

2 Chronicles Chapter 7

Verses 1-3

“Fire came down”:

This also occurred when the tabernacle was dedicated (Lev. 9:23-24).

This was the genuine dedication, because only God can truly sanctify.

The LORD’s sending “fire ... down from heaven” that “consumed” the “sacrifices” is attested elsewhere (compare Gen. 15:7-17; 1 Kings 18:36-38).

The inauguration of worship at the tabernacles had also been greeted with the LORD’s consuming fire (Lev. 9:24).

“The “glory of the LORD” (see the note on 1 Kings 8:10-12).

2 Chronicles 7:1 "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."

The “fire” that indicated that God was present (Lev. 9:23-24; 1 Chron. 21:26), would perpetually burn under the altar of burnt offering (Lev. 6:8-13).

It appears the offerings had been made and were on the altar of sacrifice.

This fire coming down from heaven and consuming the offerings was a manifestation of the presence of God.

This was very similar to the fire that descended when Elijah offered on Mount Carmel.

This left no doubt in anyone's mind who God was.

This dramatic happening would leave no room for doubt.

It would make an everlasting impression on those who saw it.

This glory of the LORD was not just in the Most Holy Place, but filled the entire temple.

2 Chronicles 7:2 "And the priests could not enter into the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD had filled the LORD'S house."

They went in to carry the ark thither, but not being able to stand to minister, they came out, and could not reenter.

"Because the glory of the LORD had filled the LORD's house":

Both the Holy Place, and the Holy of Holies (see 1 Kings 8:10).

The priests could not stand in front of such great presence of God.

Everyone who saw this, fell prostrate to the floor in total worship of God.

The LORD was saying in this, I accept this house and will meet with my people here.

2 Chronicles 7:3 "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."

Seeing the "glory of the LORD" in the temple, the people were prompted and "worshipped ... praised the LORD", echoing the words (of Psalm 106:1).

The overwhelming, Holy Glory of God had also filled the tabernacle when it was finished (Exodus 40:34-35).

This dramatic appearance of the presence of the LORD brought adoration from the people who saw it.

Their statement, for He is good; His mercy endureth forever was spontaneous.

Verses 4-10

See the notes on 1 Kings 8:62-65 and 8:66.

2 Chronicles 7:4 "Then the king and all the people offered sacrifices before the LORD."

The number of sacrifices" suggests that a large crowd had assembled for the dedication of this magnificent temple.

They had come from great distances.

These were in addition to the ones they had already offered, that the fire from heaven devoured.

These were peace offerings which would be eaten by the priests and the people.

2 Chronicles 7:5 "And king Solomon offered a sacrifice of twenty and two thousand oxen, and a hundred and twenty thousand sheep: so the king and all the people dedicated the house of God."

(1 Kings 8:62-66).

The Great Feast of Dedication.

"Twenty and two thousand oxen, and a hundred and twenty thousand sheep":

These high numbers appear also (in 1 Kings).

"The people":

Kings has the old name, sons of Israel, and house of Jehovah for house of God.

This would have fed hundreds of thousands of people, so this was a tremendous gathering of people to dedicate the temple.

2 Chronicles 7:6 "And the priests waited on their offices: the Levites also with instruments of music of the LORD, which David the king had made to praise the LORD, because his mercy [endureth] for ever, when David praised by their ministry; and the priests sounded trumpets before them, and all Israel stood."

Performed them, some in offering sacrifices, others in blowing trumpets.

As it may be explained from the latter part of the verse.

"The Levites also with instruments of music of the LORD, which David the king had made to praise the LORD":

Under a divine direction, on which the Levites played to the songs of praise offered to the LORD, and by which they made music sacred to him.

"Because his mercy endureth for ever":

Which, as it was the close of their songs of praise, was the cause of them.

"When David praised by their ministry":

The songs sung being composed by him, and the instruments they played upon being of his invention, and used by his order.

"And the priests sounded trumpets before them":

Or rather over against them, that is, over against the Levites, as they were singing and playing on the instruments of music.

"And all Israel stood":

While this sacred and delightful service was performing, they both stood up, and stood by the priests and Levites, and joined with them in praising the LORD.

This was a tremendous gathering of the people.

There was singing and playing of instruments by the people David had set aside for that purpose.

This was a very festive celebration.

Each of the Levites served in the capacity David had assigned to them in advance.

The priests took care of the sacrifices.

The singers sang and the musicians played.

The trumpets were blown in proclamation of this happening.

2 Chronicles 7:7 "Moreover Solomon hallowed the middle of the court that [was] before the house of the LORD: for there he offered burnt offerings, and the fat of the peace offerings, because the brazen altar which Solomon had made was not able to receive the burnt offerings, and the meat offerings, and the fat."

