



2 Chronicles 7-9

Tape #7132
II Chronicles 7-9
By Chuck Smith

Let's turn now in I Chronicles, chapter seven, II Chronicles, chapter seven. Ha, ha! You caught me again! The scene is the dedication of this temple that Solomon had built. The fulfillment of his father's dream. It is a temple that is magnificent beyond our imagination. Glittering with gold, overlaid with gold. Golden vessels, golden doors. Gold with jewels implanted in them.

Solomon had built a little platform for this occasion of dedication, in order that he might be elevated a little bit so that he could talk to the thousands of people, who had assembled for this glorious occasion. He stood on this platform, and he addressed the people concerning the faithfulness of God, as they saw the word of God, before their eyes fulfilled in the magnificent temple that was there. For God had promised to David his father, that He would give him a son that would build Him a temple. And, here is the fulfillment of God's promise.

Then Solomon knelt on this little platform, lifted his hands towards heaven, and he prayed unto God, asking God to keep His eyes upon this place. To let this be the place where God's people might meet with God. A place where when they came to pray, God would hear their prayers.

Then he foresaw certain problems that might exist in the future, if the people should turn their backs on the Lord. If they turned away from the Lord, and the Lord began to bring judgements, "When they turn their face and begin to pray, then hear thou from thy throne in heaven, and answer their prayers". He began to see these various things that could have happened. The famines that would come, as a result of God's judgement. Or even, captivity in the enemies lands. "If they be carried away captive, and in that place of captivity, they turn their faces toward this place, and cry unto you, then hear thou from thy dwelling place in heaven, and answer their prayers." So, he foresaw the possible calamities that might come upon the nation in the future, but always saying, "Lord if your people will turn and call upon you, then hear from heaven, answer their prayers".

So this was the prayer of Solomon, as the temple was dedicated unto the Lord. Verse forty of the previous chapter. "Now, my God, let, I beseech thee, your eyes be open, and your ears be attentive unto the prayer that is made in this place. Arise, O Jehovah God, unto thy resting place, thou and the ark of thy strength: and let the priests O Jehovah God, be clothed with salvation, and let thy saints rejoice in goodness. O Jehovah God, turn not away the face of thine anointed: and remember the mercies of David thy servant." And now, in chapter seven...

When Solomon [Had finished this prayer.] made an end of praying, then the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the Lord filled the house (7:1).

Now back in chapter five, we read that when the priests began to sound with their trumpets, and when the people began to sing, Asaph, and uh the others that were appointed as singers, when their sound of the music and the, and its voices became as one in praise unto God, that at that point, the glory of the Lord filled the temple, so that the priests were not able to stand to minister in the temple. So this glory of God is resting, there in the temple.

But now as Solomon finishes the prayer of dedication, the glory of God's still there, now the second manifestation of God's power and presence, as fire comes from God, and consumes these sacrifices that were there upon the altar. Very reminiscent of the dedication of the tabernacle in the wilderness, that Moses had made. The tabernacle was called, "the tent of meeting". It is the place where God's people come to meet God. Also the place of sacrifice, for the people cannot meet God apart from sacrifice, because of the sin of the people, and the righteousness of God, you can't bring sinful man together with a righteous God, except something be done about the sins. Thus the place of sacrifices, where the animals were sacrificed for man's sin, and thus make the meeting with God a possibility. Thus it was called, "the tent of meeting".

Now, what the tabernacle was to the children of Israel in the wilderness, the temple is to be to the nation

of Israel, that they've established in the land. This is the place that God has chosen, where people would meet Him. It is the mount of sacrifice, where the sacrifices are to be made, in order to open the door, whereby they may come to God.

Of course, in the new testament, Jesus Christ, is the place of meeting, for He offered Himself as a sacrifice for our sins, once and for all, and by His putting away our sin, He makes fellowship with God, a reality, and a possibility for us, so that we come boldly into the throne of grace, to receive mercy in our time of need, as Jesus has opened the door for you, and for me.

So, even as the dedication of the tabernacle, the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle, so that the priests weren't able to stand to minister, and the fire came from God, and kindled the fire on the altar that consumed the sacrifice. So now the repetition in the temple. God's fire kindling on the altar, consuming the sacrifice, even as took place at the tabernacle. And the glory of the Lord filling the house.

And the priests could not enter into the house of the Lord, because the glory of the Lord had filled the Lord's house (7:2).

The presence of God must be something that is extremely awesome. When a person sees the glory of God's presence in a place. So powerful it was, that they could not even enter in.

And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the Lord was upon the house, they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and they worshiped, and praised the Lord, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever (7:3).

Course that's a oft repeated refrain in the Psalms, "O praise the Lord for He is good, for His mercy endureth forever." In fact there's that entire psalm that is committed to that refrain, over and over. The exhortation of praising the Lord for His goodness, because His mercy endures forever. So, here the glorious scene. Solomon had finished his prayer, the fire comes from God, consumes the burnt offering, the glory of God is so powerful, the priests can't even enter in to the temple, and the people seeing this fall on their faces, their faces on the pavement, as they praised God, and as they worshiped God, and as they declare the goodness and the mercy of God.

