

2 Chronicles 7-9

Good evening and thank you for joining us! Would you please turn in your Bibles to 2 Chronicles 7?

If you recall, when the Chronicler wrote his history, there was controversy over the second temple (the temple that Ezra and Zerubbabel built). Some of the residents in and around Jerusalem opposed its construction, that's why so much of 2 Chronicles deals with the temple.

Remember the setting-the Jews have returned from 70 years of captivity in Babylon. And if the returned exiles were to renew their covenant relationship with God, they had to have a temple. There they could obey the laws regarding atonement for sin, worship, and fellowship with God

Tonight we see the glory of the Lord in the temple as we'll review the King Solomon's reign

The title of tonight's message is XXXX

Let's pray

1 When Solomon had finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the LORD filled the temple.^[fn] Last week we saw Solomons prayer-and after he prays, boom-God provides supernatural fireworks. Fire falls from heaven and burns up the sacrifices that were on the altar.

2 And the priests could not enter the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD had filled the LORD's house. Notice, God's glory replaced human activity. This is the measuring stick for revival! Hey ini a true revival, God is the star – not any man or woman. The attraction is God, not some personality, or performance, or act of piety.

3 When all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the LORD on the temple, they bowed their faces to the ground on the pavement, and worshiped and praised the LORD, saying:

“For He is good,

For His mercy endures forever.”[fn] I think this is fascinating.

You'd think after such an awesome manifestation of God's power the people would speak of God's majesty, or greatness, or strength, or judgment.

But that's not what they say is it? No they were overwhelmed with God's mercy, that such a pure, holy God would want to meet with them.

Hey when we worship-our attitude should be the same!

4-5

4 Then the king and all the people offered sacrifices before the LORD. 5 King Solomon offered a sacrifice of twenty-two thousand bulls and one hundred and twenty thousand sheep. So the king and all the people dedicated the house of God. The people celebrated with an incredible worship service.

J Vernon McGee "To anyone who thinks they were slaying too many animals for sacrifice, how many animals are slain in this country every day? There are thousands of animals slain every day in the packing houses of our country. No one raises a voice or does anything to protest that. After all, that is to satisfy us. But when something is done for the glory of God, there will always be people who will object."

6-7

6 And the priests attended to their services; the Levites also with instruments of the music of the LORD, which King David had made to praise the LORD, saying, "For His mercy endures forever,"[fn] whenever David offered praise by their ministry. The priests sounded trumpets opposite them, while all Israel stood.
7 Furthermore Solomon consecrated the middle of the court that was in front of the house of the LORD; for there he offered burnt offerings and the fat of the peace offerings, because the bronze altar which Solomon had made was not able to receive the burnt offerings, the grain offerings, and the fat. This is incredible- the bronze altar couldn't accommodate all the sacrifices.

Deep in his heart, Solomon understood the need for a sacrifice - that the wages of sin is death. When a sin is committed it costs a living thing its life.

At the end of the feast he looks up and 22,000 bulls are dead - 120,000 sheep carcasses lie on the ground...

The thousands of sacrifices he offered pointed to one, still distant sacrifice. It's Jesus! Jesus was a spotless lamb with sinless blood.

The tendency today in American churches is for pastors and teachers to downplay the need for a sacrifice. They seldom talk about sin or the cross. They've tried to sanitize Christianity.

Their refined and sophisticated tastes are embarrassed by the cross. But make no mistake about it – there is no salvation without sacrifice.

4 fold test of a church in my opinion

- 1) Do they speak of the blood of Jesus
- 2) Do they ever mention hell
- 3) Do they talk about sin
- 4) Do they reflect the joy of the Lord

At the Grand Opening of the Temple Solomon dramatized this truth of a need for a blood sacrifice in a profound way.

8-11

8 At that time Solomon kept the feast seven days, and all Israel with him, a very great assembly from the entrance of Hamath to the Brook of Egypt.[fn] 9 And on the eighth day they held a sacred assembly, for they observed the dedication of the altar seven days, and the feast seven days. 10 On the twenty-third day of the seventh month he sent the people away to their tents, joyful and glad of heart for the good that the LORD had done for David, for Solomon, and for His people Israel. 11 Thus Solomon finished the house of the LORD and the king's house; and Solomon

successfully accomplished all that came into his heart to make in the house of the LORD and in his own house. It was a time of great joy. It reminds us of **Psalm 16:11 You will show me the path of life;**

In Your presence is fullness of joy;

At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

12 Then the LORD appeared to Solomon by night, and said to him: "I have heard your prayer, and have chosen this place for Myself as a house of sacrifice. 20 years before this God spoke to Solomon in a dream telling him to ask for whatever he wanted. A young man wisely asked for wisdom. But now Solomon is at a different stage in life. He's older, more experienced. He has a few successes under his belt.

