

1 Kings 8:1-21

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[0 : 00] All right, 1 Kings chapter 8. 1 Kings chapter 8 is where we are at this evening. We just made our way up to this point. We're going to be in the 8th chapter.

We'll be verses 1 through 21. So, into it just a little bit. It's a very long chapter, but we're not going to get into it all the way. We're just going to get up to Solomon's prayer.

So, we're going to go verses 1 through 21 as we just continue to make our way through the book of 1 Kings. 1 Kings chapter 8, starting in verse 1.

Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes, the leaders of the fathers, households of the sons of Israel, to King Solomon in Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the covenant of the Lord from the city of David, which is Zion.

All the men of Israel assembled themselves to King Solomon at the feast in the month Ethanim, which is the seventh month. Then all the elders of Israel came, and the priests took up the ark, and they brought up the ark of the Lord, and the tent of meeting, and all the holy utensils which were in the tent, and the priests and the Levites brought them up.

[1 : 09] And King Solomon and all the congregation of Israel who were assembled to him were with him before the ark, sacrificing so many sheep and oxen they could not be counted or numbered.

Then the priests brought the ark of the covenant of the Lord to its place, into the inner sanctuary of the house, to the most holy place, under the wings of the cherubim. For the cherubim spread their wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubim made a covering over the ark and its poles from above.

But the poles were so long that the ends of the poles could be seen from the holy place before the inner sanctuary, but they could not be seen outside. They are there to this day. There was nothing in the ark except the two tablets of stone which Moses put there at Horeb, where the Lord had made a covenant with the sons of Israel when they came out of the land of Egypt.

It happened that when the priests came from the holy place, the cloud filled the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord.

Then Solomon said, The Lord has said that he would dwell in the thick cloud. I have surely built you a lofty house, a place for your dwelling forever.

[2 : 18] Then the king faced about and blessed all the assembly of Israel while all the assembly of Israel was standing, and he said, Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who spoke with his mouth to my father.

David has fulfilled it with his hand, saying, Since the day that I brought my people Israel from Egypt, I did not choose a city out of all the tribes of Israel in which to build a house that my name might be there, but I chose David to be over my people Israel.

Now it was in the heart of my father David to build a house for the name of the Lord, the God of Israel. For the Lord said to my father David, Because it was in your heart to build a house for my name, you did well that it was in your heart.

Nevertheless, you shall not build the house, but your son who will be born to you, he will build the house for my name. Now the Lord has fulfilled his word which he spoke, for I have risen in place of my father David, and sit on the throne of David as the Lord promised, and have built the house for the name of the Lord, the God of Israel.

Therefore I have set a place for the ark, which is the covenant of the Lord, which he made with our fathers when he brought them from the land of Egypt. 1 Kings 8 verses 1 through 21.

[3 : 30] The verses that follow are Solomon's prayer of dedication. We are familiar with it. We've read it a number of times, but we will see it when we gather together again. But we see here the dedicated temple.

The temple has been completed. The house of Solomon has been completed. We're about 20 years now into the reign, if you do it according to the standard. So we're 20 years, 24th, in the 24th year of Solomon's reign, because in the fourth year of his reign he began the construction of the temple.

He worked on it for seven years, and then for 13 years he built his own house. So now we're in the 24th year of Solomon's reign. We have the dedicated temple here for us.

It is an astounding thing. It's much like when we see the construction of the tabernacle, and we see some parallels there. It is really just a wonderful thing that we will see. The first thing I want you to notice when we come to this passage of Scripture is there is a reminder of his past faithfulness.

There is a reminder of his past faithfulness. It tells us that Solomon called all the elders and the leaders of the nation all the way down to the family unit, right?

[4 : 40] Even the leaders of the household. He called the leaders to come with him and take part in this ceremony. This is not necessarily just all of the people that he summoned, but he called just the leaders to come.

