

Dedicating the Temple 1 Kings 8

Dedicating the Temple Introduction

- God is infinite.
- God is eternal.
- God is holy beyond the grandest, most wide-ranging limits of our intelligence or spiritual perception.

- If we are ever going to interact with God, it is going to have to be on his terms.
- When God had Moses and his men construct the tabernacle and all of its furnishings, he was communicating that he wanted to interact with his people.

- At the time of the scene we look at today, Jerusalem had already been the capital of Israel for over forty years.
- Solomon has now finished building the temple that David his father had hoped to build.

- To dedicate it, he organized a national worship service – possibly the most important in Israel’s history.
- This gathering officially recognized Jerusalem as the place where the God of Israel had chosen to set his name.

Bringing In the Ark 8:1-11

- 8:2 at the feast in the month Ethanim
- This would have been the Feast of Tabernacles which takes place in the Fall.

- 8:6 the inner sanctuary ... the Most Holy Place
- The Temple was set up much like the Tabernacle had been only much larger.
- There was an outer court, a Holy Place and a Most Holy Place or “Holy of Holies,” in which was the ark.

- 8:9 there was nothing in the ark except the two tablets
- Originally the ark also contained the pot of manna and Aaron’s rod that budded.
 - See Exodus 16:33-34 and Hebrews 9:4.
- For some reason, they were no longer there.
- Later the ark itself was lost.

- 8:10 The cloud (sometimes called the *Shekinah* or “dwelling, inhabiting”) was a symbol of the presence of God.
- It also appeared in the days of Moses (Exodus 40:34-35).
- The prophet Ezekiel had a vision of the cloud departing (Ezekiel 10:3-4, 18-19; 11:23).
- The glory of the Lord left the temple as the nation came under God’s judgment.

Solomon Blesses the Lord 8:12-21

- Solomon’s focus is on the fact that the Lord has been faithful to fulfill all his promises – to David and to the nation.

Solomon's Prayer 8:22-53

- 8:22-26 Solomon begins his prayer by declaring God's faithfulness back to him.
- God, of course, knows that he is faithful.
- We need to say it even if he doesn't need to hear it.
- That is really true of all prayer.

- 8:27-30 The king admits that any temple built on earth would be inadequate.
- God's presence is there not because the temple is so great, but because he desires to dwell among his people.
 - *Many people have narrow concepts of God. ... Solomon ... wasn't thinking that this house would contain God. God is so much bigger. But this house would be a place where the people could meet with God.*

– Chuck Smith (1927 – 2013)

- 8:31-53 The rest of the prayer can be divided into seven distinct requests.
- Some Bibles divide them into paragraphs.
 - A. 8:31-32 A prayer for righteous judgment
 - B. 8:33-34 When the people endure defeat because of sin
 - C. 8:35-36 When there is drought because of sin
 - D. 8:37-40 When there is famine or some other problem
 - E. 8:41-43 When a foreigner (non-Israelite) prays
 - F. 8:44-45 If the people must go into battle
 - G. 8:46-53 If the people are carried away captive

Solomon Blesses the People 8:54-61

- Again, notice the focus on God's faithfulness.

- 8:59 as each day requires
- More literally, "a matter (or thing) of a day in its day"
 - *As we stand on the hill-top in the morning and look across the valley of the coming day, its scenes are too closely veiled in heavy-hanging mists for us to specify all our requests. ... God will suit his help to each requirement. As the moment arrives "the thing" will be there.*

– F. B. Meyer

- 8:59 Jesus taught us to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread."
- We can trust our Father to meet our needs as needs arise.

- 8:60 that all the peoples of the earth may know that the Lord is God; there is no other.
- Solomon is prayer this nearly 1000 years before Jesus.
- He still saw that the Lord was no local or tribal deity.

Sacrifices and a Feast 8:62-66

- 8:66 they ... went to their homes joyful and glad of heart for all the goodness that the Lord had shown
- The people had come from many miles, but their worship continued all the way home.

- 8:66 When our worship is over, let's make it a point to continue in an attitude of thankfulness and joy.
- Let the feast continue beyond our gathering together.

Dedicating the Temple Conclusions

- The Temple Mount is presently occupied by the Dome of the Rock Mosque.
- There is a movement among very orthodox Jews to build a new Temple.

- The books of Daniel and Revelation indicate that a Temple needs to be rebuilt.
- These books speak of a Temple complete with sacrifices in the end times.

- A compromise solution might work.
- There is plenty of room on the top of the hill for both a Temple and the Dome of the Rock.

- In the eternal New Jerusalem there will not be a Temple.
 - See Revelation 21:22-23.

- Jesus referred to his body as a temple that he would raise up in three days.
 - See John 2:18-22

- At the present time, we Christians are the dwelling place of God here on earth.
- Our temple needs to be dedicated to him.
 - 1 Corinthians 6:19-20
 - 2 Corinthians 6:16

- Just as Solomon's Temple was filled with the glory of God, we need to be filled with the Holy Spirit.
 - Ephesians 5:15-21
- Let's close by praying for that continual filling.