

1Kings 8:1 ¶ Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, the chief of the fathers of the children of Israel, unto king Solomon in Jerusalem, that they might bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of the city of David, which is Zion.

1Kings 8:2 And all the men of Israel assembled themselves unto king Solomon at the feast in the month Ethanim, which is the seventh month.

1Kings 8:3 And all the elders of Israel came, and the priests took up the ark.

1Kings 8:4 And they brought up the ark of the LORD, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and all the holy vessels that were in the tabernacle, even those did the priests and the Levites bring up.

With this chapter, I believe the narrative picks up after the completion of the building of the temple.

Solomon called for an assembly of all the elders of Israel, the leaders of the tribes, and other recognized leaders in the nation to come to Jerusalem and be part of the celebration involving bringing the ark of the covenant up to the temple from Zion, the city of David.

Reminder: David had transferred the ark from the tabernacle of Moses to a tabernacle that he had erected on Mt. Zion specifically for the ark.

This gathering of all the chief men of Israel occurred in the seventh month (September/October)—the same month as the feast of tabernacles. The priests/Levites, as the LORD had commanded, carried the ark as well as the tabernacle of Moses and all of the vessels that were used in it up to the temple in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah.

1 Chronicles 15:15 "And the children of the Levites bare the ark of God upon their shoulders with the staves thereon, as Moses commanded according to the word of the LORD."

2 Chronicles 3:1 "Then Solomon began to build the house of the LORD at Jerusalem in mount Moriah, where the LORD appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshingfloor of Ornan the Jebusite."

Reminder: Only the descendants of Aaron served as priests and were included in the larger group of all descendants of Levi called Levites.

JFB notes that this was 11 months after the temple had been completed.

Archbishop Usher tells us more: "This was the ninth jubilee, opening the fourth millenary of the world, or A.M. 3001, wherein Solomon with great magnificence celebrated the dedication of the temple seven days, and the feast of tabernacles other seven days; and the celebration of the eighth day of tabernacles being finished, upon the twenty-third day of the seventh month the people were dismissed every man to his home."

1Kings 8:5 And king Solomon, and all the congregation of Israel, that were

assembled unto him, *were* with him before the ark, sacrificing sheep and oxen, that could not be told nor numbered for multitude.

1Kings 8:6 And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD unto his place, into the oracle of the house, to the most holy *place*, *even* under the wings of the cherubims.

1Kings 8:7 For the cherubims spread forth *their* two wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubims covered the ark and the staves thereof above.

1Kings 8:8 And they drew out the staves, that the ends of the staves were seen out in the holy *place* before the oracle, and they were not seen without: and there they are unto this day.

King Solomon led the congregation of Israel in procession before the ark and sacrificed so many sheep and oxen that they didn't bother to try to count. The NIV Commentary offers more insight: "The participial form "sacrificing" indicates that the sacrifices were being made as the ark progressed the short distance from the city of David to the temple."

The priests carried the ark into the holy of holies and placed it under the wings of the two cherubim that Solomon had made for that purpose.

The KJV indicates that the poles used to carry the ark were pulled out enough to be seen in the outer sanctuary. Other translations indicate that the poles were so long that they could be seen from the outer sanctuary.

1Kings 8:9 *There was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb, when the LORD made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt.*

The writer makes note of the fact that only the two tables of stone (the ten commandments) that Moses put there were in the ark. It had originally also contained a pot of manna and Aaron's rod.

Hebrews 9:2-4 "For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread; which is called the sanctuary. And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all; 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...."

1Kings 8:10 And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy *place*, that the cloud filled the house of the LORD,

1Kings 8:11 So that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of the LORD.

When the priests came outside of the sanctuary, "the cloud" filled the house of the LORD. I think this is a reference to the same cloud that led the children of Israel during the wilderness wanderings. It was the cloud of the presence of the LORD. His presence was so overpowering that the priests could not stand to minister. This glory cloud, often called the shekinah glory cloud, signified God's acceptance of the temple in replacement of the tabernacle as the place to which

the people should come to make their sacrifices and offerings to Him.