We read later on that all of the people were there, and they were there because of a particular reason. It says that all of the nation of Israel was gathered, and while this was to be an event of the leadership, and it was to be an event of not only just the religious leader, but the political leaders, and all the way down to the family unit, it says that all the men of Israel were gathered together. And the reason they were gathered together, it says in verse 2, that all the men of Israel assembled themselves to King Solomon at the feast. At the feast. That is, it was happening at a particular time in the history of the nation of Israel.

At the feast in the month, athanim. This is the feast of booths, or the feast of tabernacles, or the festival of end gatherings. This is the last festival of the nation of Israel's calendar in which every individual was commanded to attend.

We see in Leviticus chapter 23. If you remember, there were those certain festivals throughout the year that God gave, that they were to go and worship these together. It just kind of maintained the corporate identity of the people of Israel.

[5 : 56] They were together together for these festivals and these celebrations. This would be also, you know, as we look at it, utilized in the New Testament when Pentecost was there.

That's the festival of the first fruits. And they're there, and they're celebrating. And everybody's there, all these men from all around. And Peter preaches the sermon. And everybody's hearing it in their own language. It's because everybody had gathered to Jerusalem to celebrate this festival.

But we see that this takes place, this dedication of the temple. When Solomon has called the leaders to join him, and they did. And then all of Israel is gathered together because they're celebrating this festival of booths, or this feast of tabernacles.

That last festival of the calendar year was to celebrate the last harvest. That's why it's referred to as the festival of end gatherings, because it was when all the fall crops were brought in.

But it was also a reminder of God's faithfulness during their wilderness wanderings. They were reminded that during the wilderness when they lived in booths or in temporary shelters, that God was faithful, and he led them, and he provided for them all throughout the wilderness.

[7 : 05] So when they come to this time, they are taking to mind that God was faithful in the wilderness, and now all of a sudden they're celebrating God's faithfulness by dedicating the temple.

What went before them, the Ark of the Covenant, is now coming after them, because it says all the men went before that, and the Ark of the Covenant is coming in after them. And they're doing all this offering and all these sacrifices, and so much so that they couldn't be counted.

And they're really worshiping and celebrating, because what is the long anticipation of the nation of Israel is finally coming about. This tabernacle is now turned into a temple.

God has chosen a place where his name would dwell among them, a place where they could gather together, and they could worship together corporately. And Solomon is bringing it in.

It tells us that they gathered not only the Ark, but they also got all the utensils and all the tents and all those things, and they brought it. The only piece of furnishing that was in the tabernacle that is also utilized in the temple is the Ark of the Covenant.

[8 : 10] Everything else is stored in one of those storehouses. Remember those storehouses that are on the side of it? Same storehouses later on when Nehemiah is there at the temple, and there are storehouses there.

He cleans those out too. But we see here that these articles are brought and stored there, but the only one that actually goes into the temple is this Ark of the Covenant.

The Ark is brought in. It's carried on its poles. The Levites are carrying it because all the priests are Levites, but not every Levite is a priest. So you understand that, that all priests are Levites. So when it says the priests were carrying it, they are Levites from the tribe of Levi, which were the ones commanded to bear the Ark, and they were commanded to bear the furnishings of originally the tabernacle and later on to minister in the temple, and they are bringing it to a place of permanent, or what was to be a permanent abode.

They leave the poles in it. The poles are a symbol of their sojourning and their wandering, and it is a symbol of their readiness to move because whenever the cloud rose up, they were to leave, right? They were to put it on their shoulders and take off. They were to follow. So they leave it there, even though now they have a permanent structure, because it reminds them again of God's faithfulness. God had led His people.

[9 : 25] He provided for His people. It is kind of amazing that when we read here, it tells us that the only thing in the Ark are the two tablets of stone. Now you know that prior to that, also there was the jar full of manna, and there was Aaron's rod that had budded.

Those were there as well. Now some Bible scholars will tell you that both of those, the manna and the rod, were symbols and reminder of wilderness doubts and wilderness rebellion.

They complained against the manna, and the reason Aaron's rod budded is because you had all those men say, well, who is Aaron? We're all like him, and they all put their rods, and the rod that budded was the one.

