



The Temple Dedicated: A House Of Prayer (1 Kings 8:22-53)

Notes: Week Five

1 Kings 8:22-53 (HCSB)

Solomon's Prayer

²² Then Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in front of the entire congregation of Israel and spread out his hands toward heaven. ²³ He said:

LORD God of Israel,
there is no God like You
in heaven above or on earth below,
keeping the gracious covenant
with Your servants who walk before You
with their whole heart.

²⁴ You have kept what You promised
to Your servant, my father David.
You spoke directly to him
and You fulfilled Your promise by Your power
as it is today.

²⁵ Therefore, LORD God of Israel,
keep what You promised
to Your servant, my father David:
You will never fail to have a man
to sit before Me on the throne of Israel,
if only your sons guard their walk before Me
as you have walked before Me.

²⁶ Now LORD^[a] God of Israel,
please confirm what You promised
to Your servant, my father David.

²⁷ But will God indeed live on earth?
Even heaven, the highest heaven, cannot contain You,
much less this temple I have built.

²⁸ Listen^[b] to Your servant's prayer and his petition,
LORD my God,
so that You may hear the cry and the prayer
that Your servant prays before You today,

²⁹ so that Your eyes may watch over this temple night and day,
toward the place where You said:
My name will be there,
and so that You may hear the prayer
that Your servant prays toward this place.

³⁰ Hear the petition of Your servant
and Your people Israel,
which they pray toward this place.

May You hear in Your dwelling place in heaven.
May You hear and forgive.

³¹ When a man sins against his neighbor
and is forced to take an oath,^[c]
and he comes to take an oath
before Your altar in this temple,
³² may You hear in heaven and act.
May You judge Your servants,
condemning the wicked man by bringing
what he has done on his own head
and providing justice for the righteous
by rewarding him according to his righteousness.

³³ When Your people Israel are defeated before an enemy,
because they have sinned against You,
and they return to You and praise Your name,
and they pray and plead with You
for mercy in this temple,
³⁴ may You hear in heaven
and forgive the sin of Your people Israel.
May You restore them to the land
You gave their ancestors.

³⁵ When the skies are shut and there is no rain,
because they have sinned against You,
and they pray toward this place
and praise Your name,
and they turn from their sins
because You are afflicting them,
³⁶ may You hear in heaven
and forgive the sin of Your servants
and Your people Israel,
so that You may teach them the good way
they should walk in.
May You send rain on Your land
that You gave Your people for an inheritance.

³⁷ When there is famine on the earth,
when there is pestilence,
when there is blight, mildew, locust, or grasshopper,
when their enemy besieges them
in the region of their fortified cities,^[d]
when there is any plague or illness,
³⁸ whatever prayer or petition
anyone from Your people Israel might have—
each man knowing his own afflictions^[e]
and spreading out his hands toward this temple—
³⁹ may You hear in heaven, Your dwelling place,
and may You forgive, act, and repay the man,
according to all his ways, since You know his heart,

for You alone know every human heart,
⁴⁰ so that they may fear You
all the days they live on the land
You gave our ancestors.

⁴¹ Even for the foreigner who is not of Your people Israel
but has come from a distant land
because of Your name—

⁴² for they will hear of Your great name,
mighty hand, and outstretched arm,
and will come and pray toward this temple—

⁴³ may You hear in heaven, Your dwelling place,
and do according to all the foreigner asks You for.
Then all the people on earth will know Your name,
to fear You as Your people Israel do
and know that this temple I have built
is called by Your name.

⁴⁴ When Your people go out to fight against their enemies,^[f]
wherever You send them,
and they pray to Yahweh
in the direction of the city You have chosen
and the temple I have built for Your name,
⁴⁵ may You hear their prayer and petition in heaven
and uphold their cause.

⁴⁶ When they sin against You—
for there is no one who does not sin—
and You are angry with them
and hand them over to the enemy,
and their captors deport them to the enemy's country—
whether distant or nearby—

⁴⁷ and when they come to their senses^[g]
in the land where they were deported
and repent and petition You in their captors' land:
“We have sinned and done wrong;
we have been wicked,”

⁴⁸ and when they return to You with their whole mind and heart
in the land of their enemies who took them captive,
and when they pray to You in the direction of their land
that You gave their ancestors,
the city You have chosen,
and the temple I have built for Your name,

⁴⁹ may You hear in heaven, Your dwelling place,
their prayer and petition and uphold their cause.

⁵⁰ May You forgive Your people
who sinned against You
and all their rebellions^[h] against You,
and may You give them compassion
in the eyes of their captors,
so that they may be compassionate to them.