Now God visits Solomon a second time. Spurgeon once said, "I commend to those of you who are getting on in life, that while you thank God for the past, and look back with joy to his visits to you in your early days, you now seek and ask for a second visitation of the Most High." We need new and continual fillings of the Spirit – fresh experiences with God.

Look what God tells Solomon...

13-14

13 When I shut up heaven and there is no rain, or command the locusts to devour the land, or send pestilence 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 will forgive their

sin and heal their land.” This is the verse that’s often applied to America, and quoted as a formula for revival. I’ve heard people say that if the Christians in our country humble themselves, and repent, and ask God to heal America He promises to do so... Knowing God, I wouldn’t put it past Him.

But I cringe a little whenever we take a promise that was made to Israel and apply it to America.

My personal opinion is we should absolutely model this verse, because the corrupt condition of America is largely the fault of a proud and lukewarm church. We should humble ourselves - repent of our wicked ways - ask God to bring revival and healing to our country. This is a principle for America - but it was a promise to Israel.

15-22

15 Now My eyes will be open and My ears attentive to prayer made in this place. 16 For now I have chosen and sanctified this house, that My name may be there forever; and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually. 17 As for you, if you walk before Me as your father David walked, and do according to all that I have commanded you, and if you keep My statutes and My judgments, 18 then I will establish the throne of your kingdom, as I covenanted with David your father, saying, ‘You shall not fail to have a man as ruler in Israel.’

19 “But if you turn away and forsake My statutes and My commandments which I have set before you, and go and serve other gods, and worship them, 20 then I will uproot them from My land which I have given them; and this house which I have

sanctified for My name I will cast out of My sight, and will make it a proverb and a byword among all peoples.

21 “And as for this house, which is exalted, everyone who passes by it will be astonished and say, ‘Why has the LORD done thus to this land and this house?’ 22 Then they will answer, ‘Because they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, who brought them out of the land of Egypt, and embraced other gods, and worshiped them and served them; therefore He has brought all this calamity on them.’” Sadly, what was a warning to King Solomon ended up a summary of later Jewish history. Idolatry becomes the blight that robs Israel of its blessing. The returning exiles would quickly recognize this

Chapter 8 lists some of Solomon’s Additional Achievements, reminding the returning exiles of Israel’s golden years.

(1 Kings 9)

1-6

1 It came to pass at the end of twenty years, when Solomon had built the house of the LORD and his own house, 2 that the cities which Hiram[fn] had given to Solomon, Solomon built them; and he settled the children of Israel there. 3 And Solomon went to Hamath Zobah and seized it. 4 He also built Tadmor in the wilderness, and all the storage cities which he built in Hamath. 5 He built Upper Beth Horon and Lower Beth Horon, fortified cities with walls, gates, and bars, 6 also Baalath and all the storage cities that Solomon had, and all the chariot cities and the cities of the cavalry, and all that Solomon desired to build in Jerusalem, in Lebanon, and in all the land of his dominion. Here’s a hint that all is not well in Solomon’s heart.... Deuteronomy 17 prohibited the king of Israel from accumulating 3 things: horses, wives, and gold.

God wanted the king to trust in Him not his cavalry. Solomon violated God's command, and started horsing around. He built chariot cities in Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer. His first flirtation was with horses, but soon we'll see him adding quite a harem, and accumulating large bank accounts. All of these led to Solomon's downfall...

7-11

7 All the people who were left of the Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, who were not of Israel— 8 that is, their descendants who were left in the land after them, whom the children of Israel did not destroy—from these Solomon raised forced labor, as it is to this day. 9 But Solomon did not make the children of Israel servants for his work. Some were men of war, captains of his officers, captains of his chariots, and his cavalry. 10 And others were chiefs of the officials of King Solomon: two hundred and fifty, who ruled over the people.

11 Now Solomon brought the daughter of Pharaoh up from the City of David to the house he had built for her, for he said, "My wife shall not dwell in the house of David king of Israel, because the places to which the ark of the LORD has come are holy."

Here's a second hint that Solomon's heart is straying from the Lord. He marries the Pharaoh's daughter in a diplomatic move.

But apparently, she refused to embrace the God of Israel and held on to her pagan idols. So much so, that to bring this woman home to live in David's palace seemed like a desecration.

Solomon built this princess of the Nile her own palace where she could worship as she pleased. Tragically Solomon's wives turn his heart to follow other gods.