So each of those are reminders of rebellion and reminders of complaining, reminders of dissatisfaction. They no longer have a place in the temple. We don't really know what happens to it. We assume, some people assume that it was taken out, and that it was put somewhere in one of those storehouses in the temple. But the one thing that stays the same is the law, the Ten Commandments.

[10 : 29] It's there. Because the standard by which God judges His people has not changed, even though the location of the ark may be changing and may be shifting, and now it's come to a place, the standard hasn't changed.

And God still judges His people. This is the place of encounter, right? This is the place where one time a year, one man would enter into the Holy of Holies, to go before the ark, to put the blood, the blood of atonement, the blood of propitiation, upon the mercy seat, right?

This was the day of atonement, that that one man would go in. This is where God would meet with His people. This is where God would reside. You remember the picture of the ark, right?

The cherubim that were above it formed this mercy seat, because there was the ark, and the ark had this beautiful covering, and in the ark was the law of God, that is the holy expectation of God. And then on the top of the ark was what they referred to as the mercy seat, or the propitiation seat. And then above the ark was where the Shekinah glory of God dwelt in the tabernacle.

[11 : 35] God met with man above the ark. But before the man would stand, they're meeting with God, but between God and His law was mercy.

And it was on that mercy seat that they would put blood, because the blood was the offering or the sacrifice for the sins committed according to the law that resided in the ark.

So between God and His law was blood. Blood was put there, and blood was a symbol of atonement and forgiveness. And this is why it tells us that Jesus is our propitiation, or Jesus is our mercy seat.

Between us and the holy God, there is mercy, and that mercy is Jesus Christ by His blood. But we see here, this is a reminder of God's past faithfulness in the wilderness, but also a reminder of God's holy standard that continues to that day.

We do this at a particular time, or the nation of Israel is doing this at a particular time, during that festival, because they would have in mind, none of them would have been there.

[12 : 39] I mean, we're many, many, many, many years into the promised land, right? But they're still pointing back. There are benchmarks in the nation of Israel. There are these Ebenezers, these stones of reminder, and one of those was the wilderness wanderings, that God was faithful, because God's faithfulness in the past is the assurance of God's faithfulness in the presence.

And they were reminding themselves of it, and they were worshiping. The second thing we notice here is not just a reminder of His past faithfulness. We see the realization of His presence among them.

There is the realization of His presence. It says that when they took the ark into the Holy of Holies, and they set it there, the one grand difference in this in the tabernacle is that in the tabernacle, the cherubim faced one another.

In the temple, the cherubim are facing outward. They're looking outward. Rather than having their wings turned into one another, their wings are turned out, and they're facing towards the front. But once they set it there, and the cherubim are still above the ark, and it resides, it says that immediately when the priest left the room, the presence of God filled the place.

[13:52] It says that at that moment, that it happened when the priest came from the holy place, the cloud filled the house of the Lord. This is the same thing that happens when they build the tabernacle, when Moses builds the tabernacle, and all the people working with him, and they finish the construction of the tabernacle, it's right there at the end of the book of Exodus.

The last chapter in the book of Exodus, and they bring everything together. The last couple of chapters, they're furnishing the tabernacle, and then all of a sudden, as soon as they put the ark of the covenant in there, and everything is done, it says that the glory of the Lord falls upon the tabernacle.

This is God's blessing upon the place. God is signifying that he's there. The tabernacle was a reminder that God dwelt among his people.

He tabernacled with them. Jesus says in the Gospel of John that he and the Father and the Spirit come and tabernacle with us. John 14, 15, and 16, right?

That they tabernacle with us. They dwell among us. The tabernacle, if you look at the camp of Israel, was to be in the center of the camp, and everybody was camped around it because God was literally in their midst.

[15:00] He was always there. That was the glory of the Lord come upon that place. The presence of God was seen there. That's where he was at. When Solomon dedicates the temple, the presence of the Lord is seen there.

God reveals his presence. Now, is all of God there? No. I mean, Solomon's gonna pray, he said, the highest heavens cannot contain you, more or less, a house that I have constructed and built upon this earth.

But God manifests his presence there. God declares that his presence is there. God says that his presence is there by revealing it so much so.

