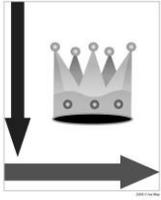


Week Twenty-one: A King Builds a Temple For God's Name - 1 Kings 6:1, 12-13; 8:1-53 **Overview**



From the time that God delivers His people from Egypt, He purposes to dwell among His people. On their journeys He leads them by a cloud by day and pillar of fire by night. The first major construction project after the Exodus is the Tent of Meeting, which contains an outer court, the Holy Place, and the Most Holy Place. God gives Moses clear instructions, and the people give sacrificially and work diligently under the direction of God's chosen men. Once the Tent of Meeting is erected, the glory of God descends upon the Tent, revealing God's awesome presence and power. Before Israel enters into Canaan, God promises to establish His Name among them in a place of His choosing (Lev. 26:11; Deut. 12:5-7, 11, 14, 21, 26).

The Tent of Meeting serves the people from the time of the Exodus; after David captures Jerusalem and establishes his kingdom, however, he desires to build a permanent temple for God. Because he is a warrior, God forbids him, but promises that He will make David a dynasty and that David's son will build the temple. David amasses wealth to prepare for the temple's construction. After David's death, Solomon builds a magnificent temple--based on David's design--a palace for the King of Glory. This lesson covers the building of the temple and God's inauguration of the temple.

Lesson Objective:

At the conclusion of this lesson, students will understand that the Temple symbolizes God's desire to dwell among His people and that His manifest presence reflects His pleasure in His people.

Key Truths

God desires to be among His people.

Anything done for God will require time, effort, and resources.

The manifest presence of God among His people demonstrates His grace on their lives and distinguishes them from all other peoples (Ex. 33:16).

God provides information to guide Israel hundreds of years in advance to reveal His sovereignty, wisdom, power, and greatness.

Lesson Outline

1. The promises regarding the temple - Deuteronomy 12:5-7, 11, 13-14, 20-21; 1 Kings 6:1, 12-13

Moses prepares Israel for the time when they will have a permanent place where God will make His name dwell and tells them, "But you shall seek the place where the LORD your God chooses, out of all your tribes, to put His name for His dwelling place; and there you shall go" (Deut. 12:5). He declares that this specific place will be a place where they must offer burnt offerings and sacrifices. God again foretells His plans for the future and brings man into His confidence. Isaiah declares that this truth distinguishes God from all other gods, "I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying 'My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure'" (Isaiah 46:9b-10).

David's desire to build a permanent dwelling place for the name of God matches the desire of God, yet David's lifelong military exploits only allow him to accumulate the materials for such a place. Building a place where God's name dwells falls, instead, to his son Solomon.

Approximately 480 years after Israel leaves Egypt, Solomon begins building the temple, in the fourth year of his reign. The ark of the covenant, the symbol of God's promise of redemption and presence, dwelt in the Tent of Meeting during the wilderness wandering and in various places in the land of Israel since that time. Israel has lacked a permanent dwelling place for the ark of the covenant. Until now.

The word of the LORD comes to Solomon, "Concerning this temple which you are building, if you walk in My statutes, execute My judgments, keep all My commandments, and walk in them, then I will perform My word with you which I spoke to your after David. And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake My people Israel" (1 Kings 6:12).

God's manifest presence in the temple is conditional to Israel's obedience to His statutes, judgments, and commandments. Bible literacy, obedience, and the manifestation of God's presence in a nation's (or a person's) life go hand in hand. It is not enough that Israel have a temple; they must have the manifest presence of God, and that is conditional. Israel must obey the Lord and adhere to His word.

2. The completion of the temple - 1 Kings 8:1-21

Without the benefits of a Home Depot or Lowe's and their power tools, Solomon and his men labor for seven years to build the temple for the LORD. Once the temple is built, the priests and Levites assemble the furnishings and prepare the temple for God's presence.

- The holy furnishings are brought into the temple by the priests and Levites and positioned in their designated places, and the ark is positioned in the Most Holy Place (8:1-4).

