

Dedicated (Temple)

8.12.18

Dedication Series preceding the New Sanctuary

2 Chronicles 7:1–22 (NIV)

The Dedication of the Temple

7:1–10pp—1Ki 8:62–66

7 When Solomon finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the LORD filled the temple. ² The priests could not enter the temple of the LORD because the glory of the LORD filled it. ³ When all the Israelites saw the fire coming down and the glory of the LORD above the temple, they knelt on the pavement with their faces to the ground, and they worshiped and gave thanks to the LORD, saying,

“He is good;

his love endures forever.”

⁴ Then the king and all the people offered sacrifices before the LORD. ⁵ And King Solomon offered a sacrifice of twenty-two thousand head of cattle and a hundred and twenty thousand sheep and goats. So the king and all the people dedicated the temple of God. ⁶ The priests took their positions, as did the Levites with the LORD’s musical instruments, which King David had made for praising the LORD and which were used when he gave thanks, saying, “His love endures forever.” Opposite the Levites, the priests blew their trumpets, and all the Israelites were standing.

⁷ Solomon consecrated the middle part of the courtyard in front of the temple of the LORD, and there he offered burnt offerings and the fat of the fellowship offerings, because the bronze altar he had made could not hold the burnt offerings, the grain offerings and the fat portions.

⁸ So Solomon observed the festival at that time for seven days, and all Israel with him—a vast assembly, people from Lebo Hamath to the Wadi of Egypt. ⁹ On the eighth day they held an assembly, for they had celebrated

the dedication of the altar for seven days and the festival for seven days more. ¹⁰ On the twenty-third day of the seventh month he sent the people to their homes, joyful and glad in heart for the good things the LORD had done for David and Solomon and for his people Israel.

The LORD Appears to Solomon

7:11–22pp—1Ki 9:1–9

¹¹ When Solomon had finished the temple of the LORD and the royal palace, and had succeeded in carrying out all he had in mind to do in the temple of the LORD and in his own palace, ¹² the LORD appeared to him at night and said:

“I have heard your prayer and have chosen this place for myself as a temple for sacrifices.

¹³ “When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command locusts to devour the land or send a plague among my people, ¹⁴ if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land. ¹⁵ Now my eyes will be open and my ears attentive to the prayers offered in this place. ¹⁶ I have chosen and consecrated this temple so that my Name may be there forever. My eyes and my heart will always be there.

¹⁷ “As for you, if you walk before me faithfully as David your father did, and do all I command, and observe my decrees and laws, ¹⁸ I will establish your royal throne, as I covenanted with David your father when I said, ‘You shall never fail to have a successor to rule over Israel.’

¹⁹ “But if you turn away and forsake the decrees and commands I have given you and go off to serve other gods and worship them, ²⁰ then I will uproot Israel from my land, which I have given them, and will reject this temple I have consecrated for my Name. I will make it a byword and an object of ridicule among all peoples. ²¹ This temple will become a heap of rubble. All who pass by will be appalled and say, ‘Why has the LORD done such a thing to this land and to this temple?’ ²² People will answer, ‘Because they have forsaken the LORD, the God of their ancestors, who brought them out of Egypt, and have embraced other gods, worshiping and serving them—that is why he brought all this disaster on them.’ ”

1. The Building of the Temple was such an important event that it is recorded in two different books of the Bible.

A. 1 Kings and 2 Chronicles both contain histories of the dedication of the Temple.

1. This was a monumental moment in the history of Israel.

2. The Tabernacle of Moses was mobile.

a. Israel carried the Tabernacle and its furnishings throughout the wilderness and then into the promised land.

b. Even after they had settled, the Tabernacle was still built in such a way as to be portable and not permanent.

3. All during the days of Judges, Saul, then David the Lord did not have a permanent house or place to be worshipped.

B. David wanted to build the Temple.

1. But the Lord wouldn't allow Him to do so because he was a man of war.

2. But that didn't stop David from accumulating the supplies and resources his son would need to build the Lord a temple.

C. Today we want to take a peek into this passage of Scripture.

1. While we aren't building the Temple of Jerusalem, we are preparing ourselves for the dedication of this building.

2. We are preparing ourselves not only for the full use of this building but more importantly for a great move of God's presence.

3. Today, I want to draw our attention to a few of the unique details of Solomon's dedication and see how the Holy Spirit wants to speak to us today.

2. First Principle: Any place you meet God can become a holy place.

A. The building location of the Temple was on Mt. Moriah.

1. Mt. Moriah had previously been owned by a guy named Ornan.

a. Ornan was an ordinary man.

b. But earlier in the kingship of David, David sinned greatly against God that led to God bringing a deadly judgment upon Israel.