Now, we also know that God will cause his glory to depart. Ezekiel's vision. When Ezekiel is looking on, Ezekiel sees the vision where the glory of the Lord departs.

And he's there no longer, right? That he has left that place because of the sins of the nation of Israel. Ezekiel also sees in his vision where the glory of the Lord returns. Many people believe that that's referring to when Christ shows up on Temple Mount, the glory of the Lord came back to the temple.

[16:02] That's the only other time we see it when Jesus says, I am the light of the world. He says that on Temple Mount. He stands in the temple and says, I am the light of the world because he is the glory of the Lord.

Just right before that's the Mount of Transfiguration, right? Where he shone brighter than any launderer could ever make it shine, right? The glory shone from within him, not upon him.

It's a big difference there. He didn't reflect glory. He radiated glory. And then he goes to the temple and he declares, I am the light of the world because he's the glory of the Lord. And he is manifesting his presence much like God manifests his presence here.

God shows it. Now, I love this because it tells us in verse 11 that when this happened, so that the priest could not stand to minister because of the cloud for the glory of the Lord filled the house.

See, when the presence of God is clearly manifested, it is not the work that we can do, but rather the only response we can have is worship. They didn't go about their work.

[17:10] They didn't do, they didn't start offering sacrifices. For a moment, it stopped. We see the same thing in the tabernacle. When the glory of the Lord fills the tabernacle, nobody could go in or do anything.

Why? Because when God is there, there is no work to be done. It is just realization that God is here. When Jesus stands in the temple and declares, I am the light of the world, unfortunately what happens is many are going about their everyday task.

Many were still doing the great religious work and many forsook Him and denied Him and they missed the glory of the Lord. It was there, but they didn't see it. Here, God manifests His presence and we realize that that presence brings such humble recognition that all work ceases, all work stops, and the only response that we can really have is worship.

We see it when we gather, we see the church gathered in the book of Revelations, when the church is gathered before the throne of God, that there's nobody working there.

They're worshipping. And I believe there are going to be things to do in heaven. I think we'll be going in and out. But when we see the picture of the church gathered, what we see is worship and the glory of the Lord among them because the radiance of His presence changes the environment so that all work stops.

[18:37] The last thing that we see is not just a reminder of His past faithfulness, God has been faithful. Not just the realization of His presence, we also notice that recognition of His promises fulfilled.

Solomon makes this declaration and He points back to Mount Sinai or Horeb. He says, Then Solomon, the Lord has said He would dwell in the thick cloud. That is a repetition of what God had declared to Moses before Moses ascended into the dark cloud.

Right? Then God says, I'm going to dwell in the cloud. The people are going to stay down here. You come up to me and we'll have this meeting. This is where He gives them the Ten Commandments, where He gives them the law and He's up there for 40 days. And Solomon repeats that and declares that God has said this is His presence.

But then He turns to the people and He blesses the people and He blesses the people in verse 14 with this saying, Then the king faced about and blessed all the assembly of Israel while all the assembly of Israel was standing and He said, Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel.

I love this. Who spoke with His mouth to my father David and has fulfilled it with His hand. That is, blessed be the Lord God who has said it and done it.

[19:49] because what God has declared, He has fulfilled. God had made a promise to David that the seed of David would build the tabernacle.

Solomon knows that God has not only equipped him with the riches that his father laid up and all the labor and the work and the people that gave to the work. We know there's a lot of people that give to this work. The people that are there, all the ones involved.

Solomon knows that God had called him to do this. He had the plans. He followed those plans and all the reality there. But Solomon makes this declaration. It was the Lord God who brought this about.

And he reminds the people that God is faithful to fulfill His promises. He reminds them, again, going back to Mount Sinai and bringing it even to the present day, he's kind of bridging that gap that these are the things that God has declared from the very beginning.

That His presence would be among His people. That He would manifest that presence. That the people would gather together and worship. Even the festival that they were celebrating was a reminder of the faithfulness of God.

