

## 1 Kings 8

(Roughly corresponds with portions of 2 Chronicles 5, 6 and 7)

V.1-3 ALL the leaders of Israel, AND ALL the men in Israel gather in Jerusalem with King Solomon to bring up the ark of the covenant to the new Temple.

There is unity in worship irrespective of past and current differences.

Israel had a complicated past of betrayal, side-ways political alignments, and treason. BUT, they were still under the hand and authority of the One True God.

Ref. Judges 20 Israel nearly wipes out the entire tribe of Benjamin in a civil war.

Ref. Absalom's rebellion 2 Sam 15

Ref. Sheba's rebellion 2 Sam 20

As David writes: [Psa 133:1 NKJV] 1 A Song of Ascents. Of David. Behold, how good and how pleasant [it is] For brethren to dwell together in unity!

We are no different, we will wound each other, hurt each other, align differently politically, some will even commit treason!

BUT, by this we learn of the One True God over all and we learn of grace.

In Jesus' group of disciples there was a tax collector for the Roman government (Matthew) who would have been considered a traitor by his own people. AND, there was a man named Simon, called the Zealot.

About the Zealots one source reads:

They were "a sect of Jews... [who] refused to pay tribute to the Romans, on the ground that this was a violation of the principle that God was the only king of Israel. They rebelled against the Romans, but were soon scattered, and became a lawless band of mere brigands. They were afterwards called Sicarii, from their use of the sica, i.e., the Roman dagger."

How did these two guys get along? Maybe they didn't, maybe they did? But they were under the Lordship of Jesus Christ - united by the bond of Christ.

Do you think they had different perspectives, biases, and agendas? Absolutely! But they were Christ's ultimately. He was the center and stepping off point for the rest of their life no matter what they had experienced. And we see their lives categorized by serving the Kingdom rather than their own cause.

There is no biblical account that either of these two men ever went back to their old way of life.

Rather they worked for the Kingdom's sake bound together by the Gospel and the Holy Spirit.

[Eph 4:3 NKJV] 3 endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

V.4-5 Innumerable sacrifice

Their focus wasn't on counting but worshipping

V. 6-9 The ark brought into the Temple with its contents

The tablets of the covenant - a reminder of the law. The agreement made between God and His people upon their delivery from slavery in Egypt. (Deut 10:2)

V. 10-13 A form of God's GLORY fills the interior space and resemble a cloud

The priests can no longer work because of it.

This is sometimes referred to as God's "Shekinah" glory. About this term: "The term enters Christian theology from its use in the Targums and rabbinic literature to describe the immanent presence in the world of the transcendent Deity. Although the word is not itself used in either Testament, it clearly originates in OT passages which describe God as dwelling among a people or in a particular place..." Elwell, W. A., & Beitzel, B. J. (1988). Shekinah. In Baker encyclopedia of the Bible (Vol. 2, p. 1943). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

Solomon's words - "a place for you to dwell forever." May be misplaced even as his intentions are admirable. He is rightfully excited about worshipping God!

[Isa 66:1 NKJV] 1 Thus says the LORD: "Heaven [is] My throne,  
And earth [is] My footstool...

Now God indwells His people - we are His Temple!

V.14-21 Solomon addresses the people - he preaches and teaches a bit about the history of what has taken place.

Preaching is important: "Today some critics suggest that we need a less rational, more artistic, less authoritarian and elitist, more communal and participatory way of communicating God's truth than this ancient method of one person standing up front and talking in a monologue to others. We need video clips, they say, and dialogues and liturgical dance. And yet there's something right and good about this ancient method that makes it appropriate, perhaps even especially appropriate, for our culture today. In our isolatingly subjectivist culture where everyone's just into their own thing, in this anti-authority culture where everyone

is confused and confusing, it is appropriate for us to gather together and listen to one who is ... giving [God's Word] to us as we contribute nothing to it other than hearing and heeding it. There is an important symbol in this process in and of itself.”  
(Dever, Nine Marks of a Healthy Church)

17-The temple is only a place for God's NAME. It is not meant to contain, or more likely, constrain His personhood.

19-The prophetic nature of Solomon's words - THE SON has established and is establishing God's Kingdom - building His church brick by brick.

21-Reminder of the covenant - the Law

V.22-26 Solomon's prayer - God the promise keeper. A reminder of God's promises and His unchanging nature of faithfulness to His word.

23-God keeps His covenant AND mercy with His servants - otherwise we would be wiped out, demolished.

The covenant demands perfect holiness, the result of failure is justice - punishment for violating God's holiness. BUT, God knowing that violations will come - that "there is no one who does not sin," extends His mercy. It is God's mercy that endures forever!

We sometimes err in positioning the nature of God in either/or terms when what we see in Scripture is very often a tension that exists in the things we want to pit against one another.

Either covenant or mercy. No - it's covenant, law AND mercy.

This is bound up in the very nature of who God is as demonstrated to Moses at the establishment of the covenant:

[Exo 34:5-7 NKJV] 5 Now the LORD descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. 6 And the LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, 7

"keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing [the guilty], visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation."

V.27 Solomon's humility - acknowledgment of God's omnipresence. "Walk humbly before your God!"

