

1 KINGS 8:14-21, 54-61

A. Introduction

1. In our elders' meetings, we're tracing the story of King Solomon, from his coronation to his burial, as recorded in 1 Kings 1-11.

As well as seeing how he points us to the 'one greater than Solomon', we're going to focus in on what we can learn as elders from his life and particularly his downfall, as we seek to lead those whom God has made us overseers over.

2. With the building and furnishing of the temple complete, 1 Kings 8 records the dedication of the temple.

An extraordinary worship service that had five parts to it.

v1-13: Celebration as the ark is brought into the temple

v14-21: Solomon praises God for keeping His promises

v22-53: Solomon prays for forgiveness

v54-61: Solomon praises God for keeping His people

v62-66: Celebration as the temple is dedicated

3. From the celebrations that accompanied the arrival of the ark at the temple in Jerusalem in verses 1 to 13, we were reminded that Jesus is with us by His Spirit, that He has forgiven all our sins, that He has promised to never leave us or forsake us, and that He leads us by His Word.

Either side of the prayer Solomon prays in the middle of the chapter, he turns to the people who had gathered for the dedication of the temple and leads them in praising God for what He had done.

"While the whole assembly of Israel was standing there, the king turned round and blessed them. Then he said..." (1 Kings 8:14-15)

"When Solomon had finished all these prayers and supplications to the LORD, he rose from before the altar of the LORD, where he had been kneeling with his hands spread out towards heaven. He stood and blessed the whole assembly of Israel in a loud voice, saying..." (1 Kings 8:54-55)

B. Solomon praises God for keeping His promises

1. The promise God made.

Solomon reminds the people of the promise that God had spoken to his father David.

"For he said, "Since the day I brought my people Israel out of Egypt, I have not chosen a city in any tribe of Israel to have a temple built for my Name to be there, but I have chosen David to rule my people Israel. My father David had it in his heart to build a temple for the Name of the LORD, the God of Israel. But the LORD said to my father David. 'Because it was in your heart to build a temple for my Name, you did well to have this in your heart. Nevertheless, you are not the one to build the temple, but your son, who is your own flesh and blood – he is the one who will build the temple for my Name.'" (1 Kings 8:15-19)

The promise was that his son would build the temple.

2. The promise God kept.

Solomon reminds the people that God had kept this promise that He had spoken to his father David.

"The LORD has kept the promise he made: I have succeeded David my father and now I sit on the throne of Israel, just as the LORD promised, and I have built the temple for the Name of the

LORD, the God of Israel. I have provided a place there for the ark, in which is the covenant of the LORD that he made with our fathers which he brought them out of Egypt." (1 Kings 8:20-21)

God kept this promise in two particular ways: 1) By Solomon becoming king and 2) by Solomon building the temple.

3. As Solomon considers how God has kept the promise He made to David, He responds in praise.

"Praise be to the LORD, the God of Israel, who with his own hand has fulfilled what he promised with his own mouth to my father David." (1 Kings 8:15)

Do we do the same?

As we consider God's Word and how He has kept the promises He has made, does it cause us to rejoice and delight in God's faithfulness?

C. Solomon praises God for keeping His people

1. God has kept His people in the past.

"Praise be to the LORD, who has given rest to his people Israel just as he promised. Not one word has failed of all the good promises he gave through his servant Moses." (1 Kings 8:56)

From the time of Moses through to Solomon's day God has looked after His people.

He had promised to deliver His people from slavery in Egypt, and He did.

He had promised to drive His people's enemies from the land of Canaan, and He did.

He had promised to settle His people in the land, and He did.

He had promised to give them rest in the land, and He did.

2. God will keep His people in the future.

On the basis of God's faithfulness in the past, Solomon prays.

"May the LORD our God be with us as he was with our fathers; may he never leave us nor forsake us. May he turn our hearts to him, to walk in all his ways and to keep the commands, decrees and regulations he gave our fathers." (1 Kings 8:57-58)

He prays that God would continue to be with them.

He prays that God would turn the people's hearts to him so that they would love His Word and do His will.

He also prays that God by keeping His people would make Himself known to the nations.

"And may these words of mine, which I have prayed before the LORD, be near to the LORD our God day and night, that he may uphold the cause of his servant and the cause of his people Israel according to each day's need, so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the LORD is God and that there is no other." (1 Kings 8:59-60)

On the basis of God's faithfulness in the past, Solomon charges Israel to be faithful.

"But your hearts must be fully committed to the LORD your God, to live by his decrees and obey his commands, as at this time." (1 Kings 8:61)

Do we pray for God's presence to be with us? Do we pray for God to work in our hearts so that we are devoted to Him? Do we pray for God to make Himself known through us?

Do we charge the members of Banstead Community Church to be faithful to God, trusting that He will be faithful to them?