12-13

12 Then Solomon offered burnt offerings to the LORD on the altar of the LORD which he had built before the vestibule, 13 according to the daily rate, offering according to the commandment of Moses, for the Sabbaths, the New Moons, and the three appointed yearly feasts—the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Weeks, and the Feast of Tabernacles. There were other Jewish feasts, but these were the three that required all Jewish males to come to Jerusalem.

14-18

14 And, according to the order of David his father, he appointed the divisions of the priests for their service, the Levites for their duties (to praise and serve before the priests) as the duty of each day required, and the gatekeepers by their divisions at each gate; for so David the man of God had commanded. 15 They did not depart from the command of the king to the priests and Levites concerning any matter or concerning the treasuries.

16 Now all the work of Solomon was well-ordered from the day of the foundation of the house of the LORD until it was finished. So the house of the LORD was completed.

17 Then Solomon went to Ezion Geber and Elath on the seacoast, in the land of Edom. 18 And Hiram sent him ships by the hand of his servants, and servants who knew the sea. They went with the servants of Solomon to Ophir, and acquired four hundred and fifty talents of gold from there, and brought it to King

Solomon. The Phoenicians were famous sailors of the ancient world. And with the help of his Phoenician friend, Hiram, Solomon launched a merchant marine. They docked on the Red Sea, at “Elath.” Today “Elath” is “Eliat” - an Israeli resort and European vacation destination

Chapter 9 we see the events regarding the Queen of Sheba’s visit (1 Kin. 10:1–13)

1 Now when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, she came to Jerusalem to test Solomon with hard questions, having a very great retinue, camels that bore spices, gold in abundance, and precious stones; and when she came to Solomon, she spoke with him about all that was in her heart.

You can be sure that this journey by the queen of Sheba surely created quite a buzz. Imagine the scene as this queen and her exotic caravan pulled into town.

When verse 1 says that she came to “test him with hard questions,” it doesn’t mean the queen of Sheba was a skeptic, but rather she was a seeker. She went to great lengths to find the truth, and she’s traveling all this way because not only has she heard of Solomon's wealth, but his wisdom.

2-4

2 So Solomon answered all her questions; there was nothing so difficult for Solomon that he could not explain it to her. 3 And when the queen of Sheba had seen the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, 4 the food on his table, the seating of his servants, the service of his waiters and their apparel, his

cupbearers and their apparel, and his entryway by which he went up to the house of the LORD, there was no more spirit in her. At some point, after Solomon answers all her questions, the queen of Sheba pauses, and looks around, soaking in all that surrounded her.

And what she saw not only captivated her, it took her breath away. Remember this wasn't some peasant, no she's a queen, she's a woman familiar with treasures and luxuries. Yet she's completely overwhelmed by the wisdom of Solomon and the glory of his kingdom.

5-7

5 Then she said to the king: "It was a true report which I heard in my own land about your words and your wisdom. 6 However I did not believe their words until I came and saw with my own eyes; and indeed the half of the greatness of your wisdom was not told me. You exceed the fame of which I heard. 7 Happy are your men and happy are these your servants, who stand continually before you and hear your wisdom!" The Queen of Sheba heard wonderful things about Solomon and his kingdom, but upon seeing it with her own eyes she realized it was far greater than she had heard. And now in verse 8 look who the gentile queen gives the credit to!

8 Blessed be the LORD your God, who delighted in you, setting you on His throne to be king for the LORD your God! Because your God has loved Israel, to establish them forever, therefore He made you king over them, to do justice and righteousness." Here we see Old Testament evangelism at work. God blesses Israel so

much that outsiders can come to only one conclusion – Israel’s God is the one, true God.

Jesus actually used the queen of Sheba as an example to the hard-hearted Pharisees. **Matthew 12:38 Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, “Teacher, we want to see a sign from You.”**

39 But He answered and said to them, “An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. 40 For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. 41 The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here. 42 The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon is here.

The Queen of Sheba so admired Solomon’s wisdom she traveled 1500 miles to sit at his feet. Yet Jesus was far wiser than Solomon. And Jesus came to them, they didn’t have to come to Him - yet the Pharisees still refused to listen to Jesus.

If the Queen of Sheba sought Solomon and the splendor of his kingdom so diligently, how much more should people today seek Jesus and the glory of His Kingdom. Sadly lots of folks will look everywhere else but Jesus for the wisdom they so desperately desire.

9-12

9 And she gave the king one hundred and twenty talents of gold, spices in great abundance, and precious stones; there never were any spices such as those the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.

10 Also, the servants of Hiram and the servants of Solomon, who brought gold from Ophir, brought algum^[fn] wood and precious stones. 11 And the king made walkways of the algum^[fn] wood for the house of the LORD and for the king's house, also harps and stringed instruments for singers; and there were none such as these seen before in the land of Judah.