I liked Guzik's comment on the glory cloud: "The intense sense of the presence of our holy God is not a warm and fuzzy feeling. Men like Peter, Isaiah and John felt *stricken* in the presence of God. This was not because God forced an uncomfortable feeling upon them, but because they simply could not be comfortable sensing the difference between their sinfulness and the holiness of God."

1Kings 8:12 ¶ Then spake Solomon, The LORD said that he would dwell in the thick darkness.

1Kings 8:13 I have surely built thee an house to dwell in, a settled place for thee to abide in for ever.

The wording of this verse as supported by the Hebrew seems to indicate that the cloud was ominous like a lowering sky. So it seems that the priests were so awestruck that they could not minister. Solomon reminded the people that the LORD had said he would dwell in thick darkness. The scriptural record that supports this truth is found in Exodus.

Exodus 20:20–21 "And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not. And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was."

It's interesting to note that Solomon's expectation was that the LORD would dwell in this temple forever. His prayer that follows indicates that he expected there would be times when the people of Israel would suffer God's judgment, but he certainly didn't expect the temple to be destroyed a little over 400 years later.

1Kings 8:14 And the king turned his face about, and blessed all the congregation of Israel: (and all the congregation of Israel stood;)

1Kings 8:15 And he said, Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel, which spake with his mouth unto David my father, and hath with his hand fulfilled *it*, saying,

1Kings 8:16 Since the day that I brought forth my people Israel out of Egypt, I chose no city out of all the tribes of Israel to build an house, that my name might be therein; but I chose David to be over my people Israel.

1Kings 8:17 And it was in the heart of David my father to build an house for the name of the LORD God of Israel.

1Kings 8:18 And the LORD said unto David my father, Whereas it was in thine heart to build an house unto my name, thou didst well that it was in thine heart.

1Kings 8:19 Nevertheless thou shalt not build the house; but thy son that shall come forth out of thy loins, he shall build the house unto my name.

1Kings 8:20 And the LORD hath performed his word that he spake, and I am risen up in the room of David my father, and sit on the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised, and have built an house for the name of the LORD God of Israel.

1Kings 8:21 And I have set there a place for the ark, wherein *is* the covenant of

the LORD, which he made with our fathers, when he brought them out of the land of Egypt.

Solomon turned to face the people and bless them as they stood before him. The Chronicler tells us that he had constructed a special raised platform from which he could speak.

2 Chronicles 6:13 "For Solomon had made a brasen scaffold, of five cubits long, and five cubits broad, and three cubits high, and had set it in the midst of the court: and upon it he stood...."

This blessing began in praise of the LORD and would go on to include intercession for the people. He praised "the LORD God of Israel" for keeping His promise to David. He noted that God had never chosen a city from any of the tribes of Israel to be specifically associated with His name. He did, however, specifically choose David to be king over Israel. David wanted to build a house to honor the LORD, but was told he could not. The LORD, however, declared that David's desire was good. It was good because the LORD wanted a permanent replacement to the tabernacle. He had even told Moses that He would choose a specific place "to put His name." That place turned out to be Jerusalem.

Deuteronomy 12:5-7 "But unto the place which the LORD your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there, even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come: And thither ye shall bring your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, and your tithes, and heave offerings of your hand, and your vows, and your freewill offerings, and the firstlings of your herds and of your flocks: And there ye shall eat before the LORD your God, and ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households, wherein the LORD thy God hath blessed thee."

2 Chronicles 6:6 "But I have chosen Jerusalem, that my name might be there; and have chosen David to be over my people Israel."

The LORD promised David that he would father a son that would build a house to honor Him. Solomon thanked the LORD for fulfilling that promise and appointing him to succeed his father as king. Further, He had allowed Solomon to accomplish what was in David's heart by building the temple in honor of the LORD God of Israel. He noted that the temple had a special place set apart for the ark that contained the covenant God made with their forefathers after delivering them out of Egypt. God's acceptance of the temple gave testimony to the complete future fulfillment of that covenant that would culminate with the coming of the Messiah to establish His kingdom.

**1Kings 8:22 ¶ And Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven:
1Kings 8:23 And he said, LORD God of Israel, *there is no God like thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath, who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants that walk before thee with all their heart:*
1Kings 8:24 Who hast kept with thy servant David my father that thou**

promisedst him: thou spakest also with thy mouth, and hast fulfilled it with thine hand, as it is this day.

