

Solomon's Prayer of Dedication

Key Verse: "Listen to the supplication of Your servant and of Your people Israel, when they pray toward this place; hear in heaven Your dwelling place; hear and forgive."—I Kings 8:30, New American Standard Bible

Selected Scripture: I Kings 8:22-39, 52, 53

OUR KEY VERSE SETS THE

tone of Solomon's prayer. Its overarching theme is this: when we sin and repent God is always at the ready to forgive, deliver from iniquity, and bless us. Solomon's prayer is prophetic of the experiences that the Israelites would endure in the centuries to follow this great event. Let us consider the sentiments of this prayer and understand that it is a template for the experiences coming to God's people in succeeding generations.

"If a man sins against his neighbor and is made to take an oath, and he comes and takes an

oath before Your altar in this house, then hear in heaven and act and judge Your servants, condemning the wicked by bringing his way on his own 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, if they turn to You again and confess Your name and pray and make supplication to You in this house, then hear in heaven, and forgive the sin of Your people Israel, and bring them back

to the land which You gave to their fathers.”—vss. 31-34, *NASB*

Solomon’s prayer continues, “When the heavens are shut up and there is no rain, because they have sinned against You, and they pray toward this place and confess Your name and turn from their sin when You afflict them, then hear in heaven and forgive the sin of Your servants and of Your people Israel, indeed, teach them the good way in which they should walk. And send rain on Your land, which You have given Your people for an inheritance. If there is famine in the land, if there is pestilence, ... whatever plague, whatever sickness there is, whatever prayer or supplication is made by any man or by all Your people Israel, each knowing the affliction of his own heart, and spreading his hands toward this house; then hear in heaven Your dwelling place, and forgive and act and render to each according to all his ways, whose heart You know, for You alone know the hearts of all the sons of men.”—vss. 35-39, *NASB*

Even in his rebukes God shows mercy and patience toward those in whom he longs to see acts of repentance. “The LORD longs to be gracious to you, And therefore He waits on high to have compassion on you. For the LORD is a God of justice; How blessed are all those who long for Him. O people in Zion, inhabitant in Jerusalem, you will weep no longer. He will surely be gracious to you at the sound of your cry; when He hears it, He will answer you.” (Isa. 30:18,19, *NASB*) The psalmist similarly declares the logic and beauty of God’s justice and mercy working together. “If You, LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with You, That You may be feared [reverenced].”—Ps. 130:3,4, *NASB*

Truly, “sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation.” (II Cor. 7:10, *NASB*) May we take to heart the theme of Solomon’s dedicatory prayer—that repentance, in a Godly manner, leads to salvation. ■