the Lord – what we want people to see Jesus. We want people to see the power of God and not us.

It is all about Jesus being seen.

It is about His glory.

12 Then Solomon spoke: "The LORD said He would dwell in the dark cloud. 13 I have surely built You an exalted house, And a place for You to dwell in forever."

14 Then the king turned around and blessed the whole assembly of Israel, while all the assembly of Israel was standing. 15 And he said: "Blessed [be] the LORD God of Israel, who spoke with His mouth to my father David, and with His hand has fulfilled [it], saying, 16 'Since the day that I brought My people Israel out of

Egypt, I have chosen no city from any tribe of Israel [in which] to build a house, that My name might be there; but I chose David to be over My people Israel.' 17 "Now it was in the heart of my father David to build a temple for the name of the LORD God of Israel. 18 "But the LORD said to my father David, 'Whereas it was in your heart to build a temple for My name, you did well that it was in your heart. 19 'Nevertheless you shall not build the temple, but your son who will come from your body, he shall build the temple for My name.' 20 "So the LORD has fulfilled His word which He spoke; and I have filled the position of my father David, and sit on the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised; and I have built a temple for the name of the LORD God of Israel. 21 "And there I have made a place for the ark, in which [is] the covenant of the LORD which He made with our fathers, when He brought them out of the land of Egypt."

Solomon is recalling God's faithfulness to his father.

There is a lot of faithfulness in God's relationship with David – even when David was not faithful to the Lord.

David pursued other things at times.

Yet God was always faithful to David.

And so what Solomon is doing – he is declaring, "If God was faithful to my father, He is going to be faithful to me."

22 Then Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the assembly of Israel, and spread out his hands toward heaven; 23 and he said: "LORD God of Israel, [there is] no God in heaven above or on earth below like You, who keep [Your] covenant and mercy with Your servants who walk before You with all their hearts.

Here we see Solomon boldly worshipping God in front of the multitudes – and the reason he is able to do that is because he is thinking about who God is.

He is thinking about the attributes of God

How faithful He is, How merciful He is, How gracious He is

What He has done in my life

How my life has changed because of Him

We worship boldly

24 "You have kept what You promised Your servant David my father; You have both spoken with Your mouth and fulfilled [it] with Your hand, as [it is] this day.

25 "Therefore, LORD God of Israel, now keep what You promised Your servant David my father, saying, 'You shall not fail to have a man sit before Me on the throne of Israel, only if your sons take heed to their way, that they walk before Me as you have walked before Me.' 26 "And now I pray, O God of Israel, let Your word come true, which You have spoken to Your servant David my father.

You promised my dad and you were faithful to him.

And now, I am going to stand on the same promise for my life before You.

Because God is faithful, we can count on Him to keep His promises.

Solomon knows that God had promised his father David that he would always have a descendant to sit upon the throne of Israel, and he's asking God to keep His word.

Some of God's promises to David were conditional – like here in verse 25

And some were unconditional – (2 Sam 7:13)

that he would have descendants who would rule Israel forever.

This is going to be fulfilled in Jesus Christ, the son of David, when He comes to establish His kingdom on earth.

Despite our unfaithfulness, God will remain faithful.

God did what He said He was going to do

And that promise is still true in our lives.

God is going to do what He said that He is going to do in our lives.

Remember – everyone is standing in front of the temple.

The temple is proof of His faithfulness.

And for those of us who have a hard time believing that God is going to do what He said He was going to do –

We just have to look at the other people in this room.

We are surrounded by people that are walking testimonies of the faithfulness of God.

He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;

(phil 1:6)

He will bring it to fruition.

27 "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You. How much less this temple which I have built!

Solomon understood – that God's presence might have filled the temple – but that didn't mean that God was somehow confined to the temple.

Solomon understood that God was bigger and greater than the temple.

Write this verse down –

A Psalm from David

[Psa 139:7 NKJV] 7 Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence?