Then the king and all the people offered sacrifices before the Lord. And king Solomon offered a sacrifice of twenty two thousand oxen, [Now this was over a period of fifteen days. There was at this time of the year, the seventh month, the feast of tabernacles, which was of eight days duration. This feast of the dedication of the temple was of a seven day duration. So this whole episode here, took place over a fifteen day period. Now these sacrifices that were being offered, were peace offerings, of which the people were eating the meat that was offered as a sacrifice. They would cut and butcher the meat, they would take the fat and burn it on the altar, and then the people would eat. So it was a time, they called them the feasts, and they were really feasting! So, at this time Solomon offered twenty two thousand cattle.] a hundred and twenty thousand sheep: [Shishkabobs for everybody!] so the king and all of the people dedicated the house of God. And the priests waited on their offices: the Levites also with their instruments of music, which David the king had made to praise the Lord with, because his mercy endures for ever, which David praised by their ministry, and the priests sounded trumpets before them, all of Israel stood (7:4-6).

So there was a great celebration, a marvelous occasion. The people there worshiping God, fellowshiping with God, the peace offering was the offering of communion. The idea of the peace offering, is sitting down, eating with God. I bring my sacrifice, the priest takes and burns the portion of it that is the Lord's, and the rest is given to me, barbecued and I sit down there and I just eat with God, fellowshiping with Him, worshiping and just fellowshiping with God as I eat.

In that culture, as we have pointed out before, eating with a person was a very significant act. In that culture, eating with that person constituted becoming one with that person. They looked at it as a unifying experience, where you and I become one, because we're eating of the same bread. We're both eating of the same loaf. We are dipping in the same soup, our bread. We are pulling off the meat from the same leg of lamb, or whatever, and we're just pulling off our portion and eating it, and thus this bread that is nourishing me, is nourishing you. This bread that is becoming a part of me, as it's being assimilated by my body, is becoming a part of you, as it's becoming assimilated by your body. Thus through the partaking of the same bread, mystically we are becoming one with each other. I am being nourished by the bread that is nourishing

you. I am becoming a part of the bread, or the bread is becoming part of me, which is also becoming part of you. So, mystically you and I become one with each other, because we have eaten together.

So the idea of eating with God. Beautiful in its application, as I become one with God. As I give God His portion, and I eat my portion of the lamb that's been sacrificed as a peace offering, we have this communion. It was called the offering of communion, where we actually become one with God, as we partake, and God partakes together. The idea is that fellowship, that koinonia, that oneness with God, that we enter into with God, as we offer these peace offerings. So here it was the music, the worship, the praise, day after day, as the people had assembled for this momentous occasion.

Moreover Solomon hallowed the middle of the court that was before the house of the Lord: and there they offered burnt offerings and the fat of the peace offering, because the brazen altar which Solomon had made was not able to receive all of the burnt offerings, and the meal offerings, and the fat (7:7).

This altar of brass that he had made was too small for the hundred and twenty thousand sheep, and twenty two thousand cattle, so he just sanctified this place in the middle of the court. He says, "Build a fire there, and we'll offer there also, in order that they might have enough room to offer all of these sacrifices".

Also at the same time Solomon kept the feast seven days, and all of Israel with him, a very great congregation, from the entering in of Hamath unto the river of Egypt (7:8).

Now Hamath was clear up in the northern area of what is today a part of Assyria. And, uh on down to the river that separated Israel from Egypt. Not the Nile, but down there that river separating um, starts with an "S", I can't remember the name, but at any rate...

The people of the whole area of Israel had gathered together for this solemn assembly: and they kept the dedication of the altar for seven days, and the feast for seven days (7:9).

So there was the feast of the tabernacles, there was the dedication for seven days, and then the feast of the tabernacles, which was another seven days.

Then on the twenty third day, of the seventh month he sent the people away to their homes, glad and merry in heart for the goodness of the Lord. [For two weeks they'd been celebrating, "For God is good, and merciful". So now as they go the whole nation, there's a spirit of the consciousness of God, "We are God's people!", and that whole glorious aura of worship, and, and just that afterglow of having spent this time, and just the rejoicing in the goodness of God, and mercy. "And so they were merry in heart for the goodness of the Lord".] that he had shown unto David, and Solomon, and Israel. And thus Solomon finished the house of the Lord, and the king's house: and all that came into Solomon's heart to make in the house of the Lord, and in his own house, and he prosperously effected (7:10-11).

So it's been completed. It's been dedicated.

