

# The People Praise the Lord

**Key Verse:** *“When all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the LORD upon the house, they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped, and praised the LORD, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever.”*  
—II Chronicles 7:3

**Selected Scripture:**  
*II Chronicles 7:1-9*

The foregoing is one of several Scriptural references reflecting the manifestation of divine acceptance of a burnt offering when the Jews displayed reverence for the Heavenly Father. For example, on one occasion, Israel had again fallen into idol worship. The prophets of Baal called upon their false god to consume a sacrifice at Mount Carmel, but despite their pleadings throughout

## **AT THE CONCLUSION OF**

Solomon’s prayer, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and sacrifices offered in connection with the Temple dedication ceremony. This manifested divine approval, and was so magnificent a sight that the priests could not yet enter therein because “the glory of the LORD” filled the Temple.—II Chron. 7:1,2

Our Key Verse illustrates the effect of this vivid portrayal of the divine presence among Israel. All the people responded with reverence and awe, bowing with their faces to the ground in worship and glory to God for his boundless goodness and mercy.

the day, this could not be accomplished. In the evening, Elijah drenched an altar with several barrels of water, upon which a bullock was laid. When he called upon the Lord, fire consumed the burnt sacrifice as well as the wood, stones, dust and even the water in the trench. The people then fell on their faces and worshiped Israel's true God.—I Kings 18:17-39

As appropriate as the praise and worship proved to be in connection with the dedication of Solomon's Temple, the use of thank offerings through blood sacrifices by the king and the people was also an important aspect of demonstrating Israel's special relationship with God. Moreover, Solomon's immense gratitude for this occasion was reflected by his offering of 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep. This staggering number seems especially difficult to visualize. The priests were actively involved in administering these sacrifices, and it was necessary for Solomon to consecrate additional space in the court surrounding the Temple because the altar that was used initially could not accommodate all the offerings. Throughout this joyous occasion the Levites also participated by using their musical instruments.—II Chron. 7:4-7

The timing of this celebration occurred when the people from all parts of Israel traveled to Jerusalem to celebrate a special feast. For seven days they lived in booths as a reminder of how God delivered them from Egyptian bondage, and was with them as they wandered in the desert for forty years and lived in tents.—Lev. 23:34-43

Although the week-long feast was an annual requirement, in this special case the Israelites had gathered together to also witness the dedication of the Temple. The activities ended with an extra day of holy convocation. (Lev. 23:36; Num. 29:35) After this Solomon decreed the people should return to their homes. Having completed the dedication of the Temple, Solomon built his palace, and his fame became renown during a time of Israel's glory.—I Kings 7:1; II Chron. 7:8-11 ■