From the platform Solomon positioned himself before the altar of the LORD in view of the people of Israel and spread his hands toward heaven. The Chronicler informs us that he was on his knees.

2 Chronicles 6:13 "For Solomon had made a brasen scaffold...and upon it he stood, and kneeled down upon his knees before all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven...."

Guzik makes a good observation: "Many modern people close their eyes, bow their head, and fold their hands as they pray, but the Old Testament tradition was to spread out the hands toward heaven in a gesture of surrender, openness, and ready reception."

He began to pray declaring that there is no God like the LORD God of Israel in heaven or earth that keeps covenant and mercy with His servants that walk before Him with all their heart. What a powerful wonderful truth! It is just as true today as the day that Solomon uttered it. All other so-called "gods," whether spirit or flesh, are puppets of Satan, the father of lies and certainly without mercy.

John 8:44 "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."

Their whole purpose is to turn people away from the one true God, Creator of heaven and earth, through deceit and by perverting the right ways of the LORD.

Revelation 20:1-3 "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season."

Acts 13:10 "O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?"

A key point in verse 23 is that the LORD keeps covenant with and shows mercy to those that seek to live their lives in obedience to Him. It's an Old Testament statement of the same truth in Romans 8:28.

Romans 8:28 "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God...."

1Kings 8:25 Therefore now, LORD God of Israel, keep with thy servant David my father that thou promisedst him, saying, There shall not fail thee a man in

my sight to sit on the throne of Israel; so that thy children take heed to their way, that they walk before me as thou hast walked before me.

1Kings 8:26 And now, O God of Israel, let thy word, I pray thee, be verified, which thou spakest unto thy servant David my father.

Solomon goes on to call on the LORD God of Israel to keep His promise to “thy servant” David. Though scripture reveals that David was not the best of fathers in disciplining his children, it was evident to Solomon at least that David “served” the LORD. He had watched his father and observed that he loved the LORD and wanted to obey Him.

The promise he referred to was the promise that there would “not fail” to be a descendant of David on the throne of David if they continued to walk before the LORD in the same way that David had. Solomon called for the LORD to be faithful to that promise.

That statement caused me to stop and think. I always understood the Davidic covenant to be unconditional. This was the actual promise:

2 Samuel 7:12–16 “And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.”

The unconditional part was that the throne of David would always exist before the LORD and that one of his descendants, the coming Messiah, would eventually build a temple and establish that throne in Israel to rule an eternal kingdom. Solomon understood that sin and rebellion would incur God’s judgment, as we will see in the verses to come. The promise to establish David’s kingdom forever would be fulfilled but not before thousands of years (from our current perspective) of an empty throne due to the judgment that Israel would incur for their sin and rebellion against the LORD.

1Kings 8:27 But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?

1Kings 8:28 Yet have thou respect unto the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication, O LORD my God, to hearken unto the cry and to the prayer, which thy servant prayeth before thee to day:

1Kings 8:29 That thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day, even toward the place of which thou hast said, My name shall be there: that thou mayest hearken unto the prayer which thy servant shall make toward this place.

1Kings 8:30 And hearken thou to the supplication of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, when they shall pray toward this place: and hear thou in heaven

thy dwelling place: and when thou hearest, forgive.

As Solomon continued to pray, he became a bit overwhelmed. He had seen the cloud of God's presence descend upon the temple, but would God really condescend to dwell on the earth, maintain His presence at the temple? The heaven or even the highest heaven can't contain God, so how could He possibly be content to dwell in the temple?

Solomon quickly decides to change his prayer to fit what he can understand—asking the LORD to hear his prayer and the future prayers of those that serve Him. He understood that though he could not truly understand the greatness of God, he could know that God sees His servants and hears their prayers. Solomon asked that when the LORD hears the prayers of repentance by His people from His dwelling place in heaven, He forgive them.

1Kings 8:31 If any man trespass against his neighbour, and an oath be laid upon him to cause him to swear, and the oath come before thine altar in this house:

1Kings 8:32 Then hear thou in heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, condemning the wicked, to bring his way upon his head; and justifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteousness.

At this point Solomon began to put forth various scenarios in which the people would need to ask God's forgiveness.

