

1Kings 8:22–53

“God Will Indeed Dwell on Earth”

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For what is Solomon praying at the temple dedication? Pastor leads his family in today's "Hopewell @Home" passage. 1Kings 8:22–53 prepares us for the first serial reading in morning public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In these thirty-two verses, the Holy Spirit teaches us that Solomon's prayer for the ultimate Davidic King, for the near-dwelling of God, for forgiveness, and for repentance, would all be answered fully and gloriously only in Jesus Himself.

Wednesday, March 2, 2022 ▪ Read 1Kings 8:22–53

Questions from the Scripture text: Before what did Solomon stand in v22? In whose presence? What does he do with his hands? Whom does he address (v23)? What doesn't exist? What about God is so unique? What do His servants do? What has God done (v24a)? How does v24b describe this? What does Solomon now ask Yahweh to do (v25–26)? Upon what condition had this promise been made? What does Solomon ask (v27)? How does he himself answer? What does he ask in v28, as an indication that the Lord was making His dwelling known/experienced there that day? And at what other times (v29)? In response to whose else's prayers(v30)? What is the great response from God that we need to all of the prayers that we make? What situation does v31–32 treat? For what outcome does Solomon ask (v32)? What situation does v33a describe? With what response from the people (v33b)? And what desired response from God (v34)? What does v34b imply would have happened? What situation does v35 describe? For what three responses does v36 ask? What situation does v37 ask about? But what is the real plague (v38)? For what does he ask, when they come to recognize this (v39)? For what ultimate goal/outcome (v40)? About whom does v41 address God? Why would this foreigner come to Israel (v41–42)? What does he do in v42? What does v43 ask for him? Why? About what situation does v44 ask? For what does he ask (v45)? To what situation does v46 return (cf. v33–34)? What would they do in captivity (v47)? With what attitude and actions (v48)? For what does he ask (v49–50, v52)? Why (v51, 53)?

Yahweh is incomparable (v23a) in keeping His covenant and steadfast-love (v23b). Man's idol gods end up reflecting man. But God's faithfulness and glory have been demonstrated just in the construction of the temple. His faithfulness is shown in the fact of the structure's existence; God had promised David this would happen (v24), and it has. God's glory is shown in the intricacy of the structure's details, hinting at Eden and the heavens with an other-worldliness that we have seen over the last two chapters.

But God's incomparable glory presents a problem (v27). Heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Him. The temple, of course, cannot contain Him. But the answer to the question is, “Yes! God will indeed dwell on the earth.” To be sure, He will make His presence known in the temple. But there would come a day when a human body would be the actual temple (cf. Jn 2:19–20). Solomon's question seems like a rhetorical question with an implied answer of “no,” but one of the great wonders of the gospel is Whose blood it is flowed through those veins and was poured out at the cross (cf. Ac 20:28). In Jesus, the fullness of the Godhead has dwelt bodily (cf. Col 1:15–20, 2:9). In Him, God dwells with us in a way that has a final and complete fulfillment yet to come (cf. Mat 1:23; Rev 21:3).

And God's faithfulness presents a problem. He is faithful to do what He says! So far, so good, when we're talking about 2Samuel 7 and the promises concerning David's seed, David's [S!]eed, and the building of the temple. v26 basically pleads for Christ to come. When we see God's past and present faithfulness, we are strengthened to believe God's future faithfulness.

But He's also faithful to Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28. That means the covenant curses aren't the vain threats of a parent who never follows through. They're so certain to happen that much of Solomon's prayer is pleading with God forgiveness *after they have been carried out*. Historically, this is interesting because by the time Judah is fully exiled, the structure before which the king is praying will be gone.

But the presence of God will still be known in His hearing prayer. And the presence of God will still be known in His forgiving the penitent.

Whatever other good we are asking God for, we are asking Him for forgiveness. Considering the wilderness period, the period of the judges, and what is to come in the divided kingdom period, Israel is in a season of comparative faithfulness. But vv30, 32, 34, 36, 39, 50 all ask for forgiveness. Why? Because the Lord is faithful to Himself, and our sin means that His righteousness and holiness must be vindicated, and we must be punished.

