

**Solomon Dedicates the Temple**

**Lesson Scope:** [2 Chronicles chapters 6 & 7](#)

*References in brackets relate to Lesson Scope unless noted otherwise*

**Lesson Focus**

In the fourth year of his reign, Solomon began to build the temple. He followed his father's instruction and used the materials his father had gathered and dedicated for the house of the Lord.

This magnificent temple was erected to honour the God of heaven and earth. Since He is a God like no other, the temple was intended to be like no other. No cost or effort was spared in its construction. The building materials were of the finest available. Skilled craftsmen fashioned the vessels and the furniture for the temple. After seven years and six months, this great undertaking was completed.

Then the priests brought the Ark of the Covenant to its new home in the temple. Solomon gathered all Israel together to offer unnumbered sacrifices of sheep and oxen. God showed His approval on their labours by filling the house with His glory. Solomon prayed on this occasion, honouring God for His faithfulness. He asked that God would hear His people Israel when they sinned and consequently suffered God's chastisement, but turned and prayed toward the temple in humility and repentance.

This lesson provides an opportunity to discuss appropriate conduct in times of worship. As you bring out the greatness and glory of God, use these thoughts to suggest suitable expressions of worship. The more we learn of God, the better we understand ourselves. The contrasts we see between ourselves and God move us to worship Him and to seek His favour.

God's glory fills the heavens and the earth. The man who humbles himself before the God of glory enjoys the marvel of divine favour

**Lesson Aim:** To understand right concepts of God's nature and His dealings with man.

**Theme Verses:** Psalm 113:5-6. Who is like unto the LORD our God, who dwelleth on high, who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven, and in the earth!

## Lesson Text

### “I Have Built an House . . . for Thee”

2 Chronicles 6:1-3 <sup>1 (KJV)</sup> Then said Solomon, The LORD hath said that he would dwell in the thick darkness. <sup>2</sup> But I have built an house of habitation for thee, and a place for thy dwelling for ever. <sup>3</sup> And the king turned his face, and blessed the whole congregation of Israel: and all the congregation of Israel stood.

2 Chronicles 6:12-14 <sup>12 (KJV)</sup> And he stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands: <sup>13</sup> 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, <sup>14</sup> 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:

2 Chronicles 6:18 <sup>18 (KJV)</sup> 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!

2 Chronicles 6:21 <sup>21 (KJV)</sup> 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.

### “The Glory of the Lord Filled the House”

2 Chronicles 7:1-4

<sup>1 (KJV)</sup> Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the LORD filled the house. <sup>2</sup> And the priests could not enter into the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD had filled the LORD'S house. <sup>3</sup> And 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. <sup>4</sup> Then the king and all the people offered sacrifices before the LORD.

## 2 Chronicles 7:8-14

<sup>8</sup> (KJV) Also at the same time Solomon kept the feast seven days, and all Israel with him, a very great congregation, from the entering in of Hamath unto the river of Egypt. <sup>9</sup> And in the eighth day they made a solemn assembly: for they kept the dedication of the altar seven days, and the feast seven days. <sup>10</sup> And on the three and twentieth day of the seventh month he sent the people away into their tents, glad and merry in heart for the goodness that the LORD had shewed unto David, and to Solomon, and to Israel his people. <sup>11</sup> 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, he prosperously effected. <sup>12</sup> And the LORD appeared to Solomon by night, and said unto him, I have heard thy prayer, and have chosen this place to myself for an house of sacrifice. <sup>13</sup> If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people; <sup>14</sup> 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.

### Questions for Study

#### “I Have Built an House . . . for Thee”

1. Where does God dwell?
2. What acts of Solomon provide us with a noble example of suitable worship?
3. In what ways is God far above us?

#### “The Glory of the Lord Filled the House”

4. Why was the people's response to the manifestation of God's presence appropriate?
5. On what basis could the people be “glad and merry in heart”?
6. How should we respond to God's presence and His Work among us today?
7. What can we do today to receive God's forgiveness and healing?

## **Analysing the Passage**

Since God is omnipresent, His dwelling place cannot be confined to one specific place as is the case with a human beings, He dwells in the black darkness (6:1) in this world, but He also dwells in the light which man can approach unto” (1 Timothy 6:16). While God s presence graced this temple Solomon had built, He was not confined to this place, He dwells in the hearts of believers everywhere in a special way, and is pleased to be present where two or three of them gather together in his name.

In 6:21, Solomon prayed in repentance for wrongs done, and as E forgiveness for any one of Israel who would repent and pray toward the temple. Isaiah 56:7 says, “Mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.”

God manifested His acceptance of the the people s sacrifices by sending fire from heaven (7:1). Such a response from God had occurred when Aaron and his sons were consecrated for the priesthood (Leviticus 9.23-24).

The glory of the Lord filled Solomon’s temple as it had the tabernacle when Moses set it up (Exodus 40:34-35).

The Holy Ghost came in visible form as tongues of fire (Acts 2:3).

God used drought, insect pests, and disease at various times to chastise His people for their sin and rebellion. He promised that He would hear their prayer if they would humble themselves and repent of their wickedness.

## **Principles and Applications**

### **“I Have Built an House . . . for Thee”**

1. God’s glory surpasses what man can comprehend (6:1) We live God’s presence and in His sight at all times. However, man cannot see God’s full glory and live. God has displayed His glorious presence in a limited way on certain occasions as He did at the dedication of the temple.

