

1 Kings 8:22-61

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[0 : 00] 1 Kings chapter 8, 1 Kings chapter 8. The 8th chapter is a very lengthy chapter. We began it Sunday night. We'll get a little deeper into it tonight, but we won't finish it.

We'll cover several verses tonight, though, as we just continue to make our way through. But it's a lengthy section that needs to be read together. So 1 Kings chapter 8 is where we will be at, 1 Kings chapter 8.

Let's go to the Lord in prayer, and then we'll get right into our text with one another. Lord, thank you so much for this day. God, thank you for the opportunity we have of gathering together.

Thank you for the fellowship that we enjoy with brothers and sisters in Christ. Thank you for the encouragement that it is to us. Lord, we just praise you that we have the opportunity to open up the Word of God with one another.

We praise you that we are privileged enough to be able to study it and to see what it says to us. So, Lord, I pray that you would enable us to have hearts and minds to want to live it out for your glory.

[1 : 01] We pray for those working with the children in the back, and we do pray for those children. God, we ask that you would speak to every heart and mind throughout this place this evening, that Christ be glorified and be magnified before their eyes.

We ask that things would draw, you would draw people closer to you than we've ever been, and we ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen. 1 Kings chapter 8.

Let's pick it up in verse 22. Verse 22. If you remember the first 21 verses of the 8th chapter, or when Solomon gathers together the elders and the leaders of the nation of Israel, and as a matter of fact, all the nation of Israel comes together.

For those of you that were here Sunday night, we looked at it then. It was on a very particular day. It was the Feast of Booths, or the Festival of Tabernacles, the last festival on the Jewish calendar in which everyone was required to come to.

They were all gathered together, and Solomon had the priest carry in the Ark of the Covenant, and they set it into the Holy of Holies inside the new temple. The temple had been furnished up to that point, and they brought in the Holy of Holies, and then as soon as the priest left the room, it tells us that the cloud fell upon the temple.

[2 : 19] The glory of the Lord fell upon that place, so much so that no priest could go in, no one could minister, no one could do anything. So we'd seen that, you know, when the glory of the Lord shows up, work's not to be done, he's just to be worshipped, right?

So they're in awe of his presence. And Solomon just makes this great blessing. He pronounces this blessing upon the place, and he reminds us of God's faithfulness.

Now, if you want to see it and kind of get to visual, because I know some of us are visual learners, we see it better if we get in 2 Chronicles, but we're not going to turn there. But in 2 Chronicles, when these events are taking place, we read that Solomon was standing on a platform.

They had built a platform, a raised platform beside the altar, the bronze altar, and Solomon was standing kind of above the whole congregation of the nation of Israel.

The glory of the Lord comes, and he just declares God's faithfulness. We'll see this again here in a minute. And then we'll read our text, but what follows is a prayer. And that's what we're going to look at tonight, is that prayer.

[3 : 24] But I want you to see, it's a prayer of purpose. That's a lengthy series of verses. We're in the 22nd verse, and we're going to read down to verse 61.

Okay, so 1 Kings chapter 8, starting in verse 22. Then Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord in the presence of all the assembly of Israel and spread out his hand toward heaven.

And he said, O Lord, the God of Israel, there is no God like you in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping covenant and showing loving kindness to your servants who walk before you with all their heart, who have kept with your servant, my father David, that which you have promised.

Indeed, you have spoken with your mouth and have fulfilled it with your hand as it is this day. Now therefore, O Lord, the God of Israel, keep with your servant David, my father, that which you have promised him, saying, you shall not lack a man to sit on the throne of Israel if only your sons take heed of their way to walk before me as you have walked.

Now therefore, O God of Israel, let your word, I pray, be confirmed, which you have spoken to your servant, my father David. But will God indeed dwell on the earth?

[4 : 35] Behold, heaven and the highest heavens cannot contain you, how much less this house which I have built. Yet have regard to the prayer of your servant and to his supplication.

O Lord, my God, to listen to the cry and to the prayer which your servant prays before you today, that your eyes may be opened toward this house night and day, toward the place of which you have said, my name shall be there.