And the Lord appeared to Solomon by night, [The people have gone home. The happy days of celebration have come to an end. You know, there's always something, of, of a let down after a, a joyous time together. A time in which God has been working, and we've seen the work of God, and had the excitement, of, of just seeing God work in a special way, and then when, when they leave, and go, there's always just sort of a let down. For years I directed summer camps. I used to direct summer camps over in Arizona. We would have three camps in a row. A Junior camp, a High School camp, and then an adult camp. During the Junior camp, the place would be filled with little kids, and we'd spend a week with those little kids. We'd get acquainted with them, we would be praying with them. We'd see God working in their lives. Of course we had all of the activities, and from sun up, to way past sun down, we were with these kids in all kinds of activities. During this time of intensified study of the word, and prayer and all with these kids, God would do a marvelous work in their lives, and the place would be buzzing, always buzzing with kids! Always needing Band-Aid, or homesick pills, or whatever, and we'd give them vitamin C for homesick pills. They would come in after and say, "Oh I feel a lot better now! I'm not homesick anymore!", we had labeled it, "Homesick Pills", you know. But, on Saturday, when the little kids went home, the High School kids didn't come up until Sunday afternoon, I'll tell you that camp was the emptiest, most forlorn, I used to just get the family, I'd say, "Let's go for a ride over to the Grand Canyon or something, I can't stand it. It's all, you know emptiness". It'd been so glorious! God had worked in such a special way, and now that they're all gone, it's just sort of a let down, it's just, you know, you look around at everything, there's nothing there.

Thus with Jerusalem, packed with people, daily there in the temple, the sacrifices, the rejoicing, the excitement, the joy, God was working, God was moving, now the people have left and gone to their tents. Now you come down to the practical reality of day to day life. The excitement is over, you settle down. "And in that night, the Lord appeared to Solomon,"] *and he said unto him, I have heard your prayer, and I have chosen this place to myself for a house of sacrifice (7:12).*

God first of all, assured Solomon that He had heard the prayer. That is his prayer of dedication that is recorded in the previous chapter. Where Solomon prayed that God would keep His eyes upon this place, His ear open to the cries that were made to Him from this place. God said, "I've heard your prayer, and I've chosen this to be the house of sacrifice. This will be the place where I will meet the people".

God had chosen it years before, when Abraham was called to offer his son Isaac, it was at this place, that he offered his son Isaac. God chose it. Abraham said, "The Lord will provide Himself a sacrifice. In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen, the place of sacrifices". And of course, on mount Moriah, the place of the ultimate sacrifice, for it was on this same mount that Jesus was crucified. So God said, "I've chosen this place as the house of sacrifice, the place of sacrifice". The place where man might meet God. And, of course how complete that is with Jesus Christ! He is the place where we meet God. It is in Christ that God and man are brought together.

In the book of Job, as his friends were trying to help Job cope with his problems, not really understanding the problem, his friends said to him, "Look man, just get right with God, and everything will be okay". And Job said, "Thanks a lot pal! You say, 'Get right with God'? How can a man justify himself before God? I look at the vastness of the heavens that God has created, and I realize how vast and infinite God is. Who am I that I could come before the God, the creator of the universe to plead my case? And beside that", he said, "Not only is the gap too big, the eternal infinite God, and here, little me on this planet earth. But", he said, "There's no daysman between us who can put his hand on us both". He saw that the distance between God and man was so great, that there was no way a finite man could touch the infinite God, apart from a mediator, a daysman, someone who could stand between and touch them both. That which Job envisioned as a necessity became the reality in Jesus Christ.

There is one God, and one mediator between God and man, even the man, Christ Jesus; who was in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God, thus could touch God, and yet He humbled Himself, and came in the form of man, so He could touch me. So Jesus, our great High Priest, who touches God, who touches me, and through Him, I meet God, and through His sacrifice, my sins are put away, so that I can stand before the holy, righteous God. "I've chosen this place", God said. "The house of sacrifice."

Now if I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, [Notice the locusts obey the command of God! "If I command the locusts to devour this land."] or if I send pestilence among my people (7:13);

God said He sends the pestilences. Now these are the things that Solomon had prayed about. "Lord, if the people turn away and forsake you, and you send pestilence, or if you send the famine, or if you hold the heavens, that it does not rain, then if your people will call upon you, hear from heaven your dwelling place, and answer their prayers." So God is taking the prayer of Solomon, and going down the prayer of Solomon, point by point. Taking the issues that Solomon brought up in his prayer. God declared...

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land (7:14).

So this verse that we've heard quoted so many times, is God's word to Solomon, in response to Solomon's prayer. **"If my people, in the time of calamity, in the time of national calamity, in the time of drought, in the time of pestilence, if my people who are called by my name, will just humble themselves, and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven. And I will forgive their sins, and I will heal their land."** Solomon prayed, "Lord let your eyes always be open unto this place". And God answers...

Now my eyes shall be open, and my ears attent to the prayer that is made in this place (7:15).

Verse forty, in the previous chapter, "Now my God, I beseech thee, thine eyes be open, let your ears be

attent". So God says, "Yes, I will". One by one, the petitions that Solomon made, God says, "I will grant. My eyes will be open, my ears be attent to the prayers made in this place".

For now I have chosen and sanctified this house, that my name may be there for ever: and my eyes and my heart shall be there perpetually (7:15).

So God has promised His heart, His eyes, perpetually on this place.