We are not entitled to any good thing. So, when we ask for any good thing, we are asking first and foremost for forgiveness. This is why we ask always in Jesus's Name. It is in Him alone that we have forgiveness from God. This is another way in which the temple, and the sacrifices which were offered there, looked forward to Christ. Solomon's prayer asks God to have regard for His promises, and His determination to make a safe way for man to come into His presence, and His provision of sacrifices through which to draw near.

Solomon's prayer, ultimately, asks God to have regard for Christ and His sacrifice to come. And all of our praying must be built upon asking God to have regard for Christ and His sacrifice already made, once-for-all.

Forgiveness is granted with its corresponding benefits: instruction and repentance. We need to note at least one more thing before we leave this passage. There are two other things that we need from God, along with forgiveness and as a result of forgiveness. We need Him to bring us to repentance. Lev 26:40–45 promised that God would use the exile to bring about 1Ki 8:47–48. Even in v36 we see this: that when God is forgiving His people's sin, He uses their affliction to “teach them the good way in which they should walk.

So, as we ask God for forgiveness along with whatever other good thing, let us also be asking that He would make us to walk in righteousness and holiness. For, this is what forgiven people do.

What have you been asking God for in prayer? What must you necessarily be asking for as well? What hope do you have that these prayers will be answered? What will your life look like as they are?

Sample prayer: Lord, thank You for coming and dwelling among us in Christ, so that we may know that through Him we have the forgiveness of our sins and the hearing of our prayers. Forgive us for being so slow to hate our sin or to appreciate what You have done about it in Christ, and grant that we would rejoice in Him and walk with You, we ask in His Name, AMEN!!!

Suggested songs: ARP122 “I Was Filled with Joy and Gladness” or TPH164 “God Himself Is with Us”

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(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording referenced above)

First Kings 8. 22 through 53. Let's remember that. These are good words and that the way we hear them want to be and lifting us hearts as worship. Then Solomon stood before the altar of Yahweh in the presence of all the assembly of Israel and spread out his hands towards heaven and he said, he always got of Israel.

There's no God in heaven above or on earth below like you who keep your covenant and mercy with your servants who walk before you with all their hearts, You have kept what you promised your servant. David. My father, you have both spoken with your mouth and fulfilled it with your hand as it is this day.

Therefore y'all hey god of Israel Now. Keep what? You promised your servant David. My father saying You shall not fail to have a man, sit before me on the throne of Israel. Only if your son's take heed to their way that they walk before me as you have walked before me.

And now I pray. O God of Israel. Let your word come true. Which you have spoken to your servant, David? My father, But will God indeed. Dwell on the earth, Behold. Heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot continue, how much less this temple? Which I have built yet. Regard the prayer of your servant and his supplication.

Oh, y'all am I God? And listen to the cry and the prayer, which you're servant is praying before you today that your eyes may be open toward this temple night and day toward the place of which you said, my name shall be there that you may hear the prayer with your servant makes toward this place.

And may you hear the supplication of your servant and of your people Israel, when they pray toward this place here in heaven, your dwelling place. And when you hear forgive when anyone sins against his neighbor and his forced to take an oath and comes, and takes an oath before your altar and his in this temple, Then here in heaven and act and judge your servants.

Condemning the wicked, bringing his way on his 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. And when they turn back to you and confess your name and pray and makes application to you in this temple, Then here in heaven and forgive the sin of your people Israel, and bring them back to the land, which you gave to their fathers on the heavens, are shut up.

And there is no rain because they have sinned against you. When they pray toward this place and confess your name and turn from their sin because you afflict them, Then here in heaven and forgive the sin of your servants. Your people Israel that you may teach them the good way in which they should walk and send rain on your land, which you have given to your people as an inheritance.