To listen to the prayer which your servant shall pray toward this place. Listen to the supplication of your servant and of your people Israel when they pray toward this place here in heaven, your dwelling place here and forgive.

If a man sins against his neighbor and is made to take an oath and he comes and takes an oath before your altar in this house, then here in heaven and act and judge your servants, condemning the wicked by bringing his way on his own head and justifying the righteous by giving him according to his righteousness.

When your people Israel are defeated before an enemy because they have sinned against you, if they turn to you again and confess your name and pray and make supplication to you in this house, then here in heaven and forgive the sin of your people Israel and bring them back to the land which you have gave to their fathers.

[5 : 48] When the heavens are shut up and there is no rain because they have sinned against you and they pray toward this place and confess your name and turn from their sin when you afflict them, then here in heaven and forgive the sin of your servants and of your people Israel.

Indeed, teach them the good way in which they should walk and send rain on your land which you have given your people for an inheritance. If there is a famine in the land, if there is pestilence, if there is a blight or mildew, locust or grasshopper, if their enemy besieges them in the land of their cities, whatever plague, whatever sickness there is, whatever prayer or supplication is made by any man or by all your people Israel, each knowing the affliction of his own heart and spreading his hands toward this house, then here in heaven your dwelling place and forgive and act and render to each according to all his ways, whose heart you know, for you alone know the hearts of all the sons of men, that they may fear you all the days that they live in the land which you have given to our fathers.

Also concerning the foreigner who is not of your people Israel when he comes from a far country for your name's sake, for they will hear of your great name and your mighty hand and your outstretched arm, when he comes and prays towards this house, here in heaven your dwelling place and do according to all for which the foreigner calls to you in order that all the peoples of the earth may know your name to fear you as do your people Israel and that they may know that this house which I have built is called by your name.

When your people go out to battle against their enemies by whatever way you shall send them and they pray to the Lord toward the city which you have chosen and the house which I have built for your name, then hear in heaven their prayer and their supplication and maintain their cause.

When they sin against you for there is no man who does not sin and you are angry with them and deliver them to an enemy so that they take them away captive to the land of the enemy far off or near.

[7 : 47] If they take thought in the land where they have been taken captive and repent and make supplication to you in the land of those who have taken them captive saying we have sinned and have committed iniquity, we have acted wickedly.

If they return to you with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies who have taken them captive and pray to you toward their land which you have given to their fathers, the city which you have chosen and the house which I have built for your name, then hear their prayer and their supplication in heaven in your dwelling place and maintain their cause and forgive your people who have sinned against you in all their transgressions which they have transgressed against you and make them objects of compassion before those who have taken them captive that they may have compassion on them for they are your people and your inheritance which you have brought forth from Egypt from the midst of the iron furnace that your eyes may be open to the supplication of your servant, to the supplication of your people Israel to listen to them whenever they call to you for you have separated them from all the peoples of the earth as your inheritance as you have spoken through Moses your servant when you brought our fathers forth from Egypt, O Lord God.

When Solomon had finished praying this entire prayer and supplication to the Lord, he arose from before the altar of the Lord from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread toward heaven and he stood and blessed all the assembly of Israel with a loud voice saying, Blessed be the Lord who has given rest to his people Israel according to all that he promised.

Not one word has failed of all his good promise which he promised through Moses his servant. May the Lord our God be with us as he was with our fathers. May he not leave us or forsake us that he may incline our hearts to himself to walk in all his ways and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his ordinances which he commanded our fathers and may these words of mine with which I have made supplication before the Lord be near to the Lord our God day and night that he may maintain the cause of his servant and the cause of his people Israel as each day requires so that all the people of the earth may know that the Lord is God there is no one else.

Let your heart therefore be wholly devoted to the Lord our God to walk in his statutes to keep his commandments as at this day.

[10 : 18] 1 Kings chapter 8 verses 22 through 61 lengthy series of verses but yet it is very becoming of us to read them as a whole.

Here we see a prayer of purpose. There is so much that is consistent throughout scripture that ties back to this prayer and there are things that we can see we could spend days looking at this prayer and really not get to the depths of it but I just want you to see a few things as it pertains to this prayer.