⁵¹ For they are Your people and Your inheritance;
You brought them out of Egypt,
out of the middle of an iron furnace.

⁵² May Your eyes be open to Your servant's petition
and to the petition of Your people Israel,
listening to them whenever they call to You.

⁵³ For You, Lord GOD, have set them apart as Your inheritance
from all the people on earth,
as You spoke through Your servant Moses
when You brought their ancestors out of Egypt.

Footnotes:

- a. [1 Kings 8:26](#) Some Hb mss, LXX, Syr, Tg, Vg, 2Ch 6:16; other Hb mss omit *LORD*
- b. [1 Kings 8:28](#) Lit *Turn*
- c. [1 Kings 8:31](#) Lit *and he lifts a curse against him to curse him*
- d. [1 Kings 8:37](#) Lit *besieges him in the land of his gates*
- e. [1 Kings 8:38](#) Lit *knowing in his heart of a plague*
- f. [1 Kings 8:44](#) Some Hb mss, some ancient versions, 2Ch 6:34; other Hb mss read *enemy*
- g. [1 Kings 8:47](#) Lit *they return to their heart*
- h. [1 Kings 8:50](#) Lit *rebellions that they have rebelled*

Holman Christian Standard Bible - *Study Bible*¹

1 Kings 8:22-53

8:22 Solomon then turned around again, this time to face God as the representative of the people. At some point (see [v. 54](#)), Solomon kneeled with his hands held upwards for this prayer.

8:23-24 Solomon stated more foundational points of covenant theology. The God of the Hebrews is unique. There is no God like Yahweh, God of Israel. God, uniquely, is a covenant-keeping God. That is, God observes (Hb *berith chesed*) covenant faithfulness, here translated as gracious covenant. Covenant faithfulness was a mutual responsibility for both parties.

8:25 God's covenant faithfulness guaranteed the permanency of the Davidic dynasty but only if Solomon's sons guard their walk before the Lord.

8:26 Keeping His covenant promises expressed God's (Hb) *chesed*. Solomon asked that this gracious faithfulness would continue.

8:27-30 After acknowledging that this house could not contain God, Solomon stated the major theme of this prayer: that God would confirm His covenant by being attentive to the prayer of His people, directed to this temple for the following concerns. This attentiveness would lead to forgiveness and restoration, recurrent themes in the remainder of this prayer. In effect, this prayer argued that God's covenant response to prayer, directed to this temple, guaranteed God's interest in all aspects of Israel's life.

8:31-32 When uncorroborated testimony must be supported by a solemn oath, the oath should be taken at this temple. In broad terms God would hear prayer to validate an honest oath and to maintain justice and integrity.

8:33-34 God would hear when the Israelites were defeated in war. In Solomon's hour of greatness, this prayer acknowledged that sin could produce defeat.

8:35-50 The following statements about sin, disaster, and restoration are not repetitious, stereotypical formulae. There is much freedom and creativity in composing the statements. Yet certain elements seem to recur. The whole process can involve: (1) sinning; (2) repentance; (3) acknowledgement of truth (either as "confessing" truth, as stating the truth in praise, or as stating the truth in thanks); (4) prayer; (5) seeking favor; (6) God's hearing; (7) forgiveness; and (8) restoration.

8:37-40 Other natural disasters also were occasions for praying to God. The Lord would hear, forgive, and reward in accordance with his (the worshiper's) ways. This would result in the fear of God among His people. "Fear" is a rich word that includes a multitude of concepts, including formal worship of God, actual fear of God, and reverence for God.

8:41-43 Solomon states the theology of missions that is implicit in God's great works of witness. The foreigner should hear of God's works and then pray toward the temple to God. And God would hear that foreigner's prayer. The popular Christian misunderstanding that the OT was purely a Hebrew document, written by and for Hebrews alone, can easily miss this point. The intended result of OT revelation was the spread of the knowledge of God to all the people on earth.

1. Jeremy Royal Howard, ed., *HCSB Study Bible*, (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2010), *WORDsearch* CROSS e-book, Under: "1 Kings 8".

8:46 Sin produces defeat in war and captivity. This truth could point to the occasional historical defeats and partial captivities of God's people, but it could also point to the two great national deportations of the people.

8:51-53 Solomon then looked to the historical basis for the covenant relationship between God and His people, particularly that He had delivered them from Egypt.

The Apologetics Study Bible²

1 Kings 8:22-53

8:23 The Hebrew word for "gracious" refers to the kindness and good treatment expected by both parties of the covenant, namely God and Israel. Solomon pointed out that the Lord had not only kept His part of the agreement, but had given special treatment to Israel because of that relationship.