When there is a famine in the land pestilence or blight mildew locusts grasshoppers. When they're enemy, besieges them in the land of their cities, whatever, plague, or whatever sickness there is whatever prayer, whatever supplication is made by anyone, or by all your people Israel. When each one knows the plague of his own heart and spreads out his hands toward this temple, Then here in heaven, you're dwelling place, and forgive and act and give to everyone, according to all his ways whose heart, you know for you alone?

No. The hearts of all the sons of men that they may fear, you all the days that they live and the land, which you gave to our fathers, Moreover concerning a foreigner who has not of your people Israel, but has come from a far country for your namesake for they will hear of your great name and your strong hand and your outstretched arm when he comes and prays toward this temple Here in heaven.

You're dwelling place and do according to all for which the Foreigner calls to you, that all the peoples of the earth, may know your name and fear you as do your people Israel and that they may know that this temple which I have built is called by your name when your people go out to battle against their enemy.

Wherever you send them. And when they pray to Yahweh toward the city, which you have chosen and the temple, which I have built for your name, then here in heaven, their prayer, and their supplication and maintain their cause, and when they sin against you, for there is no one who does not sin, and you become angry with them and deliver them to the enemy.

And they take them captive to the land of the enemy far or near. Yeah. When they come to themselves in the land, where they carried, where they were carried captive and repent, and makes application to you in the land of those who took them. Captives saying We have sinned and done wrong and committed wickedness And when they return to you, with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies, who led them away, captive and prayed to you toward their land, which you gave to their fathers, the city, which you have chosen in the temple, which I have built for your name.

Then here in heaven, your dwelling place their prayer, and their supplication and maintain their cause

and forgive your people who have sinned against you and all their transgressions, which they have transgressed against you and granted them compassion. Before those who took them captive that they may have compassion on them for.

They are your people and your inheritance whom you brought out of Egypt out of the Iron. Furnace, that your eyes may be open to the supplication of your servant and the supplication of your people Israel to listen to them, whenever they call to you, for you separated them from among all the peoples of the earth.

To be your inheritance as you spoke by your servant Moses. When you brought our fathers out of Egypt. Oh Lord. Yahweh So far, the reading of God's inspired and inherent work.

Well as Solomon prays at the dedication of the temple, he titles his prayer. So to speak and verse 23. And he says, y'all a god of Israel. There is no God in heaven above or on earth below like you The Lord is incomparable. Of course. There's no God at all in heaven, or on earth, besides the Lord.

But people have come up with Gods and they have trusted in things as though they were God and lived for things as though they were God and delighted in things as though they were God. But none of these things that they make or these things that they trust or these things that they live for these things that they delight and none of these things that you might live for, or delight in can be like the true and living God Heaven in the highest heaven, cannot contain him.

But the the point upon which Solomon makes this point in verse 23, is that he keeps present, he keeps beret. And has it that he keeps covenant and steadfast love. None of the idle gods of the nations can keep covenant with them and love them. Even our false gods about which we have romantic ideas of loving us are weird little slaves that give us whatever we want instead of having infinitely more wisdom than we do to give us, whatever is good and they're giving us whatever we want is just a figment of our imagination.

When a young man and young woman start to idolize one another in this way and want to feel the kind of love that you can only get from God from one another. And they have this imagination of what they are, like to one another and they even try to play the part of someone who loves the other, that way to one another and they fall in hormones with one another.

And they sometimes are able to maintain it all the way to a wedding ceremony and maybe for a little while after that wedding ceremony. But eventually the fact that neither of them is God becomes apparent, and everything comes crashing down, and they say, I want to leave him. I want to leave her.

We've fallen out of love. Oh yes, You've fallen out of idolatry but they're even worse things, right? Money or social standing, or economic class. Those things can't love you back at all. You can certainly love them and pour out your life for them, but they can't love you back.

There is no one, like God who keeps covenant, who makes promises that are from all, you know, infinite wisdom about what is best and carried out in Almighty power to do whatever his wisdom. Plans for you. There's no one like God who keeps covenant to binds himself and his faithful to do it.

Who keeps covenant with us in Jesus because he binds us to do things and covenant, too, but we can't. But Jesus has in our behalf and he gives us his spirit to make us to be like him. So at the last forever and ever by his grace, we will be faithful to.