But as for you, if you will just walk before me, as David your father walked, and you do all that I have commanded you, and if you observe my statutes and my judgements; Then I will establish the throne of your kingdom, according as I have made a covenant with David your father, when I said, There shall not fail thee a man to be ruler in Israel. But [Warning] if you turn away, and you forsake my statutes and my commandments, which I have set before you, and you shall go and worship other gods, and worship them; Then will I pluck them up by the roots out of my land which I have given to them; and this house, which I have sanctified for my name, will I cast out of my sight, and will make it to be a proverb and a byword among all nations. And this house, which is high, shall be an astonishment to everyone that passes by; so that he shall say, Why hath the Lord done thus unto this land, and unto this house? And it shall be answered, Because they forsook Jehovah the God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and they laid hold on other gods, and worshiped them, and served them: therefore hath he brought all this evil upon them (7:17-22).

So God made glorious promises to Solomon, conditioned upon Solomon walking in the ways of God, as David his father walked. God also warned of impending judgements, should he fail to walk in the ways of the Lord. "If you turn away", verse nineteen, "and forsake my statutes, and my commandments which I have set before you, and you begin to worship and serve other gods".

Turn back to Deuteronomy, chapter seventeen, beginning with verse fourteen. Moses is writing the commandments concerning the future. "When you come into the land which Jehovah your God gives to you, and you possess it, and you're dwelling therein, and you shall say, I will set a king over me, like all of the nations that are about me; Thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee, whom the Lord thy God shall choose: one from among your brothers shalt thou set to be king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother. But", and this is the commandments now, for the king. Number one, "He shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the intent that they should multiply horses: forasmuch as the Lord hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way. **Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold.**" That was the commandment of God concerning the king. **Not to multiply horses, or to return to Egypt to do horse trading. Not to multiply wives, and God said, "Lest they turn his heart away from the Lord". Third, "He's not to multiply gold and silver unto himself".**

Now in the later years, Solomon in strengthening the army decided that the chariots and horsemen, cavalry units, were the strongest units for battle. So in his army he had twelve hundred chariots, he had twelve thousand men in the cavalry unit. He had sent down to Egypt to buy horses. The thing that God said the kings would not, and should not do, he did.

Solomon also loved many strange women, and he had seven hundred wives, and princesses, and three hundred concubines. Now God said, "Lest they turn the heart of the king away from me". In the later years of Solomon, under the influence of these wives that he had taken from the various nations. He had married the daughter of the Pharaoh, to align Egypt with Israel, he had married a princess from the Hittites, from the Amorites, from the uh, different ethnic, and, and uh national groups around. He would marry the princesses in order to form an alliance with those nations and kings. So seven hundred wives, princesses, that is these were political kinds of marriages.

These wives began to bemoan the fact that they could not worship their gods, and so over on the side of the mount of Olives, across the Kidron valley, from the city of David, from Ophel, he began to build these temples for the gods his wives worshiped, in order that they might have places of the worshiping of their gods. Then Solomon himself, began to worship in these temples that he had built for his wives. His heart was turned away from the Lord.

Again, let me say, when God warns you, pay attention! He doesn't warn us needlessly. God knows our

nature, and He knows the characteristics and He knows what will happen if we do certain things! A lot of times, we think we can beat the game. A lot of times we feel, “Well that doesn’t apply to me. I can understand why God would tell others. But I can manage, I can handle. I’ve got it wired”. We somehow think that we are exempt from the commandments of God. That, “They apply to others, but not to me. I know how to beat it. I’ve got it figured, I can win!” Not so. Solomon, I am certain, as God was speaking to him here, and warning him here, thought well, “No problem God, I would never turn from your commandments. I would never leave from following you! I will keep your judgements”, and all. I’m certain that in his heart, he felt that kind of total commitment to God, but as the years went by, slowly, he began to turn away.

Then he began to multiply gold, and silver unto himself. Six hundred and sixty-six talents of silver annually were brought. He built navies to travel the world, to bring back gold and silver, and precious stones and all, until silver became as common as rocks in Jerusalem. If you’ve ever been to Jerusalem, that’s pretty common. It’s about the rockiest place you’ve ever seen. Silver, as common as the rocks!

The very things that God commanded kings not to do, are the very things that Solomon did. Tragic, but true. The very thing that God said would happen, did happen. The people following after Solomon. He had set a pattern that just was exacerbated as the years went by, until finally the nation had turned their backs upon God. The worship of Baal, and Molech, and Mammon became uh, very common within Judah, as the hearts of the people were turned away from the Lord.

Ultimately, Nebuchadnezzar came. Because God’s mercy endures forever, the first time he came, he only took some of the treasure out of the temple. But then when the Jews rebelled against Him, he came back again. Took captives, and more treasure. Because there was another rebellion, he came back and leveled the city of Jerusalem, and destroyed the temple. It was removed out of God’s sight.

To the present day, the site of Solomon’s temple is unknown. There are those who believe that the Dome of the Rock is built over Solomon’s temple. There are others who believe that the temple was north from there. But, no body knows for sure. The place has been removed out of God’s sight. There is only one stone on the temple mount, alongside of a path that the archeologists believe dates back to the Solomon’s temple, but it’s the only remnant that they know of, that goes back to that period of time. What has happened to the rest of it, is just not known. It was removed out of God’s sight, just like He said.

