“Solomon’s Prayer of Dedication”

2 Chronicles 6:12-21

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Introduction:

“Since the day that I brought forth my people out of the land of Egypt I chose no city among all the tribes of Israel to build an house in, that my name might be there; neither chose I any man to be a ruler over my people Israel: But I have chosen Jerusalem, that my name might be there; and have chosen David to be over my people Israel.”

2 Chronicles 6:5-6

At this point in their history, the work for the house of the Lord was finished and all the items set apart for use in this sacred assembly were brought in (2 Chronicles 5:1).
This place was of God’s choosing to bear His name and bring honor to Him through worship here. This place is where His glory would overtake, and His manifested presence would appear in the form of a thick cloud in the midst (2 Chronicles 5:14). This is the place where Solomon acknowledges God. This temple was for Him. It was His pleasure to allow it to be built. It was His pleasure to put His name there. It was His pleasure to choose the line of David to carry out such a mission and to be over the people.

Now, it is Solomon’s pleasure to honor God with the respect He deserves and to commit this place and the people wholly to Him in service, love, relationship, and dedication.

As Solomon prays this beautiful prayer he also unfolds and acknowledges some very wonderful truths for us to learn about our heavenly Father. May these truths help the modern-day believer to live a life of dedication to the Lord also.

2 Chronicles 6:12-13 “And he stood before the altar of the Lord in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands: For Solomon had made a brasen scaffold of five cubits long, and five cubits broad, and three cubits high, and had set it in the midst of the court: and upon it he stood, and kneeled down upon his knees before all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven.”
To build the foundation of this lesson, let’s go back a little further to see what is occurring that culminates into this magnificent prayer.

According to their religious/lunar calendars, the time period for this occasion was happening during the same time of the feast of tabernacles (booths) (see 1 Kings 8:2; 2 Chronicles 5:3; compare Leviticus 23:33-34). This was their festive celebration that took place in the seventh month on the fifteenth day of the month and lasted for seven days. This was a God-ordained feast occurring in the month called Tishrei or Tishri during Autumn, September or October, depending on the calendar cycle.

It was a feast that was not just about the offerings presented before the Lord (although Solomon and the people were sacrificing a great number of sheep and oxen that could not be numbered, see 2 Chronicles 5:6), but through demonstration, they reenacted the process of their living in temporary shelters as a memorial before God for keeping them through the journey of the wilderness wanderings. But now, God’s people had a permanent place of residence and with the building of this temple for God, so did His represented presence in the form of the Ark of the Covenant (see 2 Chronicles 5:2-10).

After placing the ark in its new home, a praise service broke out with instruments sounding out beautifully and voices raised
with praise and thanksgiving to the Lord, and the people saying, “For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever!” (2 Chronicles 5:13). As briefly noted in the introduction, this is when God filled the house with the cloud symbolizing His mighty presence and the priest could not minister there “for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of God,” (2 Chronicles 5:14).

So, it is during this great celebration that king Solomon rises to speak of not only the temple but the great God, who through history, had worked to bring this blessed and auspicious day to pass.

In that, he places himself in proper position to not only be seen by the people, but he puts himself in proper position in respect of God.

“He stood before the altar of the Lord in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands.” The “congregation” represented here is the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes, the chief fathers of the children of Israel, Levites, priests, men of Israel, singers, musicians, etc. (see 2 Chronicles 5:2-14).

It was a great assembly gathered there at this time of dedication and in order to be properly seen and heard by everyone in attendance, Solomon “made a brasen scaffold of five cubits long, and five cubits broad, and three cubits high, and had set it in the midst of the court.” This platform or
stage would allow even those out of the normal reach such an occasion demanded, to see and hear what was going on during these proceedings.

In this dedication, Solomon not only puts himself in proper position to be seen by the people, but he puts himself in proper position before God. Coming up upon the platform, in regard to Solomon, “upon it he stood, and kneeled down upon his knees before all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven.” This king humbled himself before God. He may have been the leader of Israel, but God was over all and as such, he fell to his knees and raised his hands in honor of the sovereign Lord.

Please Note: It would be wise for all of us to evaluate how we approach the presence of God and how we honor Him in our lives. It’s more than a body position, it’s a heart position that seeks to bring glory and honor to His holy name.