Like He is, There is no one, like God who keeps covenant, there is no one like God who keeps mercy steadfast love unfortable. Love the love. That comes from the everlasting. Covenant of God. A love that cannot have an end because it did not have a beginning that is before the foundations of the world in Jesus Christ.

That is the love with, which He loves you. Now, as you hear His word, which is the reason you're hearing His word, the love with, which you will love you all day today. So that every time you realize that you have not been remembering His goodness to you and every time that you realize that you have not been obeying His commands and doing whatever it was that you were doing was service unto him and receiving whatever, good thing he'd given to you as a gift from him, you'll find that that has not separated you from his love.

Why? Because that love is in Christ Jesus. And what has Christ Jesus done. He's atoned for your sin. There is no one like this God. Now God's incomparability and otherworldliness does present problems to us. His glory presents a problem for us. His faithfulness presents a problem for us and that's why whatever other good we ask him for.

We must be asking him for forgiveness and when he when he forgives us, he forgives us with strings attached, not strings that we have to satisfy but strings, that come after the forgiveness, and are tied to the other things that he does in forgiven people. So you cannot come to the God who forgives completely freely in Jesus Christ in the Bible and say I'd like forgiveness but not repentance.

I'd like to forgiveness but not instruction. I'd like forgiveness but not to take up my cross daily and follow you because then it wouldn't be forgiveness because we deserve. Well, Jesus on our behalf deserves that we would repent that we would be instructed that we would lose our life to gain him.

And gaining him, that we would gain our life and all things with him. You can't get part of what Jesus earns. If you have Jesus, you have to get it all. So those four things briefly God's glory presents a problem. The problem is that he can't dwell on earth and we need an asterisk there and some of you have already thought of what that is.

But verse 27 is a rhetorical question will God indeed dwell on the earth and it's a rhetorical question with an implied. Answer of no Solomon's and God can't dwell on the earth. God can't dwell in this temple, but God did dwell on the earth, didn't he? How did that happen?

Who is God? Who dwelt on the earth? It's Jesus and whom the apostle says, God was pleased that all the fullness would dwell Colossians chapter 2 and even Colossians chapter 1 more explicitly in him. All the fullness of the Godhead dwelt bodily, so that Jesus looking at Herod's temple said.

Tear this temple down, and I will rebuild it in three days and everyone else looking at Herod's temple said, Are you insane? It took 42 years to build this temple, but Jesus might have been standing in front of Herod's temple, but he meant the temple of his own body In Jesus.

The fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily because he is a full man. He has a full human nature just like his. Yes. And cannot ever lose, not even for the incarnation. Could he lose his complete divine nature? But he is one divine person. Not two different persons. And so the fullness of the Godhead selectic, The fullness of the Godhead has dwelt bodily in the Lord.

Jesus Christ. And the irony in this chapter? Is that the actual answer? Yes. To Solomon's. Question in verse 27, is the answer. Yes, to the promise that he asked God to keep in the immediate preceeding verse because he says therefore you know, he says you have kept what you promised this day verse 24, which means the temple has been built and then he says therefore, you always God of Israel now.

Keep what? You promised your servant David. My father saying you shall not fail to have a man sit before me on the throne of Israel. And we don't know whether the Spirit had revealed to Solomon. What times and glory that he meant. Well what time he meant by the the glorious and the suffering that he was prophesying here like we hear from first Peter chapter 1, the spirit of Christ prophesying in him but perhaps Solomon, just thought there was gonna be, you know, a son from the line of David and another and another and another and another and another and another, and then that would be an unbroken continual chain.

But the throne or the throne that he was spraying about wood come down. Wouldn't it at the exile? But there's one who had sit on the throne forever. Who would come from David? Who would come from Solomon?

Well comes from a son named Nathan according to one of his that's anyway he it's kept in Jesus. So when he says and now I pray O God of Israel. Let your word come true which you have spoken to your servant David my father, he might not even know it but he's praying that just as the temple has now been built according to God's promise.