The NLT gives a clearer understanding of this request: "If someone wrongs another person and is required to take an oath of innocence in front of the altar at this Temple, then hear from heaven and judge between your servants—the accuser and the accused. Punish the guilty party and acquit the one who is innocent."

Again, this emphasizes that nothing is hidden from the LORD; He knows all that we do and what is in our hearts.

Psalms 139:7–12 "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee."

1 Samuel 16:7 "...for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart."

**1Kings 8:33 When thy people Israel be smitten down before the enemy, because they have sinned against thee, and shall turn again to thee, and confess thy name, and pray, and make supplication unto thee in this house:
1Kings 8:34 Then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy people Israel,**

and bring them again unto the land which thou gavest unto their fathers.

If God allowed the people of Israel to be conquered by an enemy because they had sinned against Him and turned back to the LORD in repentance and acknowledgement of Him as LORD, Solomon asked that He hear and forgive and establish them once again in the land of Israel.

1Kings 8:35 When heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; if they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, when thou afflictest them:

1Kings 8:36 Then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Israel, that thou teach them the good way wherein they should walk, and give rain upon thy land, which thou hast given to thy people for an inheritance.

The next request concerns God withholding rain as a judgment against the people for their sin and rebellion. Solomon asked that the LORD forgive them when they sought His forgiveness in true repentance. He also asked that the LORD “teach them the good way” to live so that they could continue to live in the land of their inheritance.

This section brought to mind the words of the prophet Micah.

Micah 6:8 “He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?”

1Kings 8:37 If there be in the land famine, if there be pestilence, blasting, mildew, locust, or if there be caterpillar; if their enemy besiege them in the land of their cities; whatsoever plague, whatsoever sickness there be;

1Kings 8:38 What prayer and supplication soever be made by any man, or by all thy people Israel, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart, and spread forth his hands toward this house:

1Kings 8:39 Then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive, and do, and give to every man according to his ways, whose heart thou knowest; (for thou, even thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men;)

1Kings 8:40 That they may fear thee all the days that they live in the land which thou gavest unto our fathers.

The next scenario Solomon addressed is more of a summary of possible judgments—famine, pestilence, blasting (decay), mildew, locust, caterpillar, enemy oppression, plague or sickness. The context makes application to individual or nation. Again Solomon asked for the LORD to hear the prayers of repentance and forgive. Point is made that every individual knows the reason of his/her troubled conscience. Solomon asked that the LORD not only forgive, but also that “the judgment fit the sin” so to speak.

Solomon’s prayer is that the people of Israel have a healthy fear and respect of the LORD their God as they enjoy the land that the LORD promised their fathers He would give them.

1Kings 8:41 Moreover concerning a stranger, that *is* not of thy people Israel, but cometh out of a far country for thy name's sake;

1Kings 8:42 (For they shall hear of thy great name, and of thy strong hand, and of thy stretched out arm;) when he shall come and pray toward this house;

1Kings 8:43 Hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for: that all people of the earth may know thy name, to fear thee, as *do* thy people Israel; and that they may know that this house, which I have builded, is called by thy name.

Solomon expanded his prayer to include strangers that have left their home country to come and live in Israel because they wanted to serve the LORD. He expects that those numbers will grow as people begin to hear of His power and authority in His dealings with the people of Israel. Solomon asked that the LORD hear the stranger as readily as He hears and Israelite. I believe he recognized that the LORD wanted to be LORD of all peoples—not just the Israelites.

The prophets reiterated this truth.

Isaiah 2:2 "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it."

Isaiah 56:7 "Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people."

Zechariah 14:16 "And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles."

1Kings 8:44 If thy people go out to battle against their enemy, whithersoever thou shalt send them, and shall pray unto the LORD toward the city which thou hast chosen, and *toward* the house that I have built for thy name:

1Kings 8:45 Then hear thou in heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause.

Solomon asked the LORD to hear (and answer is implied) the people of Israel when they sought His guidance and provision as they went out to battle against their enemies.

