

October 1, 2023

“A Place We Dedicate to God” 2 Chronicles 6 & 7

Prel Rmks

Such a beautiful place

So many who have worked so hard

Blessing for years to come

Screens – outline & extra verses – except for lengthy passages – be patient

Next generation ...

INTRO

Now this morning I want us to focus on Solomon’s prayer of dedication of the temple. The heart of that prayer is found in 6:20-21. Here’s what he asked from God:

2 Chronicles 6:20-21 that Your eyes may be open toward this temple day and night, toward the place where *You* said *You would* put Your name, that You may hear the prayer which Your servant makes toward this place. **(21)** And may You hear the supplications of Your servant and of Your people Israel, when they pray toward this place. Hear from heaven Your dwelling place, and when You hear, forgive.

Solomon expressed his desire to God for the temple to be a special place and God answered:

2 Chronicles 7:15-16 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.

Background

David, Solomon’s father had wanted to build the temple

God told him that he would not be allowed to build it because he had been a man of war and had shed much blood.

But God told him that his son, Solomon, would be the one to build it.

The temple was to be permanent place for the ark of the covenant – which symbolized the presence and glory of God.

Until the temple was built, there was no such permanent place where the people would meet with God. There was the tabernacle which was just a large tent that could be set up and taken down and moved.

Exodus 40:2 "On the first day of the first month you shall set up **the tabernacle of the tent of meeting**.

God gave the assignment of building a permanent place of meeting to Solomon.

Solomon knew and understood, of course, that you can't build a house for God to dwell in, because God is omni-present.

2 Chronicles 2:6 But who is able to build Him a temple, since heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Him? Who *am* I then, that I should build Him a temple, except to burn sacrifice before Him?

2 Chronicles 6:18 "But will God indeed dwell with men on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You. How much less this temple which I have built!

But Solomon, nonetheless, took on the task of building the temple and he put his whole heart into it.

150,000 men & 3,600 supervisors – 7 years

It was glorious place – fabulous to behold

Overlaid with gold – reflection of the sun lit up the surrounding region: during the day you could have seen it from outer space

So after this tremendous edifice was completed ...

2 Chronicles 6:13 (for Solomon had made a bronze platform five cubits long, five cubits wide, and three cubits high, and had set it in the midst of the court; and he stood on it, knelt down on his knees before all the assembly of Israel, and spread out his hands toward heaven);

He began this prayer of dedicating the temple to God.

What does it mean to dedicate something to God?

It means that it is set apart and devoted wholly and earnestly for a sacred purpose – it is set apart for God.

We can see in Solomon's prayer words that fit our occasion here at GBC in GB this morning as we dedicate our renovated sanctuary.

What Solomon wanted for the temple – we should want for this place where we meet together with our God week by week.

We can see in the text before us 4 main ways that we dedicate this place, and set it apart to God.

I. We Dedicate This Place to the Glory of Our God

Solomon had a heart for the glory of God and wanted God to be glorified in the temple he built.

2 Chronicles 6:14 and he said: "LORD God of Israel, *there is* no God in heaven or on earth like You, who keep *Your* covenant and mercy with Your servants who walk before You with all their hearts.

2 Chronicles 2:5 And the temple which I build *will be* great, for our God is greater than all gods.

Psalms 26:8 LORD, I have loved the habitation of Your house, And the place where Your glory dwells.

We dedicate this place to the glory of our God

This is what we should want for this place where we meet together with our God. We should want the glory of God to fill our lives as we come together in worship – that there would be the manifest glory of the Spirit of God in this place – that God would indeed be glorified here.

This will require some things on our part:

1. Reverence ... we can't treat it as a profane place (ordinary)
2. Filled with the Spirit ourselves upon arrival – 1 Cor 6:19
3. As we meet we have our focus on Him!

So, first –

We dedicate this place to the glory of our God

II. We Dedicate This Place To The Word of Our God

Solomon Highlights for Us the Centrality of the Word of God

2 Chronicles 6:15-17 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. **(16)** Therefore, LORD 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 sons take heed to their way, that they walk in My law as you have walked before Me.' **(17)** And now, O LORD God of Israel, let Your word come true, which You have spoken to Your servant David.

