

## 2 Chronicles 7-8 – Thursday, December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016

**2 Chronicles 7** -- 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. 2 And the priests could not enter the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD had filled the LORD's house. 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."

- The chapter begins with a powerful display of God's blessing and approval of the temple with fire coming down from heaven.
- It's interesting that the fire comes down in response to Solomon praying whereas last time it was when the people praised God.
- This speaks to the power of prayer, praise and worship such that, God inhabits the praises and hears the prayers of His people,

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.

- At first read, one can almost miss the enormity and the intensity of Solomon's sacrifice offering of that many bulls and sheep.
- The question becomes one of why, why did Solomon deem it necessary to offer such a massive sacrifice of bulls and sheep.
- I believe it's because it points to the seriousness of our sin, and perhaps more importantly, the vastness of Christ's sacrifice.

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," 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. 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. 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.

- Here we're told that the offerings were so great in number that the bronze altar Solomon had made was not able to handle it.
- As such, they extend the length of this Feast of Tabernacles, and they construct additional altars in order to continue offering.
- The take away here is there are those extended seasons of sacrifice in our lives when the circumstances of our lives warrant it.

- There's something else here that's not so easily seen at first and it has to do with the entrance of Hamath to the Brook of Egypt.
- The reason I point this out is because it would seem to indicate that Israel still possessed a large amount of the Promised Land.
- This because, the original borders of the Promised Land God gave to Israel to possess included a portion of Northern Egypt.

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. 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. 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.

- As I'm sure many of you know, this passage has been the source of many a sermon over many years as it relates to our nation.
- While this promise from God was chiefly directed towards Israel at the temple dedication this principle still applies to us today.
- When any one or any nation, humbles them self, prays, seeks God's face and turns from wickedness, God will hear and heal.

- Notice how that there are four legs to this promise and principle as it were, 1<sup>st</sup>, humility, 2<sup>nd</sup>, prayer, 3<sup>rd</sup>, seeking and 4<sup>th</sup>, turning.
- In other words, when we posture our self before the Lord in these four ways and in this order, God will hear, heal, and forgive.
- Would to God we as a people, and as a nation, would be numbered amongst those who are known for this posture of humility.

- There's one more thing I would like to point out before we move on and it has to do with the timing of this warning and promise.
- I find it interesting that God would appear to Solomon at night and say this to him during their grand and glorious celebration.
- Again, the question becomes one of why. I believe it's because we're most vulnerable to a great fall after a glorious victory.

G. Campbell Morgan of this said, "The words speak to us also. No height attained, no work done, no blessing received, is in itself sufficient to ensure our continuance in favor. Nothing but continued fidelity can do that."

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.’”

- Here God continues with what I will call the principle of “if you, then I.” God says; if you walk in obedience, then I will bless you.
- While this may seem simplistic, the problem is often times we tie the hands of God’s blessing with the rope of our disobedience.
- The truth of the matter is God longs to bless His people and it’s not that He can’t or doesn’t want to, it’s that God won’t bless us.

Adam Clarke – “The manner in which these disobedient people have been destroyed is truly astonishing: no nation was every so highly favored, and none ever so severely and signally punished.”

**2 Chronicles 8** -- 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 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. 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.

- We saw this back in 1 Kings chapter five, where Solomon would have the Israelites oversee the labor of those under their rule.
- The reason I mention this is because there was absolutely nothing wrong with what Solomon does here as he conquered them.
- The Israelites could then function in roles of captains and leaders, as was the custom in that day when new cities were settled.

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.”

- Its here in verse eleven where we begin to see Solomon’s downfall coming by way of him taking for himself many foreign wives.
- Ultimately this will have horrific and far-reaching consequences for Solomon and Israel such that in the end they forsake God.
- Even if Solomon didn’t take for himself many wives, just the fact that he’d take an Egyptian wife, was the beginning of the end.

- I suppose the lesson here becomes quite clear; disobedience to the Lord, will ultimately lead to one turning away from the Lord.
- Solomon deliberately disobeyed the command of the Lord multiplying for himself many wives, which in the end took him down.
- These because, it’s easier to pull others down than lift them up in the physical sense literally and spiritual sense metaphorically.

G. Campbell Morgan of this wrote, “To build a house for Pharaoh’s daughter outside the Holy City is to open its gates sooner or later to Pharaoh’s gods.”

F.B. Meyer of unequally yoked marriages writes, “The blessedness of the marriage tie depends on whether the twain are one in spirit, in a common love for Christ, and endeavor for his glory. Nothing is more terrible than when either admits in the secrecy of the heart, concerning the other, My husband or my wife cannot accompany me into the holy places where I was reared, and in which my best life finds its home.”

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. 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.

- Chapter 8 ends with a display of Solomon’s supernatural wisdom demonstrated by his well-ordered work and accomplishments.
- It’s interesting to note this mention of a place called Ophir. To this day, no one knows exactly where this area of Ophir located.
- Some suggest it may be southern Arabia or the eastern coast of Africa yet others speculate that it could be somewhere in India.