12 Now King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all she desired, whatever she asked, much more than she had brought to the king. So she turned and went to her own country, she and her servants.

I see a picture of us in our walk with the Lord here. We bring ourselves to the Lord, seek His wisdom, astounded at who He is, then we walk away stunned with what He's given us!

Now the rest of the chapter describes more of Solomon's great wealth. 1 Kings 10

13 The weight of gold that came to Solomon yearly was six hundred and sixty-six talents of gold, Solomon's yearly salary was 666 talents of gold. Obviously, that's a lot of gold – at least 23 tons worth.

But what's intriguing is the association of Solomon with the number "666". Revelation 13 tells us the number of the Antichrist is six – six – six. And we're about to see in a minute this is not the only association between Solomon and six - six - six.

We'll see in a few verses Solomon's throne. His throne was a sight to behold. It was made of ivory, overlaid with gold. But when you approached it you saw six – six – six. There were six lions to the left – there were six steps in the center – and there were six lions on the right. From right to left...6-6-6.

Solomon has the dubious distinction of being the culprit who introduced idolatry into Israel. And because of this, some theologians see Solomon as an OT type of the Antichrist.

Solomon was a man of peace and a temple-builder. And that's how the Antichrist will start out. He'll make a covenant with Israel – a peace treaty, and rebuild their Temple.

People from all over the world journeyed to Jerusalem to marvel at Solomon's wisdom. The Antichrist will likewise impress the world with his wisdom.

Solomon showed keen business prowess and amassed great wealth. We learn in Revelation 18 the Antichrist does the same. The parallels are numerous.

14-16

14 besides what the traveling merchants and traders brought. And all the kings of Arabia and governors of the country brought gold and silver to Solomon. 15 And King Solomon made two hundred large shields of hammered gold; six hundred shekels of hammered gold went into each shield. 16 He also made three hundred shields of hammered gold; three hundred shekels^[fn] of gold went into each shield. The king put them in the House of the

Forest of Lebanon. These shields were just decorations. Gold is too heavy and too soft to be used as a metal for effective shields.
17-19

17 Moreover the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with pure gold. 18 The throne had six steps, with a footstool of gold, which were fastened to the throne; there were armrests on either side of the place of the seat, and two lions stood beside the armrests. 19 Twelve lions stood there, one on each side of the six steps; nothing like this had been made for any other kingdom. Look at the throne, and you saw six – six – six. This may be coincidental, there are people who dive into the scriptures and find new codes and all these things. Just use discernment.

20 All King Solomon's drinking vessels were gold, and all the vessels of the House of the Forest of Lebanon were pure gold. Not one was silver, for this was accounted as nothing in the days of Solomon. Silver was treated like how we treat paper cups. Only gold was good enough for Solomon.

21 For the king's ships went to Tarshish with the servants of Hiram.[fn] Once every three years the merchant ships[fn] came, bringing gold, silver, ivory, apes, and monkeys.[fn] Solomon also loved exotic pets. He had his own zoo.
22-28

22 So King Solomon surpassed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom. 23 And all the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart. 24 Each man brought his present: articles of silver and

gold, garments, armor, spices, horses, and mules, at a set rate year by year.

25 Solomon had four thousand stalls for horses and chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen whom he stationed in the chariot cities and with the king at Jerusalem.

26 So he reigned over all the kings from the River[fn] to the land of the Philistines, as far as the border of Egypt. 27 The king made silver as common in Jerusalem as stones, and he made cedar trees as abundant as the sycamores which are in the lowland. 28 And they brought horses to Solomon from Egypt and from all lands. Here's where you may want to jot down the reference to Ecclesiastes, as Solomon gives a poetic testimony to the emptiness of riches. In Ecclesiastes, Solomon powerfully showed that there is no ultimate satisfaction through materialism.

Lets finish the chapter

29 Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, first and last, are they not written in the book of Nathan the prophet, in the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, and in the visions of Iddo the seer concerning Jeroboam the son of Nebat? 30 Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel forty years. 31 Then Solomon rested with his fathers, and was buried in the City of David his father. And Rehoboam his son reigned in his place.

From our study in 1 Kings earlier this year you're likely saying- wait a minute, somethings missing from Solomons life! And you're right.

The one glaring omission from Ezra's account of Solomon's life was his harem of foreign wives – the sin that led him into idolatry.

Recall though the purpose of Chronicles was encouragement. Ezra wrote after the Jews spent 70 years in exile for their idolatry

And they knew very well of the consequences of their sin. And there's a reminder here for us. Yes we've all tasted the bitter fruit of sin, but our past doesn't have to cripple our future. God wants to lead Judah to a fresh start! And let us remember that principle when we interact with each other.