Things that were intentionally done things that were done on purpose and things that were given not only for the edification of those who heard him but for the edification of us who read it. That is something that Solomon here the wisest of the wise the king of all of God's people on this platform begins his prayer standing and somewhere in the midst of his prayer ends up hitting his knees because when he finished praying it says that he stood up.

He was in front of all the people. He had humbled himself and fallen on his knees and hands outstretched to heaven and declared this prayer before the Lord God Almighty and what a prayer it is.

Unfortunately we know that this prayer flows from the lips of Solomon who would forsake the Lord his God yet we see the truths that it contains here. We see the realities of the application that it has to us.

[11 : 40] The first thing that we notice in this prayer is that it declares the character of God. Solomon begins his prayer with a declaration and a proclamation of the character of God because all prayer is built and founded upon the character of God.

When the disciples went to Jesus and said Lord teach us how to pray. I'm reminded Andrew Murray who wrote so many great books on prayer made this great statement I have it written in my office.

Jesus never taught his disciples how to preach but he did teach them how to pray. He said Lord teach us how to pray. And he begins that prayer with the character of God our Father which art in heaven.

Right? He begins declaring the character traits of the God of whom you are calling. When Solomon begins his prayer he starts the same way with a declaration of the character of God.

He starts it with the reality that God is like no other God. That God is faithful to his covenant. That God is unfailing in his loving kindness. That God is omnipotent in his rule.

[12 : 53] That there is no other God like unto you. He begins the same way he ended with the declaration of a blessing upon the temple. He begins by reminding us that not only does God make promises with his mouth God keeps promises with his hands.

Right? He says what you have promised with your mouth you have fulfilled with your hands. That God is a promise keeping God. The initiation is always on the side of God.

That because the things of God come about because the word of God is true because we see it taking place is not based upon the efforts of man but rather it's based upon the faithfulness of God.

God doesn't say something and not mean it and God does not mean it and not intend to fulfill it. So what God has pronounced he will bring about and we've seen this. He begins to declare not only how great God is to a peculiar people that God has kept his covenants with David that God has kept his covenants with the nation of Israel.

He also begins to remind us of the scope of the God of whom he is praying to. He says you cannot dwell upon the earth more nonetheless even this house which I have built for the heavens and the highest heavens cannot contain you because see God is above the heavens.

[14 : 15] Now we forget that sometimes because we're in a family and we can cry out Abba Father and we can say our Father which art in heaven. You know in scripture they had layers of heavens.

Paul said I know a man I don't brag on my own good but I do know a man that was called up into the third heavens and of such a man I will boast. Many people believe that Paul was referring to himself we don't know this for certain but they believe that he was that he was called up into the third heavens and you say what's the third heavens we're not getting into the LDS theology here.

They would see it as the heavens that you can observe that's where the birds fly around and the sun is that's the first layer or the birds fly around that's the first heavens where the star and the moons and the suns are the second heavens that would be what we refer to as outer space right?

And then the third heavens would be that which is beyond that and that's where God's at and the highest heavens cannot contain him because he who created it must be greater than it.

by natural consequences the creator of anything is always greater than that which is created. You cannot create something greater than you because you had to think it up you had to connive it you had to build it you had to you had to bring it about these things now it may accomplish things that you had never thought it would intend but the creator always is greater than the creation and he begins to remind us of that that God cannot be contained because the highest heavens cannot contain him but then he tells us not only of the grandeur of God he also tells us of the natural relationship that God desires because he says and yet you have caused your name to dwell in this place.