[Mic 6:6-8 NKJV] 6 With what shall I come before the LORD, [And] bow myself before the High God? Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, With calves a year old? 7 Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, Ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn [for] my transgression, The fruit of my body [for] the sin of my soul? 8 He has shown you, O man, what [is] good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God?

v.28-43 The God who hears

28-40 He hears His people, Israel

41-43 He hears the foreigner, the Gentile, who seeks the One True God

V.44-52 Prophetic regarding battle, captivity and repentance - the theme of HEARING continues.

God is not deaf to world events, catastrophe, and victory alike.  
Nor is He blind to sin.

He is the all knowing one. Moving all things for His glory.

V.53 - God's people are His inheritance, He has chosen them for a high purpose to demonstrate His power, nature, character throughout time to all creation.

This was once exclusively limited to the nation of Israel but now has been extended to every nation, tribe and tongue through Jesus Christ.

V.54-61 The conclusion of Solomon's personal prayer turns corporate.

54 - the posture of prayer points to the heart

59 - Solomon the intercessor points to Christ the intercessor

[1Ti 2:5-6 NKJV] 5 For [there is] one God and one Mediator between God and men, [the] Man Christ Jesus, 6 who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time,

60 - the point of it all - for all creation to know the one true God

61 - The fool's errand - we all say "amen," and yet our loyalty is suspect at best and we find ourselves in need of grace, mercy, and an intercessor.

The Spirit is willing but the flesh is weak!

[Rom 7:22-24 NKJV] 22 For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. 24 O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?

V.62-66 The worship continues - and it was a bloody mess!

“On remarkable occasions, the heathens sacrificed hecatombs (a hundred animals), and even chiliombs (a thousand animals), but the public sacrifices offered by Solomon on this occasion surpassed all the other oblations on record, without taking into account those presented by private individuals, which, doubtless, amounted to a large additional number. The large proportion of the sacrifices were peace offerings, which afforded the people an opportunity of festive enjoyment.” (JFB)

This points toward the cross. They would have been covered in blood!

65/66 - Reconcile the timeline - two periods of non-consecutive worship including the dedication of the Temple for seven days and the Feast of Tabernacles for another seven days.

The feast of tabernacles was one of the High Holy Days in Israel.

66 - This act of corporate worship brought joy and gladness of heart!

This is how it should be! As we are covered in the blood of Christ, and we remember that we too are pilgrims awaiting our final home, we celebrate all of the work that God has done!

Yes, there is a place for conviction and contrition and both of those things are met with the blood of Jesus, grace, and mercy -- cause to rejoice!

There are so many grumpy Christians walking around nowadays, counter to what God's word tells us about the renewed life!

If our joy in worship isn't real, palpable, if it is a drudgery to us then we are misrepresenting Jesus to the world around us.

[Jhn 15:11 NKJV] 11 "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and [that] your joy may be full.

[Psa 97:10-12 NKJV] 10 You who love the LORD, hate evil! He preserves the souls of His saints; He delivers them out of the hand of the wicked. 11 Light is sown for the righteous, And gladness for the upright in heart. 12 Rejoice in the LORD, you righteous, And give thanks at the remembrance of His holy name.

To be part of His kingdom is a miraculous blessing and what that brings forth joy. Part of the fruit of knowing Christ is joy, gladness, and praise!

Let our worship be joyful as we consider all of the works of God's hands from the Temple of old even into our age today! AND, He is still working raising a new temple unto Himself - His new covenant people! It's amazing!

[Psa 33:21-22 NKJV] 21 For our heart shall rejoice in Him, Because we have trusted in His holy name. 22 Let Your mercy, O LORD, be upon us, Just as we hope in You.

Problems with direct application

\*The purpose of Israel's worship documented and preserved by the Holy Spirit for future generations is to serve as a reminder of what has happened and to serve as a compass bearing for what is to come.

When we consider Israel's corporate worship, we must consider our own as well.

Israel was and remains God's covenant people - chosen by Him for a specific purpose.

The church, the corporeal assembly of believers in Christ, are also God's covenant people.

We do not replace Israel but are a demonstration of what God has done and what He is doing through Jesus Christ.

The idea of sacrifice bears on our worship too - the one peace offering for all time is Christ.

BUT, do we offer sacrifices still? Yes, as part of our very real daily worship we are offering up sacrifice to God continually.

[Rom 12:1-2 NKJV] 1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, [which is] your reasonable service. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what [is] that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

[Heb 13:15-16 NKJV] 15 Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of [our] lips, giving thanks to His name. 16 But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

Our very lives are offered up to God as holy sacrifices. This would have at once been unacceptable to God. He will not accept rancid, defiled sacrifice, spoiled meat - but since we are made holy by Christ we are able to offer ourselves to Him fully and continually.

The worship we have together is a living reminder of God's desire and will to live in covenant with His creation; for us to turn our attention towards Him in a focused intentional way acknowledging our need, His glory, and our temporary hold on this life (or its hold on us).

As we gather we look forward to the great assembly in eternity. This gathering is temporary, that one is forever.

This one reflects on the shadows and signposts pointing to eternity - that one is the destination where we shall see Him face to face.

And THAT is cause for joy. Rejoice in the Lord always!

[Phi 4:4-5 NKJV] 4 Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! 5 Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord [is] at hand.