28 "Yet regard the prayer of Your servant and his supplication, O LORD my God, and listen to the cry and the prayer which Your servant is praying before You today: 29 "that Your eyes may be open toward this temple night and day, toward the place of which You said, 'My name shall be there,' that You may hear the prayer which Your servant makes toward this place. 30 "And may You hear the supplication of Your servant and of Your people Israel, when they pray toward this place. Hear in heaven Your dwelling place; and when You hear, forgive.

Solomon is asking God to honor this Temple by paying attention to the prayers of people who pray towards the direction of the Temple.

From the time of Solomon to Jesus, God did indeed listen to the prayers of His people as they prayed towards Jerusalem.

But with Jesus, things changed.

When Jesus met the woman at the well (John 4), she raised a question as to where God should be worshipped. Being a Samaritan, she thought that God was supposed to be worshipped on Mount Gerizim. She said,

[Jhn 4:20-21 NKJV] 20 "Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you [Jews] say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship." 21 Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father.

The worship of God no longer has anything to do with location or direction of our prayers.

It has to do with our heart.

It has to do with whether we are coming to God with our heart and whether we are coming to God based on the truth of the Scriptures.

We come to God through Jesus.

31 "When anyone sins against his neighbor, and is forced to take an oath, and comes [and] takes an oath before Your altar in this temple, 32 "then hear in heaven, and act, and judge Your servants, condemning the wicked, bringing his way on his head, and justifying the righteous by giving him according to his righteousness. 33 "When Your people Israel are defeated before an enemy because they have sinned against You, and when they turn back to You and confess Your name, and pray and make supplication to You in this temple, 34 "then hear in heaven, and forgive the sin of Your people Israel, and bring them back to the land which You gave to their fathers. 35 "When the heavens are shut up and there is no rain because they have sinned against You, when they pray toward this place and confess Your name, and turn from their sin because You afflict them, 36 "then hear in heaven, and forgive the sin of Your servants, Your people Israel, that You may teach them the good way in which they should walk;

and send rain on Your land which You have given to Your people as an inheritance. 37 "When there is famine in the land, pestilence [or] blight [or] mildew, locusts [or] grasshoppers; when their enemy besieges them in the land of their cities; whatever plague or whatever sickness [there is]; 38 "whatever prayer, whatever supplication is made by anyone, [or] by all Your people Israel, when each one **knows the plague of his own heart**, and spreads out his hands toward this temple: 39 "then hear in heaven Your dwelling place, and forgive, and act, and give to everyone according to all his ways, whose heart You know (for You alone know the hearts of all the sons of men), 40 "that they may fear You all the days that they live in the land which You gave to our fathers.

I had you make a note: plague of his own heart

Solomon recognized that some plagues are easily seen, but other plagues come from our own heart.

Many are cursed by a plague that no one else can see, but lives in their own heart.

Solomon asks God to answer such a plague-stricken man when he humbly pleads at the temple.

The first step is knowing the plague of our own heart.

Because if we do –

We are a step closer in getting right with the Lord – and He will bring healing and deliverance from these things to those who confess and repent of these things.

41 "Moreover, concerning a foreigner, who [is] not of Your people Israel, but has come from a far country for Your name's sake 42 "(for they will hear of Your great name and Your strong hand and Your outstretched arm), when he comes and prays toward this temple, 43 "hear in heaven Your dwelling place, and do according to all for which the foreigner calls to You, that all peoples of the earth may know Your name and fear You, as [do] Your people Israel, and that they may know that this temple which I have built is called by Your name.

We have to remember that the reason that God chose Israel as His chosen people – it was because they were supposed to be a light to the world. A light to the gentiles.

The other nations were going to look to Israel and they were going to want to worship the same God.

