

## 1 Kings Chapter 8

Verses 1-21 (see 2 Chron. 5:2-6:11).

**1 Kings 8:1 " Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, the chief of the fathers of the children of Israel, unto king Solomon in Jerusalem, that they might bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of the city of David, which [is] Zion."**

“Elders ... heads”: The “elders” of Israel were respected men who were in charge of local government and justice throughout Israel (Exodus 18:13-26; Num. 11:16-30; 1 Sam. 8:1-9). They advised the king on important matters of state (1 Sam. 15:30; 2 Sam. 17:5; 1 Kings 12:6-11). The “heads” of the tribes or “leaders” were the oldest living males within each extended family unit. They were the ones responsible for learning the law and leading their families to obey it.

“Zion” was the hill that David took from the Jebusites, but later the name was applied to the temple area northward, in “the City of David”, Jerusalem. Solomon first assembled the leaders of Israel before addressing the “assembly of Israel” for the temple dedication (see 2 Sam. 7:12-13).

Solomon had possibly heard David tell of the problem they encountered when they moved the Ark to Jerusalem. Notice the elders, heads of the tribes, and the fathers of the children of Israel. We see that the Ark would be moved with great celebration. This is not really moving it out of Jerusalem, which is also known as Zion. This is the greatest event in their lives. They will be moving the Ark into the Holy of Holies in the temple. The Ark was called the Ark of the Covenant, because of the Ten Commandments carved on stone that were inside the Ark.

**1 Kings 8:2 "And all the men of Israel assembled themselves unto king Solomon at the feast in the month Ethanim, which [is] the seventh month."**

During the “feast” mentioned here, the Feast of Tabernacles (Lev. 23:33-43), the Israelites lived in temporary shelters to commemorate God’s miraculous provision in their journey to the Promised Land.

“Seventh month”: Solomon finished building the temple in the eighth month of the previous year (6:38; see 2 Chron. 5:1). All its detail signifying the magnificence and beauty of God’s nature and His transcendent and uncommon glory. The celebration, then, did not take place until 11 months later. Apparently, Solomon intentionally scheduled the dedication of the temple to coincide with the Feast of Booths or Tabernacles held in the seventh month, when there would be a general assembly of the people in Jerusalem. That was also a Jubilee year, so it was especially appropriate (Lev. 23:33-36, 39-43; Deut. 16:13-15).

This seventh month is spoken of without telling us which year it was. This feast is probably the Feast of Tabernacles, that all of the males were required to attend. Ethanim or the seventh month would be the same as our October.

Verses 3-8: Just as God had prescribed, the “priests” carried the Ark using long “poles” that passed through rings on its sides (Num. 7:9). This reflects God’s utter holiness, His separateness. No one can approach Him except on the conditions He sets. The priests kept the people from touching the Ark, an act that would lead to death (2 Sam. 6:7). Contrast this with the access God’s people have to Him today, through Jesus Christ (Heb. 10:19-22).

**1 Kings 8:3 "And all the elders of Israel came, and the priests took up the ark."**

To Zion, the city of David.

"And the priests took up the Ark; from thence": In (2 Chron. 5:4), it is said the Levites did it, whose business it was (Deut. 31:25). And so the priests might be called; for every priest was a Levite, though every Levite was not a priest. And the priests did at all times bear the Ark (see Joshua 3:15).

We know how important it is for no one except the priests, to touch the Ark. Even they must do this with staves run through hoops, so that they will not actually touch the Ark. The elders accompanied but the priests carried it.

Verses 4-6: “Brought up the Ark”: The Ark of the Covenant was transported by the priests and the Levites from the tent that David had made for it in Jerusalem (2 Sam. 6:17). They also brought to the temple the tabernacle and all its furnishings which had been located at Gibeon (2 Chron. 1:2-6). The Ark was placed into the Most Holy Place (verse 6).

**1 Kings 8:4 "And they brought up the ark of the LORD, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and all the holy vessels that [were] in the tabernacle, even those did the priests and the Levites bring up."**

For the significance of the Ark of the Covenant (see the note on 6:16-22). Although the Ark was now in permanent residence, the final abiding presence of God among His people would not occur here in Solomon’s temple (Ezek. 10:18-19; 11:22-23). The chronicler reports that the bringing in of the Ark was accompanied by great rejoicing, praise, and song (2 Chron. 5:11-13).

God had set aside the Levitical tribe to care for the Ark and the things in the tabernacle. Each thing must be carried by those who are dedicated to the LORD for that purpose. Each thing must be handled with utmost care. All of the vessels in the tabernacle had been dedicated to the LORD. They must be handled by those, who the LORD has designated.

**1 Kings 8:5 "And king Solomon, and all the congregation of Israel, that were assembled unto him, [were] with him before the ark, sacrificing sheep and oxen, that could not be told nor numbered for multitude."**

On this solemn occasion.

"Were with him before the Ark": While it was in the court of the priests, before it was carried into the Most Holy Place.

"Sacrificing sheep and oxen, that could not be told nor numbered for multitude": The phrase seems to be hyperbolic, and designed to denote a great number.

This sacrificing along the way was to show their gratitude to God for giving them the Ark (which symbolized His presence with them). The sacrifices were thank offerings. They sacrificed so many animals along the way that they lost count of how many.

