

Sunday Evening Message Series

1st and 2nd Kings

January 21, 2024

Title – Chapter Eight – *The Dedication of the Temple*

Text – 1st Kings 8

Introduction

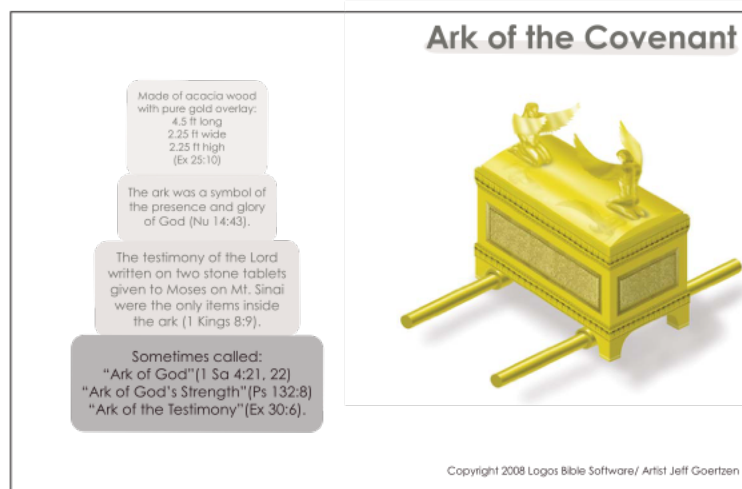
Note – 1 Kings 8 corresponds with 2 Chronicles 5 – 7.

In previous chapters, we saw the work that went into the construction of the Temple along with the items that were placed within, such as the altar of incense, the table of shewbread, the candlesticks, the brazen altar, the molten sea, and the ten lavers. In this chapter, we will see the placement of the ark of the covenant along with other items that were taken from the Tabernacle. Once everything was in its proper place, Solomon could dedicate the Temple to the Lord and pray for the blessing of the Lord upon the people who worshipped God from the Temple.

God was very pleased with what Solomon had done. 2 Chronicles tells us:

"1 Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the LORD filled the house. 2 And the priests could not enter into the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD had filled the LORD'S house. 3 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 for ever." (2 Chronicles 7:1-3)

I. The Placement of the Ark of the Covenant (vs. 1 – 11)



The Ark of the Covenant was under a tent in Jerusalem and the Tabernacle was in Gibeon. The Ark was separated from the Tabernacle way back when Hophni and Phineas brought it into a battle with the Philistines (1 Samuel 4). The Ark was taken by the Philistines and stayed with them for a short time until the Philistines realized that their nation was in peril by keeping it. They sent the Ark back to Israel on a cart and it ended up first in Bethshemesh (1 Samuel 6), next in Kirjathjearim where it remained for twenty years (1 Samuel 7). David attempted a first time to transport the Ark to Jerusalem but he did not do it the way God commanded in the Law so he ended up aborting the mission and had the Ark put temporarily in the house of Obededom (2 Samuel 6). Finally, David makes a second attempt, this time he transported it the way that Moses had prescribed in the Law, and he was successful, and the ark was placed in a tent in Jerusalem (2 Samuel 6:17).

V. 2 – The month “Ethanym, which is the seventh month” – This month corresponds with September – October on our calendar and was the month that the Feast of Tabernacles was held. It is likely that part of this fourteen-day dedication and celebration was the seven-day Feast of Tabernacles. The Temple was finished in eighth month of the previous year (1 Kings 6:38).

Note – Wiersbe believes that this dedication took place after Solomon had built his own palace as well, which would make this dedication thirteen years after the Temple exterior was completed. Wiersbe believes that the seven years referenced for the construction of the Temple only referred to the outside, but the inside with all the furnishings took much longer.

According to Wiersbe, the sequence of events is as follows:

First, the temple structure was built in seven years (6:1–38). Then, the royal palaces were built in thirteen years (7:1–12), making a total of twenty years for all this construction (9:10). During that time, Hiram was constructing the furnishings of the temple and supervising the work within the building (7:13–51). When all this work was completed, Solomon dedicated the temple (8:1–66), following which God appeared to Solomon the second time (9:1–9). The Lord’s words to Solomon in 9:3 [2 Chron. 7:12] are not as meaningful if the dedication had taken place thirteen years before.¹

V. 4 – Notice that the Tabernacle seems to have been dismantled at this time.

¹ Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Responsible*, “Be” Commentary Series (Colorado Springs, CO: Victor, 2002).