From here, to the end of (2 Chron. 7:10), is the same with (1 Kings 8:64; see notes on 1 Kings 8:64-66).

Only mention is made in (2 Chron. 7:9), of the dedication of the altar, as if distinct from the dedication of the house, and hallowing the middle of the court (see Num. 7:10).

The thousands of animals being sacrificed were more than could be handled in the usual manner, so they sacrificed in the middle of the court also.

Verses 8-10

Solomon's celebration included the special assembly to dedicate the altar on the 8th to 14th of the 7th month (Sept. – Oct.), which included the Day of Atonement.

It was immediately followed by the Feast of Booths, or Tabernacles (15th to 21st), and a special assembly on the 8th day, i.e., 22nd day of the month.

2 Chronicles 7:8 "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."

"Solomon kept the feast seven days":

“The feast” was the Feast of Tabernacles (see Lev. 23:34-36).

"The entering in of Hamath unto the river of Egypt":

I.e. from the extreme north to the extreme south of the land.

The town Hamath was on the Orontes, through the valley of the Lebanon (Joshua 13:3, 5; Num. 13:21; 34:8; Judges 3:3; 2 Kings 14:25; 1 Chron. 13:5; Amos 6:2, 14).

The river of Egypt; or the river before Egypt (Joshua 13:3), was the Shihor, or Sihor, separating Egypt and Judaea.

This dedication of the temple and the sacrificial feast that went along with it lasted 7 days.

Not all of the sacrifices were made on one day.

Some sacrifices were made each day.

Verses 9-10

After the eight-day celebration of the “dedication”, Solomon also led the people in celebrating the Festival of Tabernacles (or (Ingathering) for “seven” days, which commemorated how God had brought His people out of Egypt (Lev. 23:33-44).

2 Chronicles 7:9 "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."

That is, on the twenty-second of the seventh month (Ethanim, or Tisri; 2 Chron. 5:3).

"They made a solemn assembly":

Compare (Lev. 23:36).

Not mentioned in Kings (1 Kings 8:66 says: “and on the eighth day he dismissed the people,” i.e., after this final gathering).

For they kept the dedication of the altar seven days":

The seven days preceding the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles, or the 8th to the 14th Ethanim, had been kept as an extraordinary festival on account of the inauguration of the Temple.

“And the feast seven days”:

After this festival, the Feast of Tabernacles was celebrated in due course for seven days more.

The tone of the solemn assembly changed from a festive occasion to a more serious tone.

The feasting stopped and this was a more holy day.

It was the beginning of the services in the temple for years to come.

"Eight" means new beginnings, and symbolized the new day that would begin.

2 Chronicles 7:10 "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 showed unto David, and to Solomon, and to Israel his people."

They kept the feast of the dedication of the altar seven days, from the second to the ninth.

The tenth day was the day of atonement, when they were to afflict their souls for sin, and that was not unseasonable in the midst of their rejoicings.

Then on the fifteenth began the feast of tabernacles, which continued to the twenty-second.

And thus, they continued to be employed in sacred services, and did not part till the twenty-third.

We ought never to begrudge the time that we spend in the worship of God, and in communion with him, nor think it long, or grow weary of it.

"Glad and merry in heart for the goodness":

That is, according to the Targum, "for the goodness of the LORD shown unto David, in opening the doors of the sanctuary.

And unto Solomon, whose prayer God had accepted, and had honored with his presence in the house which he had built.

And unto his people Israel, in his acceptance of their sacrifices, and sending down fire from heaven to consume them."

After the solemn assembly, Solomon sent the people home to their own tents.

The people who had seen the presence of God in the temple would have been very happy.

There was no doubt in their hearts left, for they had experienced the presence of the One True God.

A people are never satisfied until they are established in fellowship with their God.

The temple worship had done just that for them.

Verses 11-12

See note on 1 Kings 9:1-2.

Perhaps years had passed since the dedication of the temple (in chapter 6), during which he had also built “the king’s house” (compare 8:1).

After all that time, God confirmed that He had heard Solomon’s prayer (verse 12).

2 Chronicles 7:11 "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."

With which begins (1 Kings 11:1; see notes on 1 Kings 11:1).

The temple was built long before the house of Solomon.

This verse above seems to be a summation that Solomon could have whatever he desired for the temple, or for his own house.

2 Chronicles 7:12 "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 a house of sacrifice."

That God had accepted his prayer was shown by his sending fire from heaven.

But a prayer may be accepted, and yet not answered in the letter of it.

God therefore appeared to him in the night, as he had done once before (1 Chron. 1:7), and gave him an answer to his prayer.