God is faithful to keep His word. The problem is that man is not faithful to keep his word. Man fails, and so often fails, but God is true. When God says He will bless you, He will bless you. He will keep His promise. But if God warns you of the perils of turning away from Him, and what will happen, you can be sure that if you turn away from God, He will keep His word, and those calamities will befall you. God is faithful. God will keep His word, for good or for evil. He’ll keep His word.

Now the interesting thing to me is that when the calamities come, they were then going to ask, “Why has God done this?”, and that is the common cry when God brings judgement upon a nation, or upon a person. Upon an individual, as God is dealing with us, for our failures, for our disobedience, and He allows calamity to come. What’s the first thing we say? “Why did God do this to me? Why would God allow this to happen to me?” We want to blame God for our problems that really result from our own disobedience.

Several years ago, when I was pastoring in Tucson, Arizona, a lady started attending the church, whose husband was a air force officer. I decided to make a pastoral call on a house to meet her husband. So when I knocked on the door, this fellow answered, and I introduced myself, I knew his name. I said, “I’m Pastor Chuck Smith, I’m the pastor of the church over here, your wife has been attending”. The fellow began to curse me. I’ve never been cursed quite as bad as this fellow cursed me. He ordered me off of his porch, out of his yard, and he was yelling! I learned the story, he said, he told me, he said, “You can’t tell me that God is a God of love!”. I knew that he had a little daughter that was crippled by polio. She had been coming to Sunday School. But in his whole frustration, he said, “We just got the report from the doctors who have taken the test on our second little daughter, and she has polio. Don’t tell me that God is a God of love! Get out of here! I want nothing to do with God or with you!”. Found out that his father was a Presbyterian minister. I said to him, “Let me just ask you one question. Have you been serving God?”. That just lit a fuse, and he began to curse and tell me, “No of course not!”. I said, “Then why do you feel that God owes you

anything"? You see, you turn your back on God, you forsake God, and then who do you want to blame? You want to blame God. So wrong!

We need to look at ourselves. "Therefore let a man examine himself." For if we would judge ourselves, then we would not be judged of God. But it's so typical of human nature, to just you know, go our own careless way. To walk after the flesh, and then you know, to just say, "Don't care what God says!". You know, and, and, and go after your fleshly practices, and then when you come up with AIDS, say, "Why God would you allow me to have this!". You know, you're reaping the consequences of your own forsaking God! So, God answered and responded to the prayer of Solomon, with warnings, with promises, glorious promises, but also with warnings.

Chapter 8

Now as we get into chapter eight, we get into the energy and the fame of Solomon.

It came to pass at the end of twenty years, when he had finished now his own house also. [He was seven building the house of the Lord, thirteen years building his own house. No doubt a fabulous palace.] *That the cities which Hiram had restored to Solomon,* [Now Solomon in repayment to Hiram, the king of Lebanon, for the cedars and all that he had done, Solomon said, "Here have these cities". Up there which were in the area of the uh, borders between Israel, and Lebanon. Probably in the area of Metula, and Marjaron, and that valley up in there. He said, "You can have those cities". Well, Hiram came out and looked at the cities, and he said, "No thanks!", you know I mean, he said, "They're, they're, they're, they're Cabul", which is worthless. So Solomon, inasmuch as Hiram returned them back, didn't take them, decided to build the cities up, to fortify them and all. "So these cities which Hiram had restored to Solomon",] *Solomon built them, caused the children of Israel to dwell in them. And Solomon went to Hamath-zobah, and prevailed against it (8:1-3).*

Now, that's like saying, Santa Ana, California. Hamath, is the area, and Zobah, or Zobah the area, sort of the whole area. Hamath one of the cities within the area.

He built Tadmor in the wilderness, and the storage cities, which he built in Hamath. [These are clear up in the area of Lebanon and Syria.] *And he built Beth-horon the upper, and Beth-horon the nether,* [Is the lower. So the two cities, they're about three miles from each other. They're in the area of Ephraim, just north of Jerusalem, twenty miles near the area of Gibeon.] *with the walls and the gates, and the bars; And Ballet, and all the store cities that Solomon had, and all the chariot cities, the cities for the horsemen, all that Solomon desired to build in Jerusalem, and in Lebanon, and throughout all the land of his dominion (8:4-6).*

So he was a tremendous builder! There are cities today, the ruins of the cities, such as Megiddo, where you can see still, the gates that Solomon built in the city of Megiddo, which are typical Solomon. So there are about four different cities that have been excavated with the same type of gate which causes, it's sort of Solomon's imprint. You know, that this was one of the cities that Solomon rebuilt. He built a special type of a gate for defense that is, that it peculiar to Solomon. You find that there at Megiddo. You find another one at uh, Hazor, and these particular Solomonic types of gates that identify them with Solomon's time. So you can actually see the stones that were placed there at the time of Solomon. These cities that were fortified and built by him, during his dominion.