V. 9 – According to Hebrews 9:4, at one time the ark had other items either in it or “before” it (Exodus 16:33 – 34; Numbers 17:10):

"4 Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant;" (Hebrews 9:4)

Vs. 10 – 11 – The glory of the Lord filled the Temple just as it had the Tabernacle. This was the same “pillar of a cloud” (Exodus 13:21 – 22; 14:19; 24) that directed the congregation of Israel as they wandered through the wilderness:

"34 Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. 35 And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. 36 And when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel went onward in all their journeys: 37 But if the cloud were not taken up, then they journeyed not till the day that it was taken up. 38 For the cloud of the LORD was upon the tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys." (Exodus 40:34-38)

The cloud was a symbol of the presence of God; it was a visible manifestation of God’s glory. God was pleased with what Solomon was doing here.

We also want to experience the presence of God in our lives and in our services. We pray for God to reveal Himself to us as we worship Him. Sometimes, His presence seems so real that we can feel it.

Illustration – Service at Doug Fisher’s church in San Diego. There was a holy hush over the auditorium at the invitation. Nearly everyone in the thousand-member congregation were at the altar.

II. The Preliminary Address to the People (vs. 12 – 21)

Solomon is about to pray to the Lord to dedicate the Temple to Him, but before He speaks to the Lord for the people, he speaks to the people.

V. 12 – “thick darkness” – the thick darkness was a visible manifestation of the presence of God.

"9 And the LORD said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever. And Moses told the words of the people unto the LORD. ... 16 And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled."

(Exodus 19:9, 16)

"21 And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was." (Exodus 20:21)

"11 And ye came near and stood under the mountain; and the mountain burned with fire unto the midst of heaven, with darkness, clouds, and thick darkness." (Deuteronomy 4:11)

V. 13 – This verse is addressed to God.

Notice - "a settled place" (מבון - *māḵôn* -meaning a place with a foundation.) The Tabernacle was a temporary and portable dwelling place, but the Tabernacle was permanent structure. However, even our permanent structures are not permanent.

Vs. 14 – 21 – "And the king turned his face about" -- These verses are addressed to the congregation - By completing the Temple Solomon fulfilled what that he had fulfilled what God had promised David:

Read 2 Samuel 7:1 – 16

However, the kingdom that God had promised David and Solomon would be at least partially conditioned upon obedience:

Read 1 Kings 9:1 – 9

Solomon failed in his obedience to the Lord:

Read 1 Kings 11:1 – 13

The kingdom split in the days of Rehoboam, Solomon's son. Rehoboam lost all of the tribes of Israel save Judah, and some of the members of other tribes who dwelt in Judah, the area surrounding Jerusalem.

"16 So when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in David? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents, O Israel: now see to thine own house, David. So Israel departed unto their tents. 17 But as for the children of Israel which dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them." (1 Kings 12:16-17)

Practical Thought

When Solomon was dedicating the Temple, they were in the place of supreme blessing by the Lord, because they were obeying Him. Look how quickly the blessings of God can be removed. In one generation Israel went from being the world power to a divided kingdom plagued by war from both within and without.

Why cannot we just stay in that place of obedience and blessing.

III. The Prayer of Dedication (vs. 22 – 53)

In vs. 22 – 53, Solomon prays to dedicate the Temple.

Note – I will be very happy when the day arrives that we can dedicate the new building addition to the Lord.

As we read through this passage, please notice all the references made to the people praying, and to all the promises stated regarding God's response to the prayer.

Read vs. 22 – 53

Repeatedly in this passage, Solomon states that God will respond to the prayers of His people.

A. God Keeps His Promises (vs. 22 – 26)

Notice also v. 56.

God is a promise keeper. He will do what He promises to do. God kept His promise to David. God has promised you eternal life if you trust in Him and He will do it. God has promised to meet your needs and He will do it.