From here to the end of the chapter, much the same things are related as in (1 Kings 9:2; see notes on 1 Kings 9:2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9).

Excepting (2 Chron. 7:13), which contain an answer to the requests made by Solomon in case of a famine or pestilence.

That when the people of Israel should humble themselves in prayer and supplication, the LORD would be attentive to them, and forgive them (7:14).

And which is given as a specimen, and as encouragement to expect the same treatment in all other cases mentioned in Solomon's prayer, they so behaving (2 Chron. 6:26).

We are not told whether this is a dream or a night vision.

We do know that the LORD let Solomon know that He accepted the temple, and that Solomon's request in the prayer would be answered as well.

God had chosen this place for the temple, before the death of David.

Verses 13-16

This section is almost all unique to 2 Chron. (compare 1 Kings 9:3), and features the conditions for national forgiveness of Israel's sins:

- (1) Humility;
- (2) Prayer;
- (3) Longing for God; and
- (4) Repentance.

2 Chronicles 7:13 "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;"

"Shut up heaven that there be no rain":

Deut. 11:17; 2 Chron. 6:26.

"If I command the locusts to devour the land":

That is, use my authority and power over them to cause them to do so.

A metaphor elsewhere used in reference to irrational animals (as 1 Kings 17:4, Amos 9:3), which are not properly capable of receiving a command, or of paying obedience to it.

Other national judgments are here supposed, such as famine, war, and the ravages of savage beasts.

"If I send pestilence":

2 Chron. 6:28; 1 Chron. chapter 21.

Notice these things come from God to cause people to repent of their sins.

Verses 14-15

While this promise was originally given to Solomon regarding the people of Israel, it is certainly applicable to all who will call on the LORD in repentance and faith.

These verses stand as a high expression of God's loving readiness to hear the prayers of a repentant people (compare 6:37-39; James 4:8-10).

2 Chronicles 7:14 "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."

Thus, national repentance and reformation are required.

God expects, that if his people, who are called by his name, have dishonored his name by their iniquity, they should honor it by accepting the punishment of their iniquity.

They must humble themselves under his hand, must pray for the removal of the judgment, must seek his face and favor.

And yet all this will not be sufficient, unless they turn from their wicked ways, and return to him from whom they have revolted.

National mercy is then promised.

"Humble themselves":

(Lev. 26:41), in a similar context.

"Seek my face":

(Psalms 24:6; 27:8).

"Turn from their wicked ways":

(Hosea 6:1; Isa. 6:10; Jer. 25:5).

"Then will I hear from heaven":

God will first forgive their sin, which brought the judgment upon them, and then will heal their land, and redress their grievances.

This verse serves as the guiding statement for the rest of (2 Chron. 12:6-7; James 4:10).

It would apply not only to the people as a whole but to individual kings such as Manasseh.

God's people cannot appropriately confront sin in other people's lives if they have not done so in their own.

Jesus speaks to this issue in (Matthew 7:1-6).

Solomon had asked God to hear their prayers and forgive them, and this was the answer.

Notice the big "if".

The blessings of God are conditional.

The people must repent and turn from their wicked ways and then the LORD will hear, and will answer their prayers.

Our country needs to heed this very Scripture today.

2 Chronicles 7:15 "Now mine eyes shall be open, and mine ears attent unto the prayer [that is made] in this place."

"For he speaks of the answers which he would give to the prayers which should afterward be made there (compare 2 Chron. 6:40).

Verses 16-20

God's "eyes and mine heart" represent His presence.

He would be connected to the temple as long as Solomon and the people sought and followed Him.

But if they rejected God, He would allow the temple to be destroyed as a visible symbol to other nations of Israel's sin.

The LORD was true to His word on both counts.

2 Chronicles 7:16 "For now have I chosen and sanctified this house, that my name may be there for ever: and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually."

This verse glances, as an answer to the contents, or spirit of the contents, of the second petition at (2 Chron. 6:18-21).

The beautiful touching condescension in the wording of the last clause.

"Mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually":

Will not escape notice.

God wanted to hear and answer their prayers.

He is holy and they must live up to the conditions He had set for that.

They must keep His commandments.

The effectual fervent prayer of a (righteous man), availeth much.

We must stay in right standing with God.

They were His children.

He wanted to help them.

He wanted to be their God, and them to be His people.

Verses 17-18

“If ... then”:

If there was obedience on the part of the nation, the kingdom would be established and they would have “a man to be ruler”.

Their disobedience was legendary and so was the destruction of their kingdom and their dispersion.

When Israel is saved (compare Zech. 12:14; Rom. 11:25-27), then their King Messiah will set up this glorious kingdom (Rev. 20:1).