[20:55] But yet, He reminds them that David had this desire. And in that desire, he wanted to build the temple. And God says that you had the desire, it's good, but you're not the one to do it. But He just says over and over again that now the Lord, in verse 20, He says it again, now the Lord has fulfilled His word which He spoke.

For I have risen in His place and I have built this temple. It is just this declaration, this recognition that what God has promised, what His mouth has declared, His hands have accomplished.

Now He used the hands of a number of individuals, right? He used the hands of gifted craftsmen. He used the hands of woodcutters and people that would sit and stonecutters. He used the hands of all these people.

He used the mind of Solomon. But Solomon reminds us that the fulfillment of the promise does not rest in the ability of man, but rather it rests in the faithfulness of God.

That what God has promised, God also has accomplished. Sure, He used people to do it. Sure, He moved history and He moved men to accomplish this reality.

[22 : 03] But the thing that really stands out to us is that what God said with His mouth, God did with His hands. Friend, listen to me. God has declared a lot of truth throughout Scripture and there's a lot of promises.

We don't name it and claim it on these promises, but we also stand in the confidence that what God has said with His mouth, God will accomplish with His hands. That God is faithful to His promises. He is not negligent. He is not bound by time. He is not bound by resources. And He is not bound by whom or who He may use. But God will accomplish what He has promised.

Now we know, unfortunately, Solomon strays away from these realities. But here when he's blessing the nation of Israel and the Shekinah glory has so permeated the place that all work has had to stop, that all people have to stand in awe and amazement.

If we read it in 2 Chronicles, we see that Solomon's on this platform. Everybody's standing and he reminds the people before he prays that the prayer is lengthy. That's why we're not getting into it tonight. And there's so much there.

[23 : 12] But before he hits his knees and starts praying, we see that he assures the people that what God has promised, He has fulfilled. And when we look at the history of the nation of Israel, these things resonate.

It is astounding. God brought them out to bring them in, right? God gave them a law and a standard and all these festivals. Everything God has given His people has brought them to this point where He can walk in faithfulness with them and they could be astounded at how faithful God is to fulfill these promises.

And the same thing with us. When we open up the Scripture and we see what God has promised us and we see the truths that are there, we are reminded that what God has said, God can fulfill.

I spoke with an individual recently and they were sharing with me and said, you know, I've just got a lot of questions. I said, what's good? I've got a lot of questions too. And they said, well, I just don't know if I can find all the answers.

And I said, well, you might not ever find the answers, but I can tell you that there are some things that we can know. And as long as there are some things that we can know and we can rest in the reality that what God has promised is true and is right, we can know that we are not good enough for our own, right?

[24 : 22] We can know that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. We can know these things that whoever calls on him shall be saved. These are promises, right? We can know these things. We may have questions as to how this all happened and how it all got here, but let's not focus on what we don't know.

Let's focus on what we do know. And then let's look at the promises of what scripture says. And then let's trust that God is going to keep his promises, right? All of our salvation rests on the reality that what God has promised, his hand has accomplished, right?

That God has declared with his mouth that if we confess Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, we shall be saved. And then with his hand, he has brought it about and he has sent his son to die on a cross of Calvary for our sins.

It is his work and his alone. Yeah, he may use different people, different circumstances and different times and different manners, but it's still the work of God fulfilling the promise of God.

And I said, we need to understand that and we need to rest in this. And as I counseled this individual, I said, you know, you don't need to base it upon a feeling or circumstances or even a prayer. You need to get into the word and you need to make sure that what you're standing on is the word, not so that you can say, oh, well, I made a decision back then, but so that you could look at the word 20 years from now and go, the word says this and I believe God keeps his word, right?

[25 : 39] I believe God is faithful to his word. I believe that if he's promised it, he will do it. Where does your confidence rest? Not because you see goodness or worthiness in your own life, but because you can open up scripture and say God has said something with his mouth and with his hands, he's going to do it.

Why do we believe in the eternal security of the saints? Because God does not fail in his promises, right? Because his hand is not shortened.

He, he is not, his hand is not shortened so that it cannot save. That God is true. God is faithful. That we're trusting not in the ability of man, not in the wisdom of Solomon.

