

NOON BIBLE STUDY: 1 KINGS 8

1 KINGS 8:1-5 — DEDICATION OF THE TEMPLE

V. 1 - ALL OF ISRAEL GATHERED. ALL OF THE ELDERS (V. 3).

V. 2 - THE FEAST OF BOOTHES OCCURRED DURING THIS TIME OF THE YEAR.

V. 5 - MASSIVE SACRIFICING

1 KINGS 8:6-9 - ARK OF THE COVENANT BROUGHT IN

V. 6-8 - THE ARK WAS LEFT IN THE INNER SANCTUARY (MOST HOLY PLACE) UNDER THE CHERUBIM'S WINGS. THE POLES FOR THE ARK EXTENDED SLIGHTLY INTO THE MAIN SANCTUARY OF THE TEMPLE, BUT COULD NOT BE SEEN FROM OUTSIDE.

V. 9 - STONE TABLETS ARE ONLY THING IN THE ARK AT THIS POINT.

ESV STUDY BIBLE ON 1 KINGS 8:9: THOUGH THE ARK HAD ONCE CONTAINED THE JAR OF MANNA AND AARON'S ROD (HEB. 9:4; SEE EX. 16:32—34; NUM. 17:10—11), THERE WAS NOW NOTHING IN THE ARK EXCEPT THE TWO TABLETS OF STONE ON WHICH WERE WRITTEN THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

ESV STUDY BIBLE ON HEBREWS 9:4 - "THE OT SAYS THE URN AND THE STAFF WERE PLACED IN FRONT OF THE ARK (EX. 16:32—34; NUM. 17:10—11), NOT IN IT, AND SPEAKS ONLY OF THE TWO TABLETS OF STONE AS BEING WITHIN THE ARK (EX. 25:16, 21; DEUT. 10:1—2). BUT IT WOULD NOT BE UNLIKELY FOR THE URN AND THE ROD TO HAVE SUBSEQUENTLY BEEN STORED IN THE ARK, AND THE AUTHOR OF HEBREWS MAY BE DEPENDING ON OTHER INFORMATION THAT IS NO LONGER AVAILABLE. BY THE TIME OF SOLOMON'S TEMPLE, IT WAS NOTED THAT THERE WAS NOTHING IN THE ARK EXCEPT THE TWO TABLETS OF STONE (1 KINGS 8:9; 2 CHRON. 5:10), BUT THAT MAY SUGGEST THAT OTHER ITEMS HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN IN THE ARK

1 KINGS 8:10-12 - THE LORD'S PRESENCE COMES TO "DWELL" IN THE TEMPLE

SOLOMON MAKES AN INTERESTING OPENING STATEMENT AT THE DEDICATION OF THE TEMPLE. ONE CAN ALMOST IMAGINE SOLOMON ALMOST BLURTING OUT "THE LORD SAID HE WOULD DWELL IN THE THICK CLOUD". IT IS ONE OF THOSE MOMENTS WHERE GOD'S PROMISE IS GIVEN IN SCRIPTURE YEARS BEFORE AND THEN THE FULFILLMENT IS SEEN IN REAL TIME. THE CLOUD COMES IN AND SOLOMON GOES - "OH MY! WOW! THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT GOD SAID WOULD HAPPEN!!" IN FACT, LOOK AT THE WORDS OF THE LORD TO MOSES AT THE BEGINNINGS OF THE TABERNACLE:

LEVITICUS 16:2 - THE LORD SAID TO MOSES: "TELL YOUR BROTHER AARON THAT HE SHALL NOT ENTER AT ANY TIME INTO THE HOLY PLACE INSIDE THE VEIL, BEFORE THE MERCY SEAT WHICH IS ON THE ARK, OR HE WILL DIE: FOR I WILL APPEAR IN THE CLOUD OVER THE MERCY SEAT.

SOLOMON SEES THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF THE TEMPLE CONSTRUCTION IS COMPLETE. THE LORD'S PRESENCE COMING TO "DWELL" THERE. THIS IS SIMILAR TO WHAT HAPPENED WHEN THE LORD MET THE NATION OF ISRAEL ON MOUNT SINAI:

EXODUS 20:21 - SO THE PEOPLE STOOD AT A DISTANCE, WHILE MOSES APPROACHED THE THICK CLOUD WHERE GOD WAS.