2. It was on Mt. Moriah that the Lord relented and stopped the Destroying Angel.

a. David was so thankful that he personally bought the field from Ornan and dedicated it to God.

b. It was here that his son, Solomon, would build the temple.

B. Any place you meet God can become a Holy Place.

1. The foundation of the Temple was laid upon an ordinary threshing floor.

2. But the presence of God changed common ground into holy ground.

C. Not only did David's decision lead to holy ground for himself, but for all of those who came after Him.

1. Solomon built the Temple upon the spot his father had bought.

2. Because of his father's decision, generations of people have worshipped God in that place.

3. As we prepare this place for dedication to the Lord, what we are doing is not just for us.

a. We are dedicating to the Lord a place that generations can come to and worship and be transformed by the love of God.

b. Someday, nobody may remember the names of the people who bought, built, and prepared this building.

c. What I hope people remember is not my name but an encounter with God!

D. Each one of us has a responsibility to meet God AND to ensure future generations meet God also.

1. Each year at Youth and Kid's camp, the leadership asks all the adults to come to the altar and stand in the place where God either saved them, healed them, called them, or Baptized them in the Holy Spirit.

2. This creates a continuity between what God has done in the past and what God is doing in the present.

3. This place shall be a place that future generations will meet the God of their parents, grandparents, and friends.

4. What was one generation's threshing floor became the next generation's Temple.

3. Principal #2 Preparing for God's presence is intensive.

A. The Temple didn't come together overnight.

1. Thousands of people labored to make it happen.

2. Thousands of pounds of gold was transformed into sacred furniture.

3. 80,000 men worked stone to build the walls and foundations of the temple.

a. An interesting note of history, from 1 Kings 8 says that no sound of hammers upon rock was heard at the building site.

b. Matthew Henry in his commentary says, "It was to be the temple of the God of peace, therefore no iron tool must be heard in it":

4. The Temple of the Lord was built with the utmost care and attention to detail.

B. Preparing for Someone as important as the Almighty God requires more than last minute preparation.

1. Many of you women have a "pre-company" routine.
2. When you know company is coming, last minute changes and clean up happens.
3. Yet, too often, I try to do the same thing in my life right before I am supposed to meet God in prayer, or church, or in a ministry context.
 - a. I hurriedly try to get rid of the dirty laundry in my life right before God arrives.
 - b. And the result is a "fear" of being found out.
 - c. What if they look in that closet, guest room, etc.

C. As we prepare for the presence of God, a few things must happen in us.

1. First, we must pray more.
2. Second, we must confess sin and repent.
3. Third, we must have enough margin in our life where we can be still before the Lord and give Him time to speak.
 - a. I struggle with people who don't get to the point in a conversation.
 - b. I want to jump right in and hurry the person along if need be.
 - c. This does not work with God and God often does not get in a hurry.
 - d. He requires respectful margin in communicating to us.
4. Preparation for God's presence, though intensive, is always worth the effort.

4. Principle #3 What we give to the Lord belongs to the Lord.

A. I'm thankful animal sacrifice is no longer part of our worship.

1. But it was a HUGE part of Temple worship.

2. And on the day the Temple was dedicated, the scale of animal sacrifice reached epic proportions.

a. 22,000 cattle.

b. 120,000 sheep and goats.

c. To sacrifice this many animals, a sacrifice would have to happen every three seconds, for ten hours a day, for twelve days.¹

d. This was King Solomon's portion.

3. In fact, the scale is so large that some scholars question if these are real numbers or figurative.

a. Either way, the point is very clear:

b. The dedication was a bloody and costly celebration.

c. Why is this significant?

B. This part of the dedication ceremony demonstrated the transfer of ownership from man to God.

1. Up until this point, these were ordinary and common stones, gold, and wood.

2. Until this point, Solomon and Israel had bought and brought ordinary items and made a temple.

3. Now, Solomon and Israel declared this place to be God's.

a. Ownership was being transferred.

b. And on that day, the Lord's Presence filled the Temple.

4. Think of it like a contractor building a house.

- a. While the house is being built, he has full access to everything.
- b. But once the keys are handed over to the new owners, it no longer belongs to him but to the new owners.
- c. Sacrifice and blood are solely God's domain.

C. By this grand gesture, Solomon was declaring that this place belonged to God and Him alone!

1. And the Lord responded.
2. The word says the priests could not enter the temple because the Presence of God was so strong.
3. At that moment, God declared that the common things had become Holy.