1Kings 8:46 If they sin against thee, (for *there is* no man that sinneth not,) and thou be angry with them, and deliver them to the enemy, so that they carry them away captives unto the land of the enemy, far or near;

1Kings 8:47 Yet if they shall bethink themselves in the land whither they were carried captives, and repent, and make supplication unto thee in the land of them that carried them captives, saying, We have sinned, and have done perversely, we have committed wickedness;

1Kings 8:48 And so return unto thee with all their heart, and with all their soul, in the land of their enemies, which led them away captive, and pray unto thee toward their land, which thou gavest unto their fathers, the city which thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for thy name:

1Kings 8:49 Then hear thou their prayer and their supplication in heaven thy dwelling place, and maintain their cause,

1Kings 8:50 And forgive thy people that have sinned against thee, and all their transgressions wherein they have transgressed against thee, and give them compassion before them who carried them captive, that they may have compassion on them:

Solomon declared that he knew the time would come that the people sinned and made God angry enough to deliver them into the hands of their enemy and captives taken. After all, every person sins.

Ecclesiastes 7:20 "For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not."

Romans 3:23 "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God..."

The king asked that when the captives repented of their sin and returned to the LORD with all their heart praying toward Israel and to Jerusalem, the city God chose and in which stood His temple, He hear their prayer and plea from heaven and grant their request. I believe that Solomon based this request on the writings of Moses. There are several passages in those writings that declare the blessings the people of Israel would experience if they obeyed the LORD, and the judgment they would suffer if they turned away from Him in sin and disobedience. Those judgments are some of the very ones Solomon addressed in his prayer. Those passages also declare that the LORD will hear the prayers of His repentant people and respond accordingly.

Leviticus 26:44–45 "And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I am the LORD their God. But I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the heathen, that I might be their God: I am the LORD."

The New Testament parallel to this truth is found in 1John.

1 John 1:9 "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

1Kings 8:51 For they be thy people, and thine inheritance, which thou broughtest forth out of Egypt, from the midst of the furnace of iron:

1Kings 8:52 That thine eyes may be open unto the supplication of thy servant, and unto the supplication of thy people Israel, to hearken unto them in all that they call for unto thee.

1Kings 8:53 For thou didst separate them from among all the people of the earth, to be thine inheritance, as thou spakest by the hand of Moses thy servant,

when thou broughtest our fathers out of Egypt, O Lord GOD.

Solomon declared that his prayer is based on the fact that the people of Israel are God's chosen people from among the nations that He had delivered from "the furnace of iron" in Egypt—a reference to their position as severely oppressed slaves.

When Solomon asks that the LORD's eyes be open, he is asking that the LORD acknowledge and hear the prayers of His servant, a reference to himself, and the people of Israel in general *who serve Him* (implied). Maybe Solomon doesn't really understand why the LORD chose Israel, but he knows from the words of Moses that He did. As the LORD's chosen possession among the nations, Israel inherited a special privilege to approach Him in prayer and to look forward to the fulfillment of His promises to their forefathers.

Verse 53 seems to be a direct reference to the words of Moses from Deuteronomy.

Deuteronomy 4:20 "But the LORD hath taken you, and brought you forth out of the iron furnace, even out of Egypt, to be unto him a people of inheritance, as ye are this day."

1Kings 8:54 ¶ And it was so, that when Solomon had made an end of praying all this prayer and supplication unto the LORD, he arose from before the altar of the LORD, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread up to heaven. 1Kings 8:55 And he stood, and blessed all the congregation of Israel with a loud voice, saying, 1Kings 8:56 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.

When Solomon finished his prayer, he stood up to pronounce a blessing upon the people. He praised the LORD for giving rest to His people according to His promise. Solomon emphasized that not one word of God's promise had failed in accordance with the words of Moses.

Deuteronomy 12:10–11 "But when ye go over Jordan, and dwell in the land which the LORD your God giveth you to inherit, and when he giveth you rest from all your enemies round about, so that ye dwell in safety; Then there shall be a place which the LORD your God shall choose to cause his name to dwell there; thither shall ye bring all that I command you; your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, your tithes, and the heave offering of your hand, and all your choice vows which ye vow unto the LORD...."

Sadly, we know that Israel would once again turn away from the LORD and that rest destroyed. One day, however, King Jesus will return to establish Israel in rest in His eternal kingdom.

Scripture is replete with the truth that not one word of all God's promise will ever fail.