1 KINGS 8:13-27 - SOLOMON'S DEDICATION PRAYER BEGINS WITH A RECOUNTING OF THE LORD'S PROMISE TO THE HOUSE OF DAVID AND PRAISE & EXALTATION OF GOD.

SOLOMON: "HERE WE ARE AT THIS DAY WHICH YOU PROMISED TO MY FATHER YEARS AGO!" YOU DID IT! YOU WERE FAITHFUL TO YOUR PROMISE! NOW MAY YOU CONTINUE TO BE FAITHFUL TO YOUR WORD TOWARDS ME AND IN REGARDS TO THIS TEMPLE!

1 KINGS 8:28-30 - SUMMATION OF THE PRAYER

SOLOMON IS GOING TO PRAY A PRAYER OF DEDICATION FOR THE TEMPLE. HE IS GOING TO ASK THE LORD TO CONSECRATE AND BLESS THE HOUSE WITH HIS PRESENCE FOR ALL GENERATIONS. HE IS GOING TO REQUEST THAT THE TEMPLE BECOME THE PLACE WHERE THE COVENANT OF GOD TO ISRAEL WILL BE REALIZED. HE WILL PRAY FOR A SERIES OF SITUATIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS AND THE NATION AS A WHOLE IN REGARD TO THE TEMPLE.

THIS IS NOT SOMETHING WE CAN EASILY RELATE TO BECAUSE WE HAVE OPEN ACCESS TO GOD THROUGH JESUS CHRIST. BUT AT THE TIME, THE TEMPLE IS THE CENTRAL LOCATION FOR THE WORSHIP OF YAHWEH. WHEN MEN AND WOMEN OF ISRAEL PRAY, THEY AREN'T PRAYING "IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST", AS WE DO - MEANING THEY ARE MINDFUL THAT GOD HEARS THEIR PRAYERS BECAUSE OF THE WORK AND INTERCESSION OF JESUS. NOT AT ALL - INSTEAD WHEN AN ISRAELITE PRAYS IN THIS ERA, THEY WILL BE MINDFUL OF THE TEMPLE AS THE PLACE WHERE THE PEOPLE HAVE ACCESS TO GOD.

WITH THIS IN MIND, LET'S CONTINUE ON LISTENING IN ON SOLOMON'S DEDICATION PRAYER...

1 KINGS 8:31-53 - DEDICATION PRAYER

1 KINGS 8:31-32 - IF A MAN SINS AND IS REQUIRED TO MAKE AN OATH

1 KINGS 8:33-34 - WHEN NATION IS DEFEATED BY ENEMY (BECAUSE OF THEIR SIN)

1 KINGS 8:35-36 - WHEN THERE IS NO RAIN IN THE LAND (BECAUSE OF SINS OF THE PEOPLE)

1 KINGS 8:37-40 - WHEN THERE IS GENERAL TROUBLE, FAMINE, PESTILENCE, ETC.

V. 39-40 - SOLOMON PRAYS THAT THE PRAYERS MADE IN THESE SITUATIONS, TOWARDS THE TEMPLE, CAN BE A TESTIMONY CAUSING THE PEOPLE TO FEAR THE LORD WHEN HE ANSWERS THEM.

1 KINGS 8:41-43 - WHEN A FOREIGNER HEARS OF YAHWEH'S GREATNESS AND COMES TO PRAY AT/TOWARDS THE TEMPLE, LET THEM KNOW THAT YOU ARE GOD

1 KINGS 8:44-45 - WHEN THE PEOPLE GO OUT TO BATTLE.

1 KINGS 8:46-53 - WHEN THE PEOPLE SIN AND ARE SENT AWAY IN EXILE

THIS IS ONE OF THE MOST REMARKABLE SECTIONS OF THIS DEDICATION PRAYER. FOR THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE NATION. THEY WILL TURN FROM THE LORD GENERATIONS FROM NOW AND BE DEFEATED AND SENT INTO CAPTIVITY IN BABYLON. WHAT MAKES THIS PORTION OF SOLOMON'S PRAYER SO AMAZING, IS THAT IT IS WITH THIS HEART THAT DANIEL, AN ISRAELITE MAN, CAPTIVE IN BABYLON WILL PRAY 70 YEARS INTO THEIR EXILE, INITIATING THEIR RETURN TO REBUILD JERUSALEM AND ITS TEMPLE. IN FACT, LOOK AT HOW DANIEL WAS PRAYING WHEN HE GOT SENT TO LION'S DEN:

DANIEL 6:10 - NOW WHEN DANIEL KNEW THAT THE DOCUMENT WAS SIGNED, HE ENTERED HIS HOUSE (NOW IN HIS ROOF CHAMBER HE HAD WINDOWS OPEN TOWARD JERUSALEM); AND HE CONTINUED KNEELING ON HIS KNEES THREE TIMES A DAY, PRAYING AND GIVING THANKS BEFORE HIS GOD, AS HE HAD BEEN DOING PREVIOUSLY.