As for all the people that were left of the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, which were in Israel. [Which they left alive. They made these people the slaves.] *Their children that were left in the land, that were not consumed by Israel, Solomon made them to pay tribute* [That was by slavery.] *unto this day. But of the children of Israel did Solomon not make servants for his work; but they were the men of war, the chief of his captains, and the captains of his chariots and horsemen. And these were the chief of king Solomon's officers, even two hundred and fifty, who bore rule over the people. And Solomon brought up the daughter of Pharaoh out of the city of David to the house that he had built for her:* [So he built this splendid palace for the daughter of Pharaoh.] *for he said, My wife shall not dwell in the house of David the king of Israel, because the places are holy, whereunto the ark of the Lord hath come (8:7-11).*

David evidently, when he built the tent for the ark of the Lord, built it right there near his house. So Solomon realizing that this woman that he had was not a righteous woman, built a special house, didn't let

her live in that place that David had, because of the ark of the Lord having been there. So he knew you know, that she was a hussy, but he kept her anyhow.

And Solomon offered the burnt offerings unto the Lord on the altar of the Lord, which he had built before the porch, Even after a certain rate every day, offering according to the commandment of Moses, on the sabbaths, the new moons, the solemn feasts, three times in the year, even the feast of the unleavened bread, the feast of weeks, and the feast of tabernacles (8:12-13).

So he continued to observe the sacrifices daily, weekly, the sabbaths, the new moons, and then the annual feasts.

He appointed, according to the order of David his father, the courses of the priests for their service, the Levites for their charges, and they were to praise and minister before the priests, as the duty of every day required: and also the porters by their courses at every gate: [the guards] for so David the man of God had commanded. [All of the order of the temple had been established and set up by David, who was a marvelous administrator.] And they departed not from the commandment of the king unto the priests and the Levites concerning any matter, or concerning the treasures. Now all of the work of Solomon was prepared unto the day of the foundation of the house of the Lord, until it was finished. So the house of the Lord was perfected. Then Solomon then went to Ezion-geber, and to Eloth. [Which is "Eliot", today, down on the Red sea.] And there Hiram sent to him sailors, and ships, men who had knowledge of the sea, and they [were became, they] went with the servants of Solomon to Ophir, and took from there four hundred and fifty talents of gold, and brought them to the king (8:14-18).

Chapter 9

And when the queen of Sheba heard the fame of Solomon, she came to prove Solomon with [riddles] difficult questions at Jerusalem, and with a very great company of camels that bore spices, and gold in abundance, precious stones: and when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him all that was in her heart (9:1).

She gave him all of these riddles, and all these mysteries.

And Solomon told her all of her questions: [He was able to answer every riddle.] and there was nothing hid from Solomon which he told her not. And when the queen of Sheba had seen the wisdom of Solomon, the beautiful palace that he had built, And the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, [When she saw the table, the food, and all that Solomon had, and going back to I Kings, chapter four, the meat of his table, it's wild! We're told in uh, the fourth chapter there, of I Kings, verse twenty two, "So Solomon's provision for one day", one day, food for one day. "Thirty measures of fine flour." A measure is ten bushels. Each day they had three hundred bushels of fine flour. Think of all the pastries, and the breads and all you could make with three hundred bushels of flour! Each day! "Sixty measures of meal, the grain, the oats", and so forth. The cookies! Then, "Ten fat oxen", which would be prime beef, and, "twenty oxen out of the pastures", which would be commercial beef. Each day! Thirty oxen, ten prime, twenty commercial. "A hundred sheep, besides the harts, and the roebucks, and the fallow deer, and the fatted fowl." You know, the turkey's and your chickens, and quail, and everything else. Each day! Now, "When she saw the meat of his table, and the kind of a table that he set, the abundance of his servants", actually.] and the attendance of those servants, and their apparel; his cupbearers, and their apparel; and his ascent by the stairs by which he went up to the house of the Lord; there was no more spirit in her (9:2-4).

She was wiped out! I mean this is opulence that she couldn't believe! I mean, his servants, everything was just so perfect! Of course, the gold vessels that they drank out of. The gold plates, and the gold everything you know. Just the, the royal apparel that were worn by the servants, and the way they waited the table. The abundance of the buffet food that was there. She couldn't handle it. I mean, just no more spirit.

And she said to the king, It was a true report that I heard in my own land of your acts, and of your wisdom: ["I got a report about this. I couldn't believe it."] Howbeit she said, I didn't believe it, until I came, and have seen it for myself: and, behold, they didn't tell me the half of it: you have exceeded the fame that I heard. Happy are your man, happy are these your servants, which stand continually before you, and are able to hear your wisdom. Blessed be Jehovah your God, which has delighted in thee to set thee on his

throne, to be the king for Jehovah thy God: because thy God loved Israel, to establish them for ever, therefore he made you the king over them, to do judgement and justice. And she gave the king a hundred and twenty talents of gold and spices of great abundance, precious stones: neither was there any such spice as the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon. And the servants also of Hiram, and the servants of Solomon, which brought the gold from Ophir, brought also these algum trees and precious stones (9:5-10).

They think the algum is probably the red sandalwood, and it was used in making instruments and all. A very special kind of a wood.

And the king made of the algum trees terraces to the house of the Lord, and of the king's palace, and out of them he made the harps and the psalteries for the singers: and there was none such seen before in the land of Judah. [I mean this was fancy stuff!] And the king gave to the queen of Sheba all her desire, whatsoever she asked, beside that which she had brought unto the king. So she returned and went away to her own land, she and her servants (9:10-12).