Numbers 23:19 "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he

should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?"

Deuteronomy 7:9 "Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations;"

Isaiah 55:11 "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

Matthew 24:35 "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

1Kings 8:57 The LORD our God be with us, as he was with our fathers: let him not leave us, nor forsake us:

1Kings 8:58 That he may incline our hearts unto him, to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his judgments, which he commanded our fathers.

Solomon continues by calling on the LORD "our God" to be with Israel as He was with their fathers and that He would never leave them or forsake them. The writer to the Hebrews clearly states that the LORD will never leave or forsake those that have placed their faith in Him.

Hebrews 13:5-6 "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. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."

Solomon recognized that the people needed the LORD's divine influence to help them live before Him in faith and obedience. That is actually a prayer for God's grace, "the divine influence upon the heart, and its reflection in the life" (from the Greek).

1Kings 8:59 And let these my words, wherewith I have made supplication before the LORD, be nigh unto the LORD our God day and night, that he maintain the cause of his servant, and the cause of his people Israel at all times, as the matter shall require:

1Kings 8:60 That all the people of the earth may know that the LORD is God, and that there is none else.

Solomon pleads that the LORD not forget his prayer from this day. He wants the LORD to grant his request and those of the people according to their need. He prays that the people will KNOW that the LORD is God; there is no other. Another truth emphasized throughout scripture.

Deuteronomy 6:4 "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD...."

Isaiah 44:6 "Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God."

Isaiah 45:5 "I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me...."

Isaiah 46:9 "...for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me...."

1 Corinthians 8:4–6 "As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him."

James 2:19 "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble."

Note that Solomon's desire was for the "people of the earth" to know the LORD by observing how He interacted with the people of Israel—both in blessing and in judgment according to His word.

1Kings 8:61 Let your heart therefore be perfect with the LORD our God, to walk in his statutes, and to keep his commandments, as at this day.

Solomon concluded by calling for the people to maintain peace with God by living in obedience before Him.

1Kings 8:62 ¶ And the king, and all Israel with him, offered sacrifice before the LORD.

1Kings 8:63 And Solomon offered a sacrifice of peace offerings, which he offered unto the LORD, two and twenty thousand oxen, and an hundred and twenty thousand sheep. So the king and all the children of Israel dedicated the house of the LORD.

The king along with all the people then offered sacrifices to the LORD. I truly can't imagine this scene. They sacrificed peace offerings of 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep.

The Chronicler tells us that the LORD sent down fire from heaven to consume the sacrifices, a testimony to His pleasure.

2 Chronicles 7:1 "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."

This climaxed the dedication of the temple.

The NIV Commentary adds a bit of insight: "These offerings were brought over a period of fourteen days, since the normal period of seven days for the Feast of Tabernacles was extended by another seven days. The fellowship offering was a

voluntary act of worship and was intended to testify to the fellowship between God and the one whose sins had been forgiven. After those portions belonging to God had been offered, a communal or fellowship meal was held for the offerer and his family and for the Levites.”

1Kings 8:64 The same day did the king hallow the middle of the court that *was* before the house of the LORD: for there he offered burnt offerings, and meat offerings, and the fat of the peace offerings: because the brasen altar that *was* before the LORD *was* too little to receive the burnt offerings, and meat offerings, and the fat of the peace offerings.

There were so many offerings made, that they had to expand the area used to make the offerings. The brazen altar was just too small to accommodate the number of burnt offerings, meat offerings and peace offerings made.

1Kings 8:65 And at that time Solomon held a feast, and all Israel with him, a great congregation, from the entering in of Hamath unto the river of Egypt, before the LORD our God, seven days and seven days, *even* fourteen days. 1Kings 8:66 On the eighth day he sent the people away: and 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.

All Israel, from Hamath to the river of Egypt (north to south), celebrated for 14 days. The first seven days were in specific connection to the dedication of the temple, the next seven days were in keeping with the feast of tabernacles.

2 Chronicles 7:9 “And in the eighth day they made a solemn assembly: for they kept the dedication of the altar seven days, and the feast seven days.”

The king sent the people back home on the day after the last feast. The people returned home joyful and glad of heart, rejoicing in the goodness of the LORD and His many blessings upon them.