[16 : 01] The psalmist would declare what is man that you would take notice of him. Solomon says the highest heavens cannot contain you but you have caused your name to dwell here that is you have entered into our realm and you have come to us though we cannot come to you and we begin to see the character of God because until we realize that prayer only reaches to the heights of the character of the one that we are praying to it is only as grand or as great or as powerful as the one we are beseeching and Solomon reminds us of the character of God he is a covenant keeping God he is a loving kindness God he is a God who cannot be contained but he is a God who chooses to intervene and it's amazing when we begin to realize who it is we are praying to so we see here the character of God the second thing that we notice in light of the character of God and this is a natural overflow right it is the confession of man he begins with the character of

God and as soon as he finishes speaking of the character of God he goes right into confession once he realizes who he is beseeching and he realizes what's going on here and he declares who he is he goes into the sinful nature of man this is where most of the prayer hangs out right most of the prayer centers around a confession of who we are he starts out with the sin of false witness he said if a man calls another man to court he must bear witness against him and we don't see it so much you have to go back to the original language and what it is it's a neighbor making a false accusation against another neighbor and he's bringing him to court right he's declaring things about him that aren't true and what he's saying is God this neighbor is sinning against his fellow man so you have the sins against one another he says oh God I want you to judge according to the prayer of this place I want you to judge and give to the wicked that which is deserving to the wicked and give to the righteous that which is deserving to the righteous because we realize their true judgment always falls in the courtroom of heaven and not only does he confess that man sins against man he goes into a lengthy discourse about how man sins against God notice what he says all these headings they keep repeating themselves over and over again he says if a man sins against his neighbor that's sinning against one another and then we go down when your people Israel are defeated go down a little bit more when the heavens are shut up and there is no rain go down a little bit more if there is a famine in the land see all these things defeated in military campaign when there is no rain and there is a famine in the land friend you ought to pay attention to these because each one of these are pronounced curses for the disobedience of God's people and what

Solomon says are we're going to fall short we're going to be defeated in war there's going to be seasons where there's no rain there's going to be a famine in land and he connects each and every one of them now this isn't a works based salvation here we're not looking at that but we're looking at God's interaction with his people so this is the covenant that God entered into with his people there he said that they would be victorious in battle he said that there would be rain in season he said that the cross would not fail to yield and the animals would not fail to give birth that was the covenantal relationship the conditions of the covenant were that they were to walk in obedience and be faithful to him and so what Solomon is confessing is that we are going to fall short but the great news is in light of the character of God that God when we fall short and these disciplinary actions must come against us when we fall short and we realize it and we turn back to you and cry out then oh

God hear our prayers friend don't let anybody ever tell you that the God of the Old Testament is a God of judgment and the God of the New Testament is a God of love because what we have here is repentance and God responding to the prayers of his people we haven't read it but when God answers this he says I will I will I will I will I will because God is the same yesterday today and tomorrow and the reality we see here is that Solomon makes this declaration when man messes up and we confess that fault then oh God hear our prayers and the God that cannot be contained by the highest of heaven says I will it's amazing I know I've shared it with you before I wish she was in here because she could tell me exactly how many there was one year going through the reading plan some of you know the reading plan I go through Carrie decided this was several years ago she was going to count every time every book of the

Bible says that God hears us in our prayers and so she just as we went through that year she just made a mark she just made a mark and she counted at the end of the year she could tell you and I can't she knows the exact number I wish I did it was like 864 I think it's something like over 860 times I'm probably wrong every time I quote this she says you're wrong over 800 times okay over 800 times God says he hears your prayers and it's not just I heard it it's a hearing and respond to it and this is what Solomon is praying God there are going to be seasons in our life where we mess up so bad that we lose the battle the rain doesn't come famine in the land but God we're not saying that we're not going to mess up what we're saying is that when we mess up and we realize we mess up then oh God help us as we come back to you and pray to know that the God who is above all gods hears us and God says I do that's wonderful isn't it nobody else can ever claim that with their relationship of their lowercase g

[22 : 11] God there's no other God like that right and what does this go back to it goes loving kindness God some translations say he is faithful to his covenantal love and when God entered into a covenant with his people he entered into it knowing that they would mess up but was making provisions for them to return to him when they mess up now we're not under the covenant we're not under you know Sinai we're not under the covenant with brimstone and fire and smoke and clouds and all the other stuff the book of Hebrews says the mountain we've come to is greater than that mountain right if that mountain quaked and everything else was trembling and the face of Moses was going how much more so ours right because we've entered into the covenant that's in heaven we've come through the covenant of Jesus Christ the blood of the lamb we have an eternal covenant not a temporal covenant and when God enters into that covenant with us he too knows that we will mess up as well but one of the!