2. Man must prepare himself before he can approach a holy God (6:12-13). A casual approach to God is inappropriate and unacceptable. Those who ascend into the hill of the Lord or stand in His holy place must come with clean hands and a pure heart (Psalm 24:3-4). Those who assemble for worship must come on God’s terms, showing honour to God by respecting His house and by reverent conduct.

3. God's perfection is incomparable (6:14). Perfection indicates completeness with nothing lacking and no flaws. God had no predecessors and will have no successors. Nor has there been at any time one to whom we can compare God. He stands in the singularity of Himself.

4. God is true to His word and shows mercy to His people (6:14). Though God stands high above all that He has created, He has shown His willingness to enter into a covenant or contract with even the lowliest of men. No one has a monopoly on God's mercy. It is granted to all those who walk before Him with all their hearts. God is high, yet not far from any one of us.

5. God is infinite (6:18). Infinite means "without end or limit." God is not quantifiable as to His size or ability. No earthly measuring instruments can compute a number that would establish the outer edge of God's being or existence, for He has none. He cannot be contained within any boundaries that we can establish or even imagine.

### **"The Glory of the Lord Filled the House"**

6. The glory of the Lord calls for humble praise and worship (7:1—4). The glory of the Lord, which filled this large temple Solomon had built, was but a fractional exhibit of God's glory. Yet it was sufficient to inspire the people to bow in worship and praise. The small fragment of knowledge we have regarding God's incomprehensible being is enough to move us to worship Him, "for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever."

7. The goodness of God brings great joy and gladness (7:8-10). It not only inspires worship but also motivates us to serve. It is a great privilege - a very humbling one - to be permitted to serve in the kingdom of so great a God. The gladness of heart we feel in God's service far exceeds the momentary thrills the carnal man senses in his pursuit of temporal satisfaction.

8. God accepts and answers the prayers of His people (7:12). God is not bound by any laws obligating Him to listen to or to answer the prayers of mortals. His gracious nature moves Him to respond to the requests we make. God does this on the basis of His mercy, not our merit.

9. Humility and repentance always precede forgiveness of sin (7:14). God fully knows that His people will sometimes fail. "For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust" (Psalm 103: 14). For that reason, He has prescribed a route of return for those who fail. The con-

ditions for forgiveness are (1) humility, (2) prayer, (3) petition, and (4) repentance. The challenge lies in man's willingness to do his part. God is always faithful in doing His part.

### **Important Teachings**

1. God's glory surpasses what man can comprehend (6:1).
2. Man must prepare himself before he can approach a holy God (6:12-13).
3. God's perfection is incomparable (6:14).
4. God is true to His word and shows mercy to His people (6:14).
5. God is infinite (6:18).
6. The glory of the Lord calls for humble praise and worship (7:1-4).
7. The goodness of God brings great joy and gladness (7:8-10).
8. God accepts and answers the prayers of His people (7:12).
9. Humility and repentance always precede forgiveness of sin (7:14).

### **Answers to Questions.**

1. Where does God dwell?

He dwells in the thick darkness (6:1). He dwelt in Solomon's temple (6:2). He dwells between the cherubim (2 Kings 19:15). He dwells in the believers (1 John 4:12). Yet all of heaven is insufficient for God's dwelling place (6:18).

2. What acts of Solomon provide us with a noble example of suitable worship?

He stood as in the presence of the King greater than himself. He knelt down upon his knees in humility, acknowledging his own smallness. He spread forth his hands toward heaven in petition to God for himself and for his people.

3. In what ways is God far above us?

He exceeds us in His size. All the nations are but as a drop of a bucket in comparison to God (Isaiah 40:15). His thoughts are far above ours. His knowledge is full and complete; ours is fragmentary and partial. His perfection and holiness make all our righteousness appear as filthy rags.

4. Why was the people's response to the manifestation of God's presence appropriate?

The fact that they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground shows their humility in the presence of God's greatness. Their words of

praise show that they were grateful recipients of God's favours to them. Their sacrifices indicated that they understood that God is the owner of all things.

5. On what basis could the people be "glad and merry in heart"?

This stemmed from God's goodness. However, it was not solely based on God's goodness to them. It was also connected to God's acceptance of their efforts to build the temple with the best they could bring and of God's favourable response to their worship on this occasion.

6. How should we respond to God's presence and His work among us today?

We should acknowledge God's control of the weather and in all nature when these matters come up for discussion. We should be aware of the presence of angels working to protect us, though unseen to us.

We can talk of God's mercies to us and of our unworthiness. We should testify of Jesus' death on the cross and of how that has bridged the gap between us and God.

7. What can we do today to receive God's forgiveness and healing?

We can confess our personal wrongs to God and ask Him to lead us into the paths of righteousness. We can assemble with the saints to have our thoughts and motives redirected. We need to humble ourselves in contrition, being truly sorry for our sins. We must submit to the chastisement God brings upon us to help us to forsake the wrong and be healed.

### **Summarizing the Lesson**

Those who possess an adequate concept of God's nature are in a position to Worship Him as He ought to be worshiped and to serve Him as He deserves to be served. God's dealings with man demonstrate His understanding of man's human tendencies and His intense desire for fallen man's restoration. What a privilege we have to be a part of God's work today.

### **Research Guide**

1. Read Scriptures describing God's glory displayed in a special way. Several passages to consider are Exodus 19:16-25; Isaiah 6:1-4; and Matthew 17:1-2.

2. See 1 Corinthians 3:16-17 for an explanation of God's temple and dwelling place today.