8:31 "Forced to take an oath" is literally "lifts a curse against him to curse him." The Hebrew idiom refers to the ancient Near East practice where one taking an oath calls upon the gods (in this case, the Lord) to punish him if he speaks falsely.

8:32 "May You hear... and act"; that is, the Lord will carry out the punishment. "Bringing... on his own head" refers to the guilty person suffering the consequence of his actions.

8:33 See [Dt 29:17-27](#). Solomon was deliberately using the language of this passage.

8:41, 43 The Lord will hear the praying foreigners and treat them according to what they deserve.

8:42 This is the fulfillment of God's purpose in creating Israel as a "kingdom of priests" ([Ex 19:6](#)).

8:51 The "iron furnace" referred to a furnace where iron is smelted.

2. Kirk E. Lowery, "Notes on 1 Kings," in *The Apologetics Study Bible: Understanding Why You Believe*, ed. Ted Cabal, (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2007), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 512-515.

NLT Life Application Study Bible³

1 Kings 8:22-53

8:24 Solomon was referring to the promise God had made to David in [2 Samuel 7:12-15](#) that one of David's sons would build the Temple.

8:27 In his prayer of dedication, Solomon declared that even the highest heavens cannot contain God. Isn't it amazing that, though the heavens can't contain God, he is willing to live in the hearts of those who love him? The God of the universe takes up residence in his people.

8:33, 34 After Solomon's reign, the people continually turned away from God. The rest of the kingdom era is a vivid fulfillment of Solomon's description in these verses. As a result of the people's sin, God let them be overrun by enemies several times. Then, in desperation, they cried out to God for forgiveness, and God restored them.

8:41-43 God chose Israel to be a blessing to the whole world ([Genesis 12:1-3](#)). This blessing found its fulfillment in Jesus—a descendant of Abraham and David ([Galatians 3:8, 9](#))—who became the Messiah for all people, Jews and non-Jews. When the Israelites first entered the Promised Land, they were ordered to clear out several wicked nations; thus, we read in the Old Testament of many wars. But we should not conclude that war was Israel's first duty. After subduing the evil people, Israel was to become a light to the surrounding nations. Sadly, Israel's own sin and spiritual blindness prevented them from reaching out to the rest of the world with God's love. Reaching out to the world is still the commission of God's people today. Christians need to take every opportunity to spread God's love to the world. [8:46-53](#) Solomon, who seemed to have prophetic insight into the future captivities of his people ([2 Kings 17; 25](#)), asked God to be merciful to them when they cried out to him, to forgive them, and to return them to their homeland. Reference to their return is made in [Ezra 1-2](#); [Nehemiah 1-2](#).

3. *Life Application Study Bible*, (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1988), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 526-528.

Life Essentials Study Bible⁴

A Principle to Live By

1 Kings #10: God's Forgiveness

from 1 Kings 8:22-53

Even though our sins are forgiven because of our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, we need to confess our sins in order to experience ongoing and intimate fellowship with God.

There are a number of themes in Solomon's dedicatory prayer that relate to God's living temple today:

1. The king interceded for Israel, just as Jesus Christ is the one true mediator between God and man ([v. 22](#); [1Tm 2:5](#)).
2. Without knowing it, Solomon alluded to the time God would become a man in the person of Jesus Christ ([v. 27](#); [Jn 1:14](#)).
3. Though Solomon had no comprehensive understanding of the ultimate plan God had in mind in choosing Israel, he understood that as a nation they were to be a witness to all people ([vv. 41-43](#); [Gn 12:1-3](#)).

But no theme is more pervasive in Solomon's prayer than the need for God's gracious forgiveness ([vv. 30, 34, 36, 39, 50](#)). Understanding only the temporary sacrificial system that God instituted at Mount Sinai, Solomon demonstrated the need for the one final sacrifice, Jesus Christ, who is "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" ([Jn 1:29](#)). He is our perfect high priest and intercessor who can identify with all of our weaknesses in that He was "tested in every way as we are" ([Heb 4:14-16](#)). And, when we confess our sins and receive the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior, His blood continues "to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" ([1Jn 1:9](#); see also [Eph 1:7](#)). However, to live in God's will and to experience a clear conscience, we must more and more be transformed into Christ's glorious image (see [Rm 12:1-2](#); [1Tm 1:5](#)).

Reflection and Response

How should God's eternal forgiveness through the shed blood of Christ affect the way we live today?

4. Gene Getz, *Life Essentials Study Bible*, (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2011), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 442.