B. God's Presence Is Infinite (vs. 27 – 30)

God is omnipresent, or everywhere present. This does not mean that God is everything as the pantheist believes, but He is everywhere. God is infinite in relation to space.

(**Jeremiah 23:23, 24**; Psalm 139:7-12; Ephesians 1:23; **Acts 17:24-28**; Matthew 28:20; **Proverbs 15:3**; Hebrews 4:13)

"3 The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good." (Proverbs 15:3)

"23 Am I a God at hand, saith the LORD, and not a God afar off? 24 Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the LORD. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the LORD." (Jeremiah 23:23-24)

"24 God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; 25 Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; 26 And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; 27 That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: 28 For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring." (Acts 17:24-28)

"13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." (Hebrews 4:13)

But there was a special place that God ordained to meet with His people.

But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth (1 Timothy 3:15).

A. God Answers Prayer (vs. 31 – 53)

Some of those prayer promises include forgiveness of sins; the settling of disputes; protection from enemies; provision of rain; healing from disease; and restoration after judgment. The prayer promises extended beyond just the Israelites but also was intended for the “strangers” who were among them.

These are wonderful promises regarding the corporate prayer of God’s people.

Our church needs to pray about everything.

- We need God’s wisdom and provision as we continue through this building program.
- We need God’s protection as we minister to all the children that are now coming to our church.
- We need Spirit-fullness to help us reach and disciple more souls from our community.