Now that he is in proper position, Solomon opens his mouth and begins to speak this beautiful prayer of dedication.

2 Chronicles 6:14 “And said, O Lord God of Israel, there is no God like thee in the heaven, nor in the earth; which keepest covenant, and shewest mercy unto thy servants, that walk before thee with all their hearts.”
Solomon is declaring God and all that He is before the people. In their worship and in their dedication, they had to recognize the God they served.

“There is no God like thee in the heaven, nor in the earth.” God has no equal! There is nobody that can be measured up against Him! There is no comparison, no rival, no match, and no substitutes – none that can be even remotely like God!

“Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: ‘I am the First and I am the Last; besides Me there is no God,” (Isaiah 44:6, NKJV).

God is incomprehensible. God is incomparable! “For who in the heaven can be compared unto the LORD? who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the LORD? God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him,” (Psalm 89:6-7).

In short, no matter where you search, you will NEVER find one like God (compare Deuteronomy 33:26; 1 Kings 8:23; 2 Samuel 7:22, just to name a few)! This was an important point for Solomon to reiterate in their relationship with God and with this dedication. In a time and place where people were constantly surrounded by the idea of idol worshipping, their own focus had to be on God and His true nature, not only during these times of celebration but throughout the course of their lives.
Idols are lies. False ideologies are lies. But, God is very real and there is only one of Him. As Creator of the heavens, if you look there you still won’t find another like Him. As He who called the earth into existence, if you search there you still won’t find another. He is, all by Himself, God alone!

He keeps “covenant.” The Sovereign of the universe binds Himself in an oath with His people (compare Leviticus 26:9). This is unheard of for gods of the day. The ideas based around them were uncaring, harsh, evil and demanding. But, the one and only true God looks out for His people and His searching heart is to be in a relationship with them. He has been in an intentional pursuit for them and adheres to His side of the covenant for “hearts” that are devoted to Him and “walk before” Him with their all.

He is a God of “mercy.” Again, this is a characteristic that could not be associated with false deities of the day. Mercy is His love compassionately acting on behalf of people to remain faithful to them even when they don’t deserve it, especially while in covenant relationship with them. “But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children’s children,” (Psalm 106:1).

While mankind can be on or off, hot or cold, God is always on for His people. There is never a time when God steps out of the borders of the promise of the covenant He made. There is
never a time when God is not faithful to do what He said He would do.

This is proven even more so in the following verses.

2 Chronicles 6:15-17 “Thou which hast kept with thy servant David my father that which thou hast promised him; and spakest with thy mouth, and hast fulfilled it with thine hand, as it is this day. Now therefore, O Lord God of Israel, keep with thy servant David my father that which thou hast promised him, saying, There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit upon the throne of Israel; yet so that thy children take heed to their way to walk in my law, as thou hast walked before me. Now then, O Lord God of Israel, let thy word be verified, which thou hast spoken unto thy servant David.”

Referring to even the recent history of his own father, King David, Solomon declares of the promises of God, He has “kept” them and has “fulfilled” them. God is not just a God of promise, but He is a God who keeps what He has promised. Many can make promises and whisper things that make us feel good but lack when it comes to the follow-through portion of it. But, not God. God does exactly what He says He will do.

Numbers 23:19 says, “God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?” God doesn’t lie! He makes good on His promises!
There were many of times and many of reasons where God could have taken back what He said He would do. But, thank God, despite the failings of human nature, He remains loyal to what He swore. Even to “David,” a man after God’s own heart, but a man whose history is littered with mistakes too.

“David” received promises from God and God guarded and watched over those promises and fulfilled each in its own time. One of those promises related directly to Solomon, his son, the main character of today’s lesson, who would be a king of rest and through him a house would be built for the name of the Lord (see 1 Chronicles 22:9-10; see also 2 Samuel 7:12-13), the reason for their celebration and gathering in today’s lesson. Although it was David’s dream and desire to build this house because of his history of war God prohibited it. Thus, he prepared and charged Solomon to build the temple for God (see 1 Chronicles 22:5-8).