Promises God made to David

2 Samuel 7:8-16 Now therefore, thus shall you say to My servant David, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts: "I took you from the sheepfold, from following the sheep, to be ruler over My people, over Israel. **(9)** And I have been with you wherever you have gone, and have cut off all your enemies from before you, and have made you a great name, like the name of the great men who *are* on the earth. **(10)** Moreover I will appoint a place for My people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own and move no more; nor shall the sons of wickedness oppress them anymore, as previously, **(11)** since the time that I commanded judges *to be* over My people Israel, and have caused you to rest from all your enemies. Also the LORD tells you that He will make you a house. **(12)** "When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. **(13)** He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. **(14)** I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men. **(15)** But My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took *it* from Saul, whom I removed from before you. **(16)** And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever." ' ' ' (There's a promise here of the coming of the Messiah ...)

Psalms 138:2 I will worship toward Your holy temple, And praise Your name For Your lovingkindness and Your truth; For You have magnified Your word above all Your name.

We Dedicate this place to the Word of Our God

This will be a place where the Word of God is our central focus!

There's a reason the pulpit is in the center of a Bible believing church ...

As we continue to be a Bible-centered church:

We will be a God-centered church ... We will be a Christ-centered church ... We will be a Gospel-centered church ...

We will be a Spirit-filled church

III. We Dedicate This Place to Pray to Our God

Solomon puts great emphasis in his prayer of dedication on prayer.

He knew that the temple would be and should be a place of prayer.

2 Chronicles 6:19-21 Yet regard the prayer of Your servant and his supplication, O LORD my God, and listen to the cry and the prayer which Your servant is praying before You: **(20)** that Your eyes may be open toward this temple day and night, toward the place where *You* said *You would* put Your name, that You may hear the prayer which Your servant makes toward this place. **(21)** And may You hear the supplications of Your servant and of Your people Israel, when they pray toward this place. Hear from heaven Your dwelling place, and when You hear, forgive.

Verses 22-38 Occasions for Prayer

1. If a man sins
2. If the nation suffers defeat in battle because of sin
3. If drought comes because of sin
4. If famine or other calamities come or enemies invade and besiege the land
5. If a time of war comes
6. If foreigners convert and begin to call on God
7. If they are taken into captivity

“Then hear from heaven Your dwelling place”

“forgive their sin”

“hear their plea”

“maintain their cause”

Solomon placed great emphasis in his prayer of dedication on the importance of prayer – the temple would be place dedicated to prayer!

Mark 11:17 Then He taught, saying to them, "Is it not written, 'MY HOUSE SHALL BE CALLED A HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR ALL NATIONS'? But you have made it a 'DEN OF THIEVES.'"

Isaiah 56:7 Even them [v. 6 – foreigners who join themselves to the LORD, to serve Him, And to love the name of the LORD, to be His servants] I will bring to My holy mountain, And make them joyful in **My house of prayer**. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices *Will be* accepted on My altar; For **My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations.**"

We dedicate this place –

**To The Glory of Our God
To the Word of Our God
To Pray to Our God**

IV. We Dedicate This Place to Rejoicing In Our God

This place should be a place of great joy and rejoicing as we meet together week by week to worship our God.

2 Chronicles 7:8-10 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.

Psalms 122:1 A Song of Ascents. Of David. I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go into the house of the LORD."

Psalms 100:1-2 A Psalm of Thanksgiving. Make a joyful shout to the LORD, all you lands! (2) Serve the LORD with gladness; Come before His presence with singing.

Nehemiah 8:9-10 And Nehemiah, who *was* the governor, Ezra the priest *and* scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, "This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn nor weep." For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the Law. (10) Then he said to them, "Go your way, eat the fat, drink the sweet, and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared; for *this* day is holy to our Lord. Do not sorrow, for the joy of the LORD is your strength."

{Several weeks ago – during the S.S. hour ...}

{Beyond Our Lifetime}