44 "When Your people go out to battle against their enemy, wherever You send them, and when they pray to the LORD toward the city which You have chosen and the temple which I have built for Your name, 45 "then hear in heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause. 46 "When they sin against You (for [there is] no one who does not sin), and You become angry with them and deliver them to the enemy, **and they take them captive to the land of**

the enemy, far or near; 47 "[yet] when they come to themselves in the land where they were carried captive, and repent, and make supplication to You in the land of those who took them captive, saying, 'We have sinned and done wrong, we have committed wickedness'; 48 "and [when] they return to You with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies who led them away captive, and pray to You toward their land which You gave to their fathers, the city which You have chosen and the temple which I have built for Your name: 49 "then hear in heaven Your dwelling place their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause, 50 "and forgive Your people who have sinned against You, and all their transgressions which they have transgressed against You; and grant them compassion before those who took them captive, that they may have compassion on them 51 "(for they [are] Your people and Your inheritance, whom You brought out of Egypt, out of the iron furnace), 52 "that Your eyes may be open to the supplication of Your servant and the supplication of Your people Israel, to listen to them whenever they call to You. 53 "For You separated them from among all the peoples of the earth [to be] Your inheritance, as You spoke by Your servant Moses, when You brought our fathers out of Egypt, O Lord GOD."

Solomon asks God to honor the prayers of the men in battle as they pray toward the Temple in Jerusalem.

And Solomon also asks God to hear the prayers of His people who are taken captive because of their transgressions.

Not because they deserve it – but because of who God is and what God has done for them.

There would be a day when God would send the nation into captivity. The Babylonians would take the nation away to Babylon in 586 BC.

Solomon prays that if the people come to their senses while in captivity, and if they pray toward the land of Israel, that God would hear their prayers and restore them to the land.

The prophet Daniel took this promise seriously.

Toward the end of his life, Daniel had been studying the Scriptures and realized that according to Jeremiah's prophecies, the nation was nearing the end of their seventy year captivity.

What does Daniel do? He confesses the sins of the nation and asks God for forgiveness (Dan. 9:1-5)

Did God answer Daniel's prayer? Yes. It was at this time that the decree went out for the Jews to be returned to Jerusalem.

And in the same manner God answers our prayers when we transgress against Him.

He has delivered us out of the bandage of sin

We are His

And He forgives us because of His grace

And He restores us because of His grace

And He uses us because of His grace

54 And so it was, when Solomon had finished praying all this prayer and supplication to the LORD, that he arose from before the altar of the LORD, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread up to heaven. 55 Then he stood and blessed all the assembly of Israel with a loud voice, saying: 56 "Blessed [be] the LORD, who has given rest to His people Israel, according to all that He promised. **There has not failed one word of all His good promise, which He promised through His servant Moses. 57 "May the LORD our God be with us, as He was with our fathers. May He not leave us nor forsake us, 58 "that He may incline our hearts to Himself, to walk in all His ways, and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments, which He commanded our fathers. 59 "And may these words of mine, with which I have made supplication before the LORD, be near the LORD our God day and night, that He may maintain the cause of His servant and the cause of His people Israel, as each day may require, 60 "that all the peoples of the earth may know that the LORD [is] God; [there is] no other.**

Did you guys get that – no one word of all His good promise has He failed to keep.

61 "Let your heart therefore be loyal to the LORD our God, to walk in His statutes and keep His commandments, as at this day."

This should be our response to all that God has done.

62 Then the king and all Israel with him offered sacrifices before the LORD. 63 And Solomon offered a sacrifice of peace offerings, which he offered to the LORD, twenty-two thousand bulls and one hundred and twenty thousand sheep. So the king and all the children of Israel dedicated the house of the LORD. 64 On the same day the king consecrated the middle of the court that [was] in front of the house of the LORD; for there he offered burnt offerings, grain offerings, and the fat of the peace offerings, because the bronze altar that [was] before the LORD [was] too small to receive the burnt offerings, the grain offerings, and the fat of the peace offerings. 65 At that time Solomon held a feast, and all Israel with him, a great assembly from the entrance of Hamath to the Brook of Egypt, before the LORD our God, seven days and seven [more] days--fourteen days. 66 On the eighth day he sent the people away; and they blessed the king, and went to their tents joyful and glad of heart for all the good that the LORD had done for His servant David, and for Israel His people.

And here at the end of the chapter – we have the result of being in the presence of the Lord – they were joyful and glad of heart for all the good that the LORD had done

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

[Num 6:24-26 NLT] 24 '

May the LORD bless you and protect you.

May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you.

May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.'