So also Jesus would come according to God's promise and then the very next words are about, will God indeed dwell on earth, why? Yes, he will. Here is one of the ways that Jesus is coming. Answers our problem Gods and comparable. Glory can't be known apart from Jesus Christ.

God's faithfulness also presents a problem because he keeps his word and we're sinners, right? So, Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28. And we won't take the time now to go and look at all of the curses that were threatened, but a bunch of the things that Solomon prays about if this happens and they pray towards your temple.

Forgive are exactly the things that God said would happen and Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28. So God can be counted on to keep his word but the one thing that man can be counted on is to sin verse. 46. When they sin against you, for there is no one who does not sin, right?

So Solomon reads, Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28. And he says, well, the exiles inevitable, man, sins. And God says, this is what happens. This is what you'll do when we sin and sinning is the only thing we can be counted on to do, but God can absolutely be counted upon to keep his word.

You know, God's faithfulness to keep His promises isn't all happy news for sinners just like Hebrews, 12 isn't happy news, although it's good news that God disciplines all truths children of His. So that if you're a true child of his, you can expect him to bring hardship into your life, for your good for the production of holiness.

And not just when you have a particular unrepented sin that he needs to bring to your attention. But

even just for producing character and perseverance and hope which doesn't disappoint because glory is guaranteed. God's faithfulness presents a problem, but of course the solution is God's faithfulness to the promise of Christ to return.

For our sin, that Jesus would be our priest and our sacrifice and our temple. So he would be the one in whom God receives our atonement. He would be the one who offers the atonement to God, and He would be the atonement that he offers. So God said, Jesus is the fulfillment of the temple and the fulfillment of the priests who offer the sacrifices and the, and, and mediate go between us and God on the basis of the blood of the sacrifices, and Jesus is the fulfillment of the sacrifices, and his blood is that upon which he mediates That too.

If you're paying careful attention to the passage, You could see even here because you can imagine that as the, as the Israelites first in the northern kingdom, but especially when Judah was exiled in the southern kingdom, what happened with that exile? What did the Babylonians do to this temple?

They're destroyed it. And so the people of Judah and in Babylon would be, you know, trying to figure out what they're supposed to pray towards because they remember what Solomon prayed in first Kings 8 and they say well we're supposed to pray towards the temple so that God will hear us from heaven and give us compassion and the eyes of those who took us captive so that we may return just like the throne.

That would be forever. Could not be the throne that Solomon would sit on. Yeah. After he left the temple precinct and offered this prayer that temple, that is forever. Could not be the structure that Solomon built, which would not even last, as long as the tabernacle had for 400 years.

So ironic isn't it? The skin and wood structure that God gave them at Sinai. Lasted longer than these magnificent. This magnificent stone and bronze structure that God gave Solomon to build. But of course how small and insignificant they are by comparison to that, which is the true temple of God for us, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, because God is faithful to his own word, whatever. Other good we ask for, we must ask him for forgiveness even if we're asking him that that we would be like a light to the nations that they would see us in the church and that by what the Lord Jesus does for us and does in us, they would see what a great God and Savior.

He is and that God would use that to draw them to Christ so that they would hear the gospel of Christ proclaimed and want to become like him. You know, that was the plan for Israel. That's something that Solomon just in our chapter today. Prayed would happen as a result of this temple.

Did that happen? Would we actually want the people of the earth to come and fear God as do His people, Israel and verse 43, who reads from this point in first Kings to the end of the Old Testament and says, ooh, we would love for the nations to fear God like they did, we would love for the nations to do as they did.

And yet, God has also His true Israel, which is first and foremost Jesus Christ, and the church that is in him, that's the big comparison in the book of Isaiah. You know, the first two-thirds of which are so is how Israel has failed to be. What Solomon here is praying.

They would be so that the nations would come to God by them. But then he starts talking about his true servant the Lord Jesus, who would call me, doesn't use the name Jesus, but it's Jesus. In the last third of the book of Isaiah Jesus is the one who is so good, that the nations would be drawn to him.