Now it is thought that the queen of Sheba was probably an Arabian, and that she came from the area of uh, Kuwait, Oman, down in that part of Arabia. However, the Ethiopians say that she was an Ethiopian, and that she had come from Ethiopia. When it declares that, "Solomon gave to her all that she desired", that a part of that was that he impregnated her, and that when she returned to Ethiopia she had a son, who was actually Solomon's son.

Thus in Ethiopia, up until just a few years back when the communists took over, the Ethiopians had a spiritual leader, the king that they said was a direct descendant of Solomon. Who was it? Halle Salassi, was the last of these kings to rule over Ethiopia, which he claimed, and those who follow claim, he was a direct descendant of Solomon, dating back, and tracing back to the queen of Sheba, and her return from her visit to Solomon, having received all of her desire. Don't know. That's what they claim. Don't know. Most bible scholars believe that Sheba was though, in the area of southern Arabia, down in the area of Kuwait.

Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year [He's not to multiply gold, but, the weight of gold that came in one year, each year.] was six hundred and sixty six talents of gold (9:13);

An interesting number indeed! Six from a symbolic standpoint in the Bible, is the number of man. Man's imperfection. Seven is the number of completeness. Six, one short, the number of man, incomplete. We know that in the book of revelation, chapter thirteen, when the Antichrist comes on the scene, that the number of his name will number six hundred and sixty six.

We find in the book of Daniel, when Nebuchadnezzar made this great image, which is thought by many to be sort of a prefiguring of the Antichrist, and the image that he will make. It was sixty cubits high, and six cubits wide. So the sixty, and the sixes again. Here, the amount of gold. Now, there probably is some significance, I don't know what it is, but it's interesting that it would be six hundred and sixty six. Surely it was uh, something that God had commanded he should not do, and uh, it's a number that uh, has a significance.

Beside that which the chapmen and the merchants had brought. And all of the kings of Arabia the governors of the country brought their gold and their silver to Solomon. King Solomon made two hundred targets of beaten gold: and there were six hundred shekels of beaten gold in each target. And then he made three hundred shields of beaten gold: and three hundred shekels of gold went into each shield. And the king put them in the house of the forest of Lebanon. Moreover the king made a great throne of ivory, [And this must have been something! An ivory throne!] that he overlaid with pure gold. There were six steps going up to the throne, with a footstool of gold, which were fastened to the throne, and the stays on each side of the sitting place, and there were two lions standing by the stays (9:14-18):

So these, this throne, with these lions, and then there were lions on each of the steps going up.

Twelve lions stood there one on either side, and on the other upon the six steps. There was not anything like this in all of the kingdoms. And all of the drinking vessels of king Solomon were of gold, and all of the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon [Now this house of the forest was his palace. His palace was made out of the cedars of Lebanon. Doesn't mean it's a house up in Lebanon, but the house of Lebanon. But the house of Lebanon was the house that was made out of the cedars that had come from Lebanon. So it was a fancy palace.] and all of the drinking vessels were of [gold,] pure gold: none were of silver; [And not

anything accounted uh, and,] *it was not any thing accounted of in the days of Solomon (9:19-20).*

So much you couldn't count it. It was just, you know they, they quit trying.

For the king's ships went to Tarshish [Now he had the one navy that was going from the Red sea, down along the African coast, gathering gold and trading, and then he had another navy, that was plying the Mediterranean, all the way to Tarshish, which is thought to have been in southern Spain. They would make their circuit,] *and three years they would return with all of their gold, and [of course] bringing gold, silver, ivory, apes, peacocks. King Solomon passed all the kings of the earth in riches and in wisdom.* [He surpassed them all.] *And the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon,* [An audience with him.] *to hear the wisdom, that God had put in his heart. And they brought every man his present, vessels of silver, vessels of gold, raiment's, and harnesses, and spices, horses, mules, at a rate year by year. And Solomon had four thousand stalls for the horses,* [Up in Megiddo there's a lot of stalls that they believe go back to Solomon's time.] *chariots, twelve thousand horsemen; whom he bestowed in the chariot cities, with the king at Jerusalem. And he reigned over all the kings from the river even unto the land of the Philistines, and to the border of Egypt. And the king* [That would be the river Euphrates. "And the king",] *made silver in Jerusalem as common as stones, cedar trees were as common as sycamore trees that are in the low plains. And they brought unto Solomon horses out of Egypt, and out of all the lands. Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, first and last, are they not written in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, and in the visions of Iddo the seer against Jeroboam the son of Nebat? And Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all of Israel forty years. And Solomon slept with his fathers, and he was buried in the city of David his father: and Rehoboam his son reigned in his stead (9:21-31).*

Now in the book of Chronicles it doesn't tell us of Solomon's apostasy in his later years. How that his wives turned his heart away from God. It does not tell us of his worship in the pagan temples that he had built. That is told us in the book of Kings. These other books that are referred to, we do not have. It would be fascinating if we could have a little more of the history of Solomon. Surely an illustrious character!