2 Chronicles 7:17 "And as for thee, if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, and do according to all that I have commanded thee, and shalt observe my statutes and my judgments;"

"If thou wilt walk before me":

He promises to establish and perpetuate Solomon's kingdom, on condition that he persevered in his duty.

Assuring him, that if he hoped for the benefit of God's covenant with David, he must imitate the example of David.

"Walked":

Kings adds, “in perfectness of heart, and in uprightness.”

So Syriac and Arabic.

"Shalt observe":

R.V., wilt keep (as 1 Kings 9:4).

2 Chronicles 7:18 "Then will I stablish the throne of thy kingdom, according as I have covenanted with David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man [to be] ruler in Israel."

The LORD's answer to Solomon's dedicatory prayer (compare 1 Kings 9:1-9).

The general contents, and the order of the thoughts in the divine answer in the two texts, agree.

But in the Chronicle individual thoughts are further expounded than in the book of Kings, and expressions are here and there made clear.

The second clause of (2 Chron. 7:11), is an instance of this, where "and all the desire of Solomon, which he was pleased to do," is represented by "and all that came into Solomon's heart.

To make in the house of the LORD and in his own house, he prosperously effected."

Everything else is explained in the Commentary on (1 Kings chapter 9).

At the time God spoke this to Solomon, he was a man after God's own heart.

He was observing the statutes of God.

God wanted to bless Solomon, and He did bless Solomon, until Solomon sinned with his foreign wives.

2 Chronicles 7:19 "But if ye turn away, and forsake my statutes and my commandments, which I have set before you, and shall go and serve other gods, and worship them;"

Thou or thy seed.

"And forsake my statutes":

Thus, God sets before him death as well as life, the curse as well as the blessing.

He supposes it possible, that though they had this temple built to the honor of God, yet they might be drawn aside to worship other gods.

For he knew how prone they were to backslide into that sin.

And he threatens, if they did so, it would certainly be the ruin of both church and state.

2 Chronicles 7:20 "Then will I pluck them up by the roots out of my land which I have given 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."

That though they had been long in that good land, and had taken deep root in it, he would "pluck them up by the roots".

Would extirpate their whole nation, as men pluck up weeds in a garden, and throw them out upon the dunghill.

And that this sanctuary would be no sanctuary to them to protect them from the judgments of God, as they imagined.

God blesses those who are faithful, and curses those who do not keep His commandments.

To worship false gods was committing spiritual adultery.

This very thing did happen to the temple that God loved so much.

Actually God did not immediately destroy the temple and Jerusalem, until all of the people themselves, committed spiritual adultery also.

The temple burned during the war with the Babylonians when those of Judah fell to Babylon.

2 Chronicles 7:21 "And this house, which is high, shall be an astonishment to every one that passeth by it; so that he shall say, Why hath the LORD done thus unto this land, and unto this house?"

"And this house, which is high":

Not only for the magnificence of its structure, but for the intended ends and uses of it, could be brought down.

Laid in ruins, and made a cause of wonder and astonishment to every one that passed by, and to all the neighboring nations.

This too happened.

Those passing by could not believe the ruin that had come to so magnificent a temple.

They did hiss as they passed by.

2 Chronicles 7:22 "And it shall be answered, Because they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, which brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, and laid hold on other gods, and worshipped them, and served them: therefore hath he brought all this evil upon them."

And men shall say.

"Hath he brought":

Kings, "hath Jehovah brought."

So the Syriac and Arabic here.

Israel's and Judah's disobedience to God brought the wrath of God down upon their heads.

He did not destroy them, until they had forsaken Him.

Our God is a Jealous God.

He would not share His people with false gods.

2 Chronicles Chapter 7 Questions

1. When Solomon had made an end of praying, what happened?
2. What other Biblical event did this remind the author of?
3. Where was the glory of the LORD?
4. What did everyone do that saw the glory of God?
5. What two statements did the people make about God?
6. What did the king do, after the appearance of the presence of the LORD?
7. How did they begin to praise the LORD?
8. Why were trumpets blown?
9. Where did Solomon hallow to offer sacrifices, besides the usual places?
10. What kind of offerings were these?
11. How long did they keep the feast?
12. What did he do on the eighth day?
13. How did this differ from the feast?
14. What day of the month did he send the people to their own tents?

15. How were they feeling?
16. A people are never satisfied, until what happens?
17. The _____ was built long before the house of Solomon.
18. How did the LORD appear to Solomon?
19. What did He tell him?
20. Who sends the pestilence in verse 13?
21. What is the Word, in verse 14, that is so significant?
22. How do we know God wants to hear them?
23. What was the condition, if Solomon is to be blessed?
24. What did God say would happen, if Solomon turned away to other gods?
25. To worship a false god was _____.
26. When did these things really happen?