The way Israel was supposed to have been and the church that is in Jesus and being conformed to Jesus will be more and more like that. But even when we pray for that, the first thing we need is forgiveness. Every time you ask God for everything, for anything that is good, you're asking the opposite of what you deserve, don't you?

So when we come and we ask God for something good, One of the things we're asking, even if we don't name it, is that we would be forgiven for our sins, and that he would deal with us instead according to Jesus's righteousness. And so, you know, here working on your math later and you just don't get anything Lord, help me to get it.

You might not say Lord forgive my sins because I don't deserve to get it, but Jesus deserves all good things for me. And so for Jesus' sake, help me to get it, You might just pray. Lord help me to get it. But you are aren't you. Implicitly asking God for forgiveness, Lord.

Help me survive these children today. I'm asking for forgiveness. Lord help me with my frustration over how poorly. It feels like my work is going today. I'm asking for forgiveness because actually don't deserve to be made. Less frustrated to be given, patience. Patience is a fruit of the spirit.

It's a Jesus earned. Jesus shaped spirit produced thing. Every good thing we ask for. We ask for forgiveness and so Solomon's prayer as he's building the temple is full of requests for forgiveness.

But also, for every good thing including the missionary request we were thinking about earlier including requests that, when they go out to battle, God wouldn't maintain their cause first kings, eight 44, and 45 and so forth. And the last thing is that God would bring us not just give us, not just forgiveness but also repentance.

In verse 36 here in heaven, forgive the sins of your servants, your people that you may teach them the good way in which they should walk. So the we need forgiveness in order that we would be taught the good way to walk. That's part of the good that we want from God.

You can't say I only want help with my math. God only want help with my parenting. God Only want help doing my my work. Contentedly. Got No, The good that we ask him for is also that he would teach us the good way that we should walk verse 36.

That he would bring us to the wholeheartedness towards him verse. 47 verse 48, so that when we confess our sin and We won't take the extra time to look at the second half of verse 47. And what confession of sin looks like. And it's Yeah, I said we wouldn't take the time, so we won't but then verse 48 as well and they return to you, with all their heart, and all their soul.

That's part of the goodness that we're asking from God, that he would give us not just forgiveness for what we have done, but that he would make us to walk in his good ways and turn us back to Him with all our heart. And with all our soul, that's what's happening.

When you repent of a bad attitude in school or the way you just talked to your sibling or when you were doing the thing that, you know, mom doesn't like, and this time, she didn't even have to catch you doing it, you just realized it and you shrink back and you aren't going to do it.

You realize that the biggest problem was just now, I was not loving God with all my heart and all my soul, all of our little repentings, need to be a turning back to a whole heartedness towards him. So that the Christian life is something that is very active and very full-hearted and he gives us passages like this to remind us to live like that.

Let's ask him to bless this portion of his word to us. Father, there was a lot here. We thank you for the extent to which you gave us the ability to persist in listening and desiring from you that you would work in us in this way. We ask that your spirit would grant to us, not to lose the good benefit of it.

That we would not be like those who who have little root and the first scorching sun or wind would dry it up and it would be like, we never worshiped you at all today. So Grant that you would grant you would help us with the with the habit of mind of meditation and be thinking upon your word that some of the things that we heard even about moments of realizing sin.

And returning to fullheartedness towards you of how you have come near in Christ to sits on the throne and to his atone for us. Grant that these things would turn over be being turned over in our mind throughout the day so that we might worship you with the life and not only with the moment and the time of having worshiped you together.

Thank you, forgiving us. Such fellowship as a family and these times where we have this this intimacy and best fellowship of worshiping you together, but we confess Lord. That there have been times recently when we didn't have that fellowship and that intimacy when it came to the other parts of our life together.

And so we pray that you would help us by taking the worship aspect and conditioning, the minds and hearts with which we do the rest that we might have a good family fellowship of walking together, not only with you but with one another with you today, we offer these first through Jesus who has earned it into his worthy of it.

Amen.