grand positions that Jesus holds is he is the intercessor of the saints he daily lives to intercede for us that when we acknowledge that and we realize that and we admit that and we confess that then oh God here we have this assurance from the word of God yes if God answers and says he would hear prayers directed to that place how much more do you think God hears the prayers directed towards his place and we see this right this confession this confession that declares we're not perfect but God has provided a perfect way for us to come before him we have to admit that we have to own that we have to say and Solomon in his wisdom is declaring it and he says it beforehand the character of God the confession of man the one that gets me more excited than any of them is this third one it's a consistent witness!

we're going to mess up we're going to fail we're going to mess up now if we were alive during that time and we were not Jewish people we're all Gentiles so we'd be going that's good for them right they got that thing going on over there they have famine all this God gets their attention but then he says this he says!

in verse 41 also concerning the foreigner hey that's us also concerning the God equipped and gave him wisdom and we've looked at this it wasn't just built by Jewish people there was Jews half Jews and non Jews they were all involved right everybody was there so they were all involved in this construction of this place because this wasn't just a Jewish temple this was a temple where God would cause his name to dwell and God is not a Jewish God he's the God of the!

I love that because where we put the adjective defines the noun he is not a Jewish God he is the God of the Jews right you should not be a white Christian black Christian and American Christian you should be a Christian that is this because never let that define you and we have to understand this right so the reason we know this God built this temple and that's where he calls his name to dwell Solomon and then the foreigners well God because they're going to hear about you and isn't that what the nation of Israel is supposed to be right to be a billboard to the world God wasn't cutting the world off God was actually inviting the world in to the nation of Israel that's what he was doing he was providing an opportunity for the world to come he says they're going to hear about you you're not just going to do something awesome for us

[26 : 09] I want you to do something awesome for all people so that all the world may know that you are God and there's none like you that's astounding because the God who answers the prayer of the Jewish individuals the God who answers the prayer of the non Jewish individual because he is the God who welcomes all people to itself God I want you to answer their prayers so that when you answer their prayers they know you're God not so they can say man the people of Israel got it figured out over there but so that they know you're God and that they know there's no other God like you God testify to them the way you testify to us and I love this because it just throws the door wide evangelization right it is declaring who God is to the world so much of the quote unquote religion was shut off from everybody else but from the very beginning of it

God says I want the people to come to me I want them to answer and he says so when they do that Lord just help them to see it I want them to know that there's no!

consistent witness right when you lead them far away and they're in foreign territory help them to fight like nobody else so that people that are fighting will know that you're God okay and then when they mess up pay attention to this one because this one has biblical application I want you to just think right here thank Daniel for just a minute just thank Daniel that's all you need to think about discipline them and you send them far away to a foreign country we call that Babylonian exile right and when you send them far away when they're in that place and they call to mind who you are and then they confess their sins and say we messed up forgive us for our iniquities go back and read the book of Daniel you know what Daniel did Daniel got on his knees and said oh God we have messed up forgive us for our iniquities go read the book of Nehemiah you know what Nehemiah did when he heard about the walls being fell down Nehemiah said oh God we have messed up forgive us for our iniquities

I love that because these men weren't there doing the problem but they did not separate themselves from themselves from the problem right because God says you gotta own it so Daniel goes God we messed up forgive us for our iniquities Nehemiah says the same thing Ezra says the same thing where are they at they're over there they're in Babylon that foreign country what happens God hears their prayers and when God hears their prayers Nehemiah is praying all the time by the way he's always going before the!

long prayers but God answers his prayers what did Solomon make their request to God when they're there they confess they own it they cry to you give them mercy in the sight of their captives right Nehemiah King Artaxerxes says what do you want okay I'll give it to you here here here's you cannot tell me any political reason why in the world King Artaxerxes gave Nehemiah permission and gave him all the funds to go get all the timbers and all the material he needed to rebuild the walls in the city that was known for its rebellion with the people of that land other than the fact that Nehemiah prayed and God gave him mercy in the presence of his captives you cannot tell me why Ezra gets to go back and bring all when King Cyrus issued a decree other than the fact that God had said that there would be a king named Cyrus who would issue a Daniel begins to pray over it and