D. While all the sacrifice and blood seem odd to us, it was a powerful expression of commitment and dedication to God.

1. As you give yourself to the Lord, you will experience times of cost.
2. There will be times when what God asks you to do will seem to be too far, too costly, and too painful.
3. But those moments are just as holy and blessed as the times when everything seems to go easy and favored.

E. This building we are dedicating has been costly.

1. You all have given generously and sacrificially to this work.
2. The Lord sees the sacrifice you have made, and I believe He has blessed it.
3. *The future people who experience the presence and power of God in their lives through this church will do so because you were willing and obedient to give to God.*

5. Principle #4 What is given to the Lord should be given enthusiastically and passionately.

A. 2 Chronicles 7:4-7 tell of all the singers and musicians.

1. Music has always been part of worshipping God.
2. Music is intensely spiritual, and that is why the words of songs are important.

B. What I want to show you from this passage is this: There are times when we are to be quiet before the Lord and there are times when we are to worship Him loudly and passionately.

1. Some of us are more comfortable with loud expressions and others with quiet.

2. Styles between us all are definitely different.

3. But what brings us together is our love for Jesus!

4. Because we love Jesus, we will worship Him regardless if the music is too loud, too quiet, too slow or too fast, too new or too old for our tastes.

- a. All of these are negotiable.

- b. What isn't negotiable is passion and love for God that finds expressions through our personalities, gifts, and talents.

5. Don't be afraid to glorify God in a way that is contrary to your normal personality.

- a. If you are normally quiet, be vocal.

- b. If you are a loud person, be quiet.

- c. If you are never still, be still.

- d. Listen to the Lord at the moment and ask how He wants YOU to worship Him, and be obedient.

6. Principle #5 Dedication is a relationship between us and God.

A. So far, we have looked at what Solomon and Israel did towards God.

1. They built a temple.
2. They worshipped and sacrificed.
3. They prayed and celebrated.
4. But this was not a one-sided affair.

B. God responds in several, memorable ways.

1. First, fire came from heaven and consumed the burnt offerings. (7:1)
 - a. Fire signifies acceptance of the offering.
 - b. God saw the offerings and called it good.
 - c. He then sent fire down from heaven to receive the offering.
 - d. Next week, we will see that in Acts 2 God sent the fire of the Holy Spirit as a way of declaring His acceptance of the Church offering themselves to God to be filled with the Holy Spirit.
2. Then the Glory of the Lord filled the Temple, in sight of all the people.
 - a. This was not some hidden work of God.
 - b. All the people saw what God had done in their midst.
 - c. Next week, we will hear that God baptized His church in the Holy Spirit on a very public day as a sign for all the people that GOD was in their midst.
3. What is unique in 2 Chronicles 7 is that God spoke to Solomon.

C. God's words reminded Israel of her responsibility to God and God's promise to Israel.

1. God told them that when Israel sins, and God sends judgment upon them, that if they would humble themselves, pray, and seek the face of God that GOD would heal them and their land.

2. God chose this Temple to be the place where His glory would dwell and live among His people.

a. God wanted His people to turn towards him and pray.

b. God wanted to hear the prayers of his people and move on their behalf.

D. **The Presence of God comes with great responsibility.**

1. Israel could not take God's presence for granted.

2. She had to stay connected to God and walk in obedience.

3. If Israel turned her back on God, God would go so far as to destroy the Temple that they had built for the glory of God.

E. We are invited to come boldly to God, but we must not take for granted His Presence and Calling.

1. We have been given a great opportunity to see God move upon Licking MO.

2. We must make sure we are diligent to prepare ourselves for the work God has for us.

Closing: God is calling us to prepare ourselves for a move of His Spirit.

A. If we ignore God in this, we can miss out on what God has for Licking and Texas County.

1. That's why I believe God is calling us to a time of preparation.

2. To pray like never before.

3. To worship like never before.

4. To study and receive from the Word like never before.

B. What is at stake are present and future generations.

1. What is at stake is the chance for common things to be made holy.

2. What is at stake are eternities of kids, teens, and adults across our region.

3. Our dedication is more than celebrating a new building, it is about us giving all of ourselves to God.

C. This morning, let us do just that:

1. Let us confess our sins today before God.

2. Let us ask Jesus to Baptize us with the Holy Spirit.

3. Let us receive healing from the Savior for those parts of our lives that are broken and in despair.

4. Let us give ourselves fully to the cause of Jesus here in our area.

ⁱ Selman, Martin J. 2 Chronicles: An Introduction and Commentary. Vol. 11. Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994.