IV. The Post-Address to the People (vs. 54 – 66)

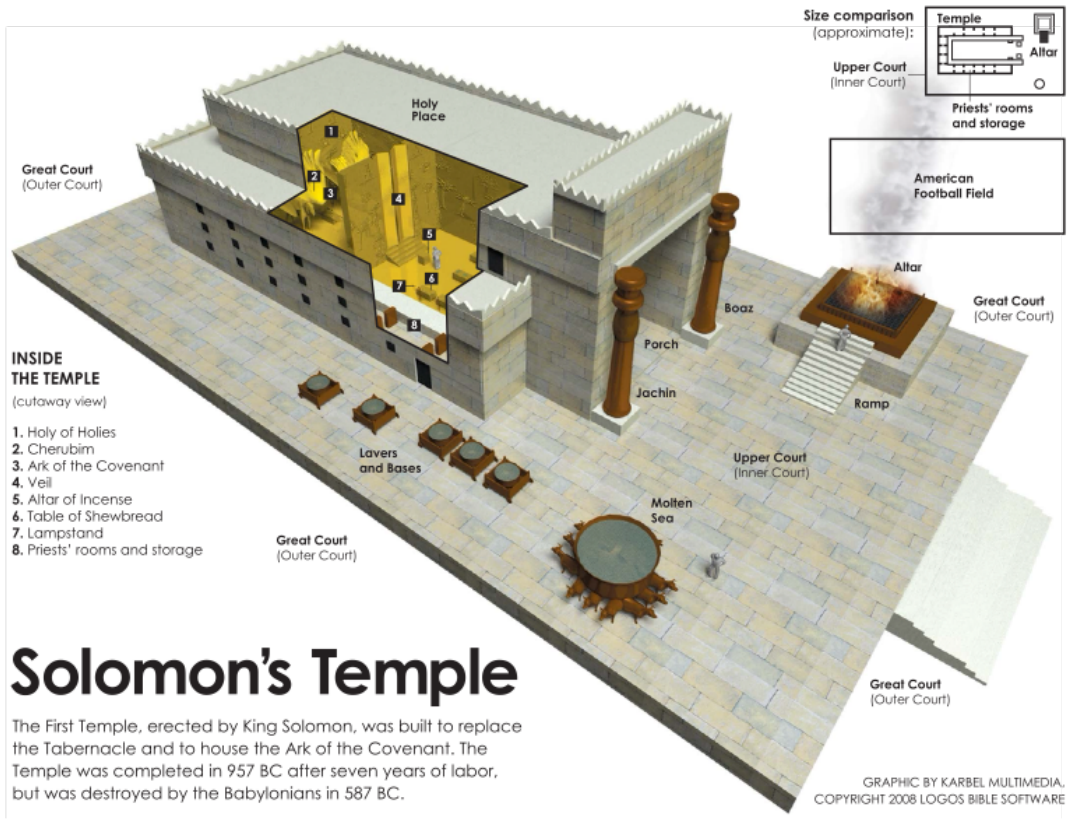
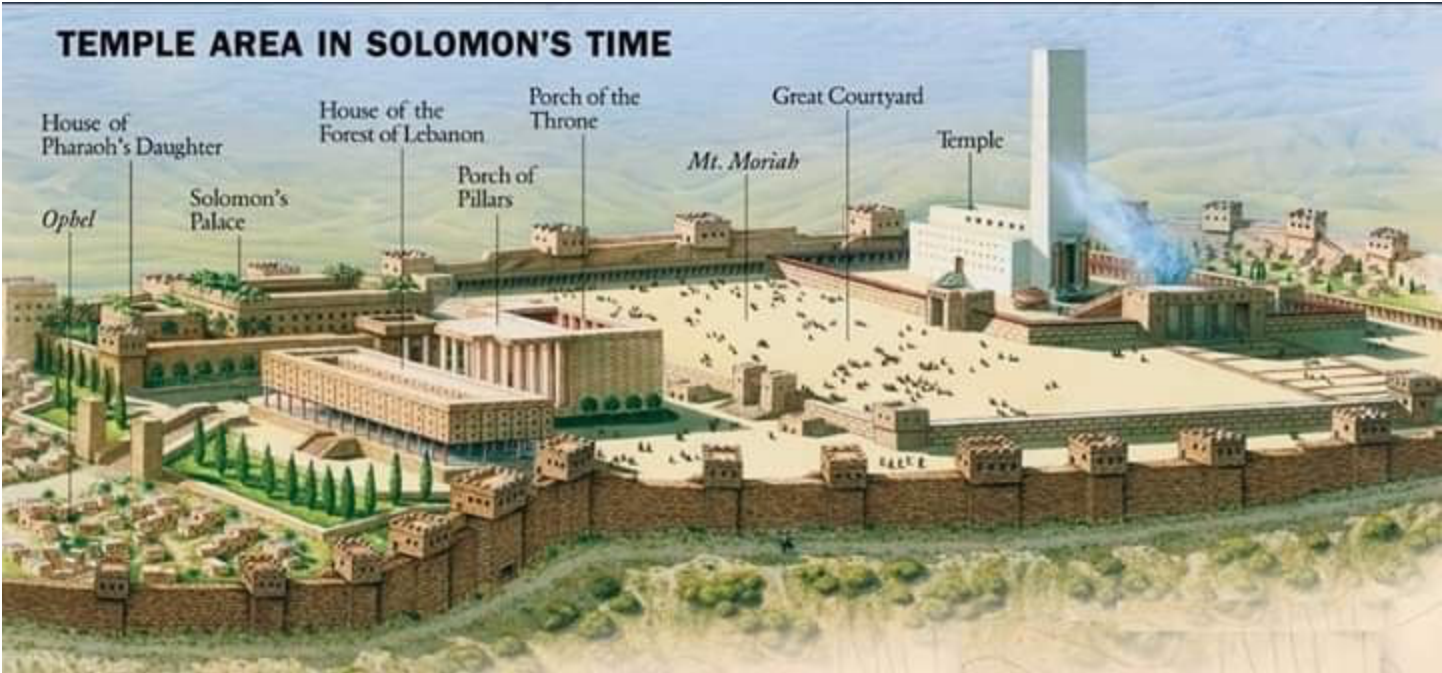
Notice v. 57 – compare with Hebrews 13:5:

"5 Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." (Hebrews 13:5)

Conclusion

At this point in Israel’s history, they are at the actual zenith. Things would never get any better for them than they are at this point. Unfortunately, beginning with Solomon, the nation would gradually get away from God. They would forsake the Lord’s commandments and begin to put their own carnal desires above their obedience to the Lord. The problem was that following their own lusts eventually brought them nothing but heartache and destruction as a nation. If they had just stayed in the will of God?

TEMPLE AREA IN SOLOMON'S TIME



Temple Size Comparisons