- As soon as everything is in place, the priests come out of the Holy Place and immediately, “The cloud filled the house of the LORD, so that the priests could not continue ministering because of the cloud; for the glory of the LORD filled the house

of the LORD” (8:10-11). The glory of the Lord fills the house of the LORD just as it had nearly 500 years earlier at the completion of the Tent of Meeting (Ex. 40:34-38; Lev. 9:22-24). The glory of God is in the midst His people once again Oh, glorious day

- Solomon leads Israel in worship, “Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, who spoke with His mouth to my father David, and with His hand has fulfilled it saying, ‘Since the day that I brought My people Israel out of Egypt, I have chosen no city from any tribe of Israel in which to build a house, that My man might be there. So the LORD has fulfilled His word which He spoke; and I have filled the position of my father David, and sit on the throne of Israel, as the LORD had promised; and I have built a temple for the name of the LORD God of Israel. And I have made a place for the ark, in which is the covenant of the LORD which He made with our fathers, when He brought them out of the land of Egypt” (8:12-21).

The temple is inaugurated with the very presence of God, and Solomon leads the people in worshiping the God of Israel. Worship doesn’t bring God’s presence, but real worship responds to God’s presence.

3. The king’s prayer regarding the temple - 1 Kings 8:22-53

As he prays, Solomon understands that the completed temple fulfills God’s word to Israel in Deuteronomy 12, “That Your eyes may be open toward this temple night and day, toward this place of which You said, ‘My name shall be there.’” Solomon’s prayer reveals a wise heart filled with God’s truth; the king prays a prayer laced with riches of heavenly doctrine:

- There is no God but the LORD (8:23)
- God keeps His covenants and mercy (8:23)
- God is greater than this temple--”the heavens and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You”(8:27)
- God hears prayer and forgives sin (8:30, 49-50)
- God judges both wickedness and righteousness (8:32)
- God gets His people’s attention through defeat (8:33), drought (8:35), and disease (8:37)
- God alone knows the hearts of all men (8:39)
- God intends that His name be made known to all nations on earth so that they fear Him (8:43)
- All men are sinners (8:46)

- God has compassion on His people even when He sends judgment (8:50).

Solomon's prayer of dedication also records eight requests of the LORD regarding the following prayers lifted up to Him from the temple:

- For condemnation of the wicked and justice for the righteous (31-32).
- For return for those whose sin causes them to be defeated and captured by an enemy (33-34).
- For rain when sin causes drought in the land and the people confess and turn from their sin (35-36).
- For food when famine occurs in the land as a result of the plague of sin in the heart (37-40).
- For blessing upon the foreigner who calls upon the LORD's name (41-43).
- For victories in battle (44-45).
- For forgiveness and compassion when Israel sins against the LORD and are taken captive into a foreign land (46-51).
- For God's eyes and ears to attend to the prayers of His people (52-53).

From this point on, Jerusalem and its temple take center stage in Israel's history. Nearly 400 years later Israel, will learn the cost of disobedience when the temple in Jerusalem is destroyed by the Babylonians and they are taken into captivity.

Application - What does this lesson teach us about God? Man? Sin? Redemption?

- The Temple, like the Tent of Meeting, teaches the holiness of God, the seriousness of sin, and the singular way of approaching God.
- God desires a dwelling place in which to put His name and then raises up Solomon to build such a place hundreds of years later. Only heaven will reveal the grand narrative where each believer will see how his life fits into His great purposes.
- Solomon worships God as He fulfills the purpose for which he has been called.

Fulfilling the purpose of God for your life brings great joy.

Summary

God speaks through Moses to prepare Israel for the day they will have a place for His Name; He gives David the plans for temple and then communicates the conditions regarding the temple to Solomon.

God acts by filling the temple with His presence.

God reveals His desire to dwell among His people in a visible manner.

Discussion Questions

Considering John's statement, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (Jn. 1:14), what characterized the manifest presence of God in the Lord Jesus? Among His people today?

Considering Paul's statement, "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10), what prevents many believers from understanding and fulfilling their purpose?