Another part of that promise was, “There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit upon the throne of Israel.” In a previous lesson I wrote regarding this portion of the promise to David:

“David’s desire to build God a house was not wrong, but God was looking for a kingdom that would last forever. Solomon would come along and be the son that would undertake the building of the physical temple. But Christ would ultimately be the Son where God would “establish
the throne of his kingdom for ever,” through which the line of this rule would continue into eternity.

Acts 13:36 tells us, “For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption.” As did his son and his son’s sons, and so on. “But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption,” (Acts 13:37). Jesus is the one that was raised from the dead to rule forever on that “throne,” thereby establishing an eternal kingdom. Moving from His death and resurrection back to the time of His birth we see it was declared of Jesus, “He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end,” (Luke 1:32-33). From before the beginning to the end of His life Jesus was fulfilling the promise of this forever kingdom rule.

Through His covenant, God would maintain a special father-son relationship with the members of this family...

“But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul.” When Saul disobeyed God, God had to punish him... His dynasty would not go any further. As a part of God’s covenant with David, the same fate would not befall his sons who disobeyed Him. Oh, they would be punished.
God spoke to Solomon once because his heart had turned away from following God and said, “I will surely rend the kingdom from thee,” (1 Kings 11:11). But, because of this covenant, God also said, “Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom; but will give one tribe to thy son for David my servant’s sake,” (1 Kings 11:13).

Through it all and throughout Israel’s history, God’s “mercy” was still at work and the line of David would perpetuate, thereby establishing and fulfilling the promised that “thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.” God’s eternal covenant will remain in effect to bring forth what He promised to David.” (Word For Life Says/God’s Covenant with David)

So, in this prayer, Solomon is praising and declaring God’s faithful mercies through it all and he is praying that God would continue to “keep with thy servant David my father that which thou hast promised him.”

2 Chronicles 6:18 “But will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth? behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house which I have built!”

As if in a moment of contemplation or a dawning of thought hit him, Solomon realized the vastness of God compared to any
and everything else. As grand as this edifice was and as ornately decorated it was, it was still considered insignificant in Solomon’s sight when coming to the idea of God dwelling with men on earth.

God is uncontainable. God is infinite. Anywhere we seek to go, He is there (compare Psalms 139:7-12). He cannot be bound by time and space let alone the walls of this building. Solomon knew that even, “the heaven and the heaven of heaven cannot contain thee,” which God created Himself. How much more “this house which I have built!”

In Isaiah 66:1 God said, “The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest?” The psalmist once said of God, “Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters: who maketh the clouds his chariot: who walketh upon the wings of the wind,” (Psalm 104:3).

What a mighty God this is who constructed all and is Author of all, but at His choosing, He brings Himself close to where His people are and wants to “dwell” there in the midst of them. How awesome is that?!

2 Chronicles 19-21 “Have respect therefore to the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication, O Lord my God, to hearken unto the cry and the prayer which thy servant prayeth before thee: That thine eyes may be open upon this
house day and night, upon the place whereof thou hast said that thou wouldest put thy name there; to hearken unto the prayer which thy servant prayeth toward this place. Hearken therefore unto the supplications of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, which they shall make toward this place: hear thou from thy dwelling place, even from heaven; and when thou hearest, forgive.”

So, Solomon continues to pray and entreats God to “hearken unto the cry and the prayer which thy servant prayeth before thee.” And, not only hear but that His “eyes may be open upon this house day and night” and that He would “forgive” those who prayed toward this place where His name dwells (compare Nehemiah 1:5-6).

The Bible tells us, “The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry,” (Psalm 34:15). But, even in the frailty of their human flesh when they sin, Solomon’s desire was for God to still hear them from His “dwelling place” when they prayed, and to “forgive.”

Isaiah tells us of God’s forgiving character, “I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins,” (Isaiah 43:25). This was Solomon’s prayer for those who repent and seek God. He asked that God would be open to His people and forgive (see also Micah 7:18).
How many through the course of time have prayed according to Solomon’s prayer? How many have received the intervention of pardon from God for their wrongs committed? None could ever count. But, we must never forget that we, too, rely on God’s pardon for the repentant heart that seeks forgiveness. This can be found today in Jesus Christ our Savior.

**Conclusion:**

As Solomon dedicated this temple and people before God, may we be just as dedicated in our love, service, and relationship toward Him as well.