

SOLOMON'S SERMON

I Kings 7:1 - 8:66

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“And he stood, and blessed all the congregation of Israel with a loud voice, saying, Blessed be the LORD, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant.”

I Kings 8:55-56

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SOLOMON'S SERMON

When King Solomon became the ruler of Israel there was no temple dedicated to the worship of Jehovah. It had been in the mind of King David to build a house for the Lord. However, in the wisdom of God, David was not allowed to build a temple. He had been a man of war. The Lord's plan was for David's son, Solomon (a man of peace) to erect a building to the honor of the Father. During the final years of his reign, David gathered the materials to build this structure. That made it possible for Solomon to complete the temple in only 7 years. When the construction of God's house was finished, he began building a house for his own use. That structure took another thirteen years to complete. Chapter seven of I Kings lists the five parts of that house, known as Solomon's house. "The palace consisted of several buildings connected together; namely, (1) the house of the forest of Lebanon (vers. 2-5); (2) the pillar-hall with the porch (ver. 6); (3) the throne-room and judgement-hall (ver. 7); (4) the king's dwelling-house and the house of Pharaoh's daughter (ver. 8). ... *The*

house of the forest of Lebanon. – This building – so named because it was built, so to speak, of a forest of cedar pillars – is called in the Arabic the ‘house of his arms,’ because, according to ch. X. 17, it also served as a keeping place for arms.” (K&D. Vol. 3. P. 89) I Kings has already revealed that there were no current enemies or wars during this part of Solomon’s reign. So, the question comes up; why did Solomon need an armory? Chapter ten tells us that Solomon had so much gold that he made shields of gold and kept them in the “house of the forest of Lebanon.” (I Kings 10:16-17). When the Temple was finished, Solomon planned a special service to consecrate the temple to the Lord. The construction was finished in the month of *Bul* (November) (Vs. 6:38) and the dedication took place in *Ethanim* (October) (Vs. 8:2). “The actual dedicatory services were held approximately eleven months after the completion of the Temple.” (Wycliffe. P. 318) There was much preparation to be done for that special day. The ark of the covenant was brought out of Jerusalem and placed into the oracle, or holy place, in the temple. All the people of Israel

were assembled and a great time of sacrifice and feasting was planned. All this took time to arrange and when all was in readiness, *“all the men of Israel assembled themselves unto king Solomon at the feast in the month Ethanim, which is the seventh month. And all the elders of Israel came.”* (Kings 8:5)

When the Ark was in place and the people sacrificed to the Lord, God showed His pleasure in this service by filling the entire structure with a cloud that was so thick that the priests could no longer minister in the temple. “The cloud, as the visible symbol of the gracious presence of God. He filled the temple as a sign that Jehovah, the covenant-God had entered into it, and had chosen it as the scene of His gracious manifestation in Israel.” (K&D. Vol 3. P. 122) The cloud signified that God was taking possession of the temple. It became His house. It was the physical proof that He now was in residence. Solomon saw the cloud and he “assuredly believed that God was in the cloud also, and that, as formerly He had filled the tabernacle, so He would now fill the temple and dwell therein.” (IBID.) (Exodus 40:34-38) This fact is

important to the believer because, the cloud was a type of the Spirit of God in the believer's life. "What the shekinah glory was to the tabernacle, that the Spirit is to the holy temple," the church, and temple which is the believer's body. *"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore, glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."* (1 Corinthians 6:19-20) This infilling speaks of how the Father possesses the believer as His temple and His infilling of this temple is for the believer's strength and direction.

As the temple filled with the glory of God, Solomon turned to address the people of Israel. He begins a sermon to challenge the people and praise God. "The main point of the sermon, beyond all reasonable question, was that the all-powerful God of Heaven was willing to take up His abode, in protective presence and power, in the house that Solomon had now erected for his glory and honor." (Wycliffe. P. 318.) In this sermon Solomon prays for the people of Israel. Rather than a detailed examination of the

prayer, a listing of the main points will be sufficient for this study. Wycliffe, in his commentary of the bible lists seven points that Solomon covers in this prayer before the Lord. He prays for;

1. God's continued presence and protection (8:25-30)
2. For God to condemn the wicked and vindicate the righteous (Vs. 31-32)
3. For deliverance from enemies (Vs. 33)
4. For divine help in time of calamity (Vs. 35-40)
5. For divine help for the devoted foreigners. (Vs. 41-43)
6. For victory in future battles (V. 44-45)
7. For national forgiveness (Vs. 46-53)
(Wycliffe. P. 319)

Solomon ends his sermon with a benediction or blessing of the people. The first blessing he mentions is to remind the people that God has kept all of His promises. *"Blessed be the LORD, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant."* (8:56) He

thanked the Lord for the fact that God would always be with them as He was with their fathers. He would always help them to walk in obedience to His ways. All these things were done so that the *“all the people of the earth may know that the LORD is God, and that there is none else.”* (Vs. 60)

The people went back to their homes rejoicing. *“they blessed the king, and went unto their tents joyful and glad of heart for all the goodness that the LORD had done for David his servant, and for Israel his people.”* (Vs. 66) The events in this chapter of I Kings are also recounted in II Chronicles with very few changes or additions. The writer of II Chronicles, however, did include one thought not mentioned in the I Kings account. At the end of Solomon’s prayer God sent fire down to consume the sacrifices that were on the altar. The people bowed in worship and sang together the words of the song that the musicians performed when the service started. It was from the messianic psalm, 118. *“It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD; and when they lifted up*

their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of musick, and praised the LORD, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever: that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the LORD". (II Chronicles 5:13) When the fire fell the people recounted the words they remembered from the special music. "And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the LORD upon the house, they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped, and praised the LORD, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth forever." (II Chronicles 7:3)

"So the king and all the children of Israel dedicated the house of the LORD." (8:63b) The special service came to an end. The result of the dedication of the temple of the Lord was that when the people left the service, they were different than when they came. The House of God, the temple was set apart in their heart. It was given an exclusive place in their lives. That is what is meant, or implied in the word "dedicated." They had met with God there. They had seen the Shekinah glory of God there in the cloud that

filled the temple. They had seen the fire of God fall. They knew that was where they could meet with God. Secondly, Solomon had “hallowed” the place of sacrifice. He had set apart the place of worship and sacrifice as a holy, sacred, consecrated place. With their hearts right with God they returned home *“glad and merry in heart for the goodness that the LORD had shewed unto David, and to Solomon, and to Israel his people.”* (II Chronicles 7:10b) Should this not always be the result of true worship. When the child of God dedicates his body a temple for the Holy Spirit and hallows his heart to the service of the Father, the natural result is gladness of heart for the goodness that the Lord has shown in his life. It results in service and faithfulness to the Lord and to the house of God.

K&D = Commentary on the Old Testament in Ten Volumes.

C.F. Keil and F. Delitzsch. Vol. III. William B. Eerdmans

Publishing Company. Grand Rapids, Michigan. 1982.

Wycliffe = The Wycliffe Bible Commentary. By Charles F.

Pfeiffer and Everett F. Harrison. Moody Press, Chicago, Il. 1962.