NOW LOOK AT WHAT HE PRAYED LATER:

DANIEL 9:2-5 - IN THE FIRST YEAR OF HIS REIGN, I, DANIEL, OBSERVED IN THE BOOKS THE NUMBER OF THE YEARS WHICH WAS REVEALED AS THE WORD OF THE LORD TO JEREMIAH THE PROPHET FOR THE COMPLETION OF THE DESOLATIONS OF JERUSALEM, NAMELY, SEVENTY YEARS. 3 SO I GAVE MY ATTENTION TO THE LORD GOD TO SEEK HIM BY PRAYER AND SUPPLICATIONS, WITH FASTING, SACKCLOTH AND ASHES. 4 I PRAYED TO THE LORD MY GOD AND CONFESSED AND SAID, "ALAS, O LORD, THE GREAT AND AWESOME GOD, WHO KEEPS HIS COVENANT AND LOVINGKINDNESS FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM AND KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS, 5 WE HAVE SINNED, COMMITTED INIQUITY, ACTED WICKEDLY AND REBELLED, EVEN TURNING ASIDE FROM YOUR COMMANDMENTS AND ORDINANCES.

THE ENTIRE PRAYER OF DANIEL IS IN DANIEL 9. NEHEMIAH WILL PRAY A SIMILAR PRAYER IN NEHEMIAH 1-2. SO WILL EZRA IN EZRA 9. ALSO, JONAH, AFTER HE SINS AND RUNS FROM GOD PRAYS THE FOLLOWING FROM THE STOMACH OF THE GREAT FISH:

JONAH 2:4 - "SO I SAID, 'I HAVE BEEN EXPELLED FROM YOUR SIGHT. NEVERTHELESS I WILL LOOK AGAIN TOWARD YOUR HOLY TEMPLE.'

"THE PRAYER IS IMPORTANT FOR UNDERSTANDING THE BOOKS OF KINGS AS A WHOLE, FOR IT PLACES BOTH THE TEMPLE AND THE LAW IN WIDER PERSPECTIVE. THE TEMPLE IS AN IMPORTANT BUILDING, BUT GOD IS NOT CONFINED BY A BUILDING AND IS CERTAINLY NOT DEPENDENT ON IT. HE WILL SURVIVE EVEN ITS DESTRUCTION, AND WILL HEAR HIS PEOPLE'S PRAYERS WHEN THEY GO INTO EXILE. LIKEWISE, OBEDIENCE TO THE LAW IS VERY IMPORTANT, BUT SOLOMON HOLDS OUT HOPE FOR RESTORATION, EVEN WHEN THE PEOPLE FAIL TO OBEY." (ESV STUDY BIBLE, 1 KINGS 8:22-53, "SOLOMON'S PRAYER")

1 KINGS 8:54-61 - SOLOMON'S CHARGE AND BLESSING TO THE NATION

1 KINGS 8:62-66 - SACRIFICE, FEASTING & CONCLUSION OF DEDICATION

WE CLOSE THE CHAPTER WITH ANOTHER SCENE OF ABRAHAMIC COVENANT FULFILLMENT AND A FORESHADOW TO THE MESSIAH'S ETERNAL KINGDOM. THE KINGDOM STRETCHES FROM THE EUPHRATES (ENTRANCE OF HAMATH) TO THE BORDER OF EGYPT (BROOK OF EGYPT) (V. 65). THE KINGDOM FROM KING TO PEASANT IS WORSHIPPING THE LORD (V. 65). AND THE NATION IS FILLED JOYFUL AND GLAD HEARTS BECAUSE OF ALL THE "GOODNESS THAT THE LORD HAD SHOWN TO DAVID HIS SERVANT AND ISRAEL HIS PEOPLE."