[30 : 02] Daniel is praying over it and all of a sudden this favor begins to rain down and I know that's during all this Darius and the Mede and the Persian empire but then this king comes Cyrus in favor of his sin and Cyrus writes a decree whoever wants to go back can blows me away Ezra comes back and he brings all the the golden utensils and everything else God gave them favor in the presence of their enemies why is Daniel here Daniel is promoted God gave him favor in the presence of his enemies he's praying towards this place he gets thrown into a lion's den lions don't eat him God gave him favor in the presence of his enemies when he comes out the decree of the king then is whoever does not worship that god is just messed!

king Nebuchadnezzar looks in there and says I see a fourth man like unto the son of man when he calls them out he testifies he's not a believer but he testifies to who God is that God is greater than him right and we know later pride creeps in all sudden seven years you're going to be like a wild animal God is so faithful to these words why because there's a based upon the prayers of his people wherever they're at and this is a prayer with purpose right which gets us to the last thing I know I'm a little preachy on a Wednesday night but it's a good passage this last thing right this we see the character of God the confession of man a consistent witness and consistent testimony here's this last thing a call to obedience so he finishes his prayer he says God this is what I want you to do and he finishes his prayer and he gets up and

I appreciate this because he doesn't just get up and go okay that was quite a prayer he says he gets up and he turns around and he faces the nation of his now I wish Solomon heeds his own advice but that doesn't mean we need to throw that advice out right I wish he would have heeded his own advice but yet what happens is Solomon turns around and he calls the nation to obedience and he bases that call again on the character of God he tells them first of all he blesses God verse 56 he said blessed be the Lord who has given rest to his people Israel and he reminds them that not one thing that God has promised has failed to happen and he goes all the way back looking at the history looking at the history looking at the history God is so faithful again the faithfulness of

God is the grounds of our obedience we do not obey so that God will be faithful we obey because he is faithful you're not trying to earn God's faithfulness you are responding to God's faithfulness big difference right so we're not well if I do this God will be happy with me and if I do this and God will be pleased with me and if I do this and God will take care of me and that's name it and claim it we're not doing that right I'm not going to say well if I obey this way and if I sacrifice the gift no what I say is God has not failed me yet therefore I want to obey him still right I'm not trying to get anything out of God I'm not trying to gain anything by my obedience I just want to obey him because I've seen how faithful he is to me nothing that he has promised me has come short not one single word has fallen short in the good times and the bad times and the mountain tops and the valleys right those the faithfulness of God is consistent and since it is consistent again he is the initiator then

I ought to walk in obedience to him because I can count on his character and that's exactly what Solomon is declaring here right he says he hasn't failed us he's brought us to this place therefore you may incline our our lives right we want to he says in verse 59 and may these words of mine with which I have made supplication before the Lord be near the Lord our God day and night that he may maintain the cause of his people Israel as each day requires it is not just a past event it is an everyday event so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the Lord is God there is no one else right so what God does proves his existence among the peoples and he ends it this way let your heart therefore be wholly devoted to the Lord our God since God maintains the calls as each day declares let your heart be wholly devoted to the

[35 : 03] Lord our God to walk in his statutes to keep his commandments as at! this day! it's to be worshiping when the glory of God falls into the temple and we're all gathered together in this celebration and we see it but each day each and every day the God of glory is the God of every day the God who falls down and his glory fills the place so much so that nobody can go in is still the same God the next day when people are going about their daily activities but he maintains the causes each day requires and what Solomon is calling the people to obedience and to faithfulness see when we get up from prayer and we understand this purpose of prayer of purpose that it's not just so that we can declare a few things and go on so that after we come before a holy God and we declare these things and we get up and our lives and we walk in faithfulness and we do it with our whole heart we set our heart upon him completely because he does not fail us and we see it here in 1 Kings chapter 8 verses 22 through 61 thank you my brother I brought us to a so so so