But the thing that gets me, here was a man endowed with so much wisdom. This guy wrote, what was it, three thousand proverbs and a thousand psalms? Now have you ever tried to write a proverb? I mean that's not easy! This guy was wise. Wrote all these proverbs. We'll get to the book of Proverbs, with Solomon, and that's not all of them, but just a good number of them. With all of this wisdom, with all of the endowment of God upon his life, a man who had, had a vital confrontation with God. A man who had been blessed by God, beyond our imaginations!

How is it, that a man with this wisdom, and with these blessings, could turn his back upon the Lord, in his later years? Because somehow, he felt he was above the commandments of God. Somehow he felt that they didn't apply to him. Somehow he felt that he could disobey God, and get by with it. But, he found that God was wiser than he. Those things which God declared, did come to pass. Though he thought he could beat it, he couldn't.

We're not nearly as wise as Solomon, but unfortunately, we are as foolish many times, in thinking that we can somehow go against the word of God, and still come out on top! We somehow feel that the commandments don't apply to our situation. We're always thinking that we are some kind of an exception to the rule. That we can violate a commandment, and get by with it. But the Bible says, "Be not deceived. God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap". If you sow to your flesh, then of your flesh, you're going to reap corruption. But if you sow to the Spirit, then of the Spirit, you're going to reap life everlasting.

God is faithful to His word. God has promised the blessings that He will bestow upon you, if you will submit your life to the lordship of Jesus Christ. God will forgive you your sins. He will blot out your past. God will give to you eternal life, and He promises to you, that you will be with Him in the glory of His eternal kingdom. In the joys and the blessings, of that eternal kingdom of God, if you will just walk in fellowship with Him, through Jesus Christ. But God has also warned, that if you forsake Him, that if you walk after your own ways, if you live after the flesh, if you walk in impertinence to His commandments, that one day, His judgement will come, and you will know the wrath of God. God says that concerning individuals, and thus we need to take it to heart.

God also speaks to nations. In the prayer of Solomon, Solomon was praying for a national thing, and God answered in the national aspect. "If the nation will serve me and follow me, then I'll bless the nation and prosper it. But if they turn from me, then calamities will come."

What applied to Israel, applies to the United States. Surely even as Israel born in the Spirit, its early days of inception were days of glory, the blessing and the power of God, yet in the later years they turned their back, and felt that they could live independent of God. We see our nation following that same path of disaster. We already see, warning signs by God, in our nation. The social upheaval, the pestilences that have come. Issues that we don't yet know how to fully deal with them. The acid rains, and the problems of the economy, the national debt, and so many things, are symptomatic of the fact that our nation has turned away from God, and is worshiping other gods. Gods of wood, and stone. The works of man's hands.

But, God is faithful, and that we really need to be concerned about! Because, what God has said He would do, in judgement, He will surely do to this nation, if we continue this path, away from Him. But, "If my people called by my name, will humble themselves, and pray and seek my face". That's you, that's me. It starts with us. It starts individually. We can't say, "Oh would to God that the whole nation would turn to God". Would to God, that we would turn to God! It starts with me! I can't decry the national apostasy, if I'm apostate myself! I cannot say, "Oh would to God that everyone would start praying!", if I'm not praying myself! It starts with me, it starts with you. Beginning to seek the Lord, as we have never sought Him before.

We have many opportunities for prayer, here at Calvary Chapel. I invite you men to join me, on Saturday night as we gather with the other men, to pray in the fellowship hall. I invite you ladies to join with the Monday morning prayer group in the prayer room, and I pray that the day will soon come, when that room won't be big enough, and you'll have to move to the fellowship hall. I invite you men to become involved in the all night prayer groups that we have going every night of the week, here at Calvary Chapel. "If my people call by my name, humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face", and we have opportunities to do it. We cannot decry the national apostasy, unless we ourselves have committed our lives to seeking God, and waiting upon Him, for revival. God help us to challenge, help us to rise to the challenge.

At the time when Israel ultimately failed, God spoke to the prophet Ezekiel, who was warning them at that very moment, and God said, "I sought for a man among them, who would stand in the gap, and fill in the hedge, and I found none. Therefore their judgement came". I believe today, God is seeking men and women, who will stand in this gap, who will pray. Because God is not willing that any should perish, and God does not delight in judgement, He delights in mercy. But we've got to give Him the excuse, or the reason to exercise His mercy, by seeking Him. Time has come, where we've got to get serious before God, or else, there's no hope for our nation. Let's pray.

Father we pray tonight, that Your Holy Spirit will challenge each of our hearts, with our own personal involvement in seeking thee through prayer, through fasting. That we might see, O God, thy work among our nation. The turning again of the hearts of the people, back to God. Lord, we see the, the tremendous influence of television. We see a school system that has been so corrupted by humanism. It seems Lord like there are giants in the land, and they are so strong, and they are so powerful, and they are so deeply entrenched, that our hearts often just fail, and we're cowed into a lethargic do-nothingness. But, O Lord, may we rise up like men, and may we begin to bombard the citadels of darkness. Through prayer, may we tear down the strongholds of the enemy. May we see Lord, the triumph of thy Spirit. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.