**1 Kings 8:6 "And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD unto his place, into the oracle of the house, to the most holy [place, even] under the wings of the cherubims."**

Destined for it, the like to which it had in the tabernacle.

"Into the oracle of the house, to the Most Holy Place": That part of the house where the divine oracle was, the Holy of Holies. For though into it none but the High Priest might enter, and he but once a year; yet in case of necessity, as for the repair of it, which the Jews gather from hence, other priests might enter, as was the case now. A High Priest could not carry in the Ark himself, and therefore it was necessary to employ others; and besides, as yet the divine Majesty had not taken up his residence in it.

"Even under the wings of the cherubim": The large ones which Solomon had made (1 Kings 6:23), not those of Moses.

The lesson we studied on the cherubims in the Holy of Holies, told us that the entire wall was covered with the wings of the cherubims. The Ark containing the Ten Commandments would be placed just before the cherubims. The mercy seat covered the Ark. We must remember that everything in the Holy of Holies was pure gold, or 24 karat gold overlaid, because it was in the presence of God.

**1 Kings 8:7 "For the cherubims spread forth [their] two wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubims covered the ark and the staves thereof above."**

"Staves": God had originally commanded that staves or poles be used to carry the Ark (Exodus 25:13-15). They were left protruding to serve as a guide so the High Priest could be guided by them when he entered the dark inner sanctuary.

This is saying they actually hovered over the ark. The main thing they did was to keep curious eyes from seeing the Ark. No one was allowed into the Holy of Holies but the High Priest.

**1 Kings 8:8 "And they drew out the staves, that the ends of the staves were seen out in the holy [place] before the oracle, and they were not seen without: and there they are unto this day."**

“Unto this day”: The phrase is used from the perspective of one who lived and wrote before the destruction of the temple (in 586 B.C.). The writer of 1 Kings incorporated such sources into his book (9:13, 21; 10:12; 12:19).

The staves were not to be removed from the Ark. This possibly means they were brought forward, and someone saw them. Perhaps the reason for the staves being removed would mean that the Ark is now in its home to stay. It will not go forth anymore.

**1 Kings 8:9 "[There was] nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb, when the LORD made [a covenant] with the children of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt."**

“The Ark” contained only the “two tablets of stone” that communicated the “covenant” God made with His people (Deut. 9:9; 10:1-5, 8); and Ten Commandments (see note on Exodus 32:15-16).

“Two tables of stone”: At this time, the Ark of the Covenant contained only the two tablets inscribed with the Ten Commandments. The pot of manna (Exodus 16:33), and Aaron’s rod that budded (Num. 17:10), were no longer in the Ark (see Hebrews 9:4).

Earlier the Ark had contained the manna, the tables of the covenant, and the rod of Aaron that bloomed. The manna and the rod of Aaron were probably lost, when the Ark was taken by Israel's enemies, the Philistines, in battle. There was no monetary value to the two tables of stones, so the Philistines would not have taken them. The manna was in a pot of gold however, and the rod would have been usable as well.

Verses 10-12: As “the glory of the Lord had filled” the tabernacle at its inauguration (Exodus 40:34-35), so also it fills the temple. Rabbinic scholars spoke of the visible presence of God’s dwelling with His people as the Shekinah glory. The Shekinah glory had been with Israel at Sinai, had gone with them through the wilderness wanderings, and had led them into the Promised Land. Although it would later leave the temple (Ezek. 10:18-19), it would return to the millennial temple (Ezek. 43:1-5), and to His redeemed people Israel (Isa. 4:5). However, before that future day, God again tabernacled among His people in the person of His Son, Jesus Christ (John 1:14), who, having secured man’s redemption, now dwells within the believer, whom He has taken into union with Himself (Col. 1:15-22, 27; 2:9-10). Ultimately all believers will enjoy God’s presence throughout all eternity (Rev. 21:2-3). Note that as “the glory of the Lord had filled” both tabernacle and temple at their inauguration, so the Holy Spirit came in visible power to the church at its inception (Acts 2:1-4).

The cloud symbolized God's mystery, obscuring the view of Him. It also represented His nearness, He was present in a tangible way.

**1 Kings 8:10 "And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy [place], that the cloud filled the house of the LORD,"**

"The cloud": the cloud was "the glory of the Lord" (verse 11), the visible symbol of God's presence. It signaled the Lord's approval of this new temple. A similar manifestation took place when the tabernacle was dedicated (Exodus 40:34-35; see note on Lev. 9:23).

This is actually speaking of the Most Holy Place. This is the same cloud that went with the Israelites during the wilderness wanderings. This meant that God had accepted this temple. He would generally be in the Holy of Holies, but this is speaking of His presence all through the temple.

**1 Kings 8:11 "So that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of the LORD."**

Either through the darkness it first caused, or through the light that broke out of it, which was dazzling to them, or through the terror it struck their minds with. They could neither minister in the Holy Place, by offering incense there; and as for the Most Holy Place. None but the high priest could minister there, and that on one day only, or in the court of the priests; at the altar of burnt offerings.

"For the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord": A bright and glorious stream came forth from the cloud, and spread itself all over the house, and then took up its abode in the most Holy Place as in the tabernacle (Exodus 40:34).

The presence of the LORD was so great even in the Holy Place that the priests could not stand. The manifestation of the presence of the LORD had completely overcome them. They had been putting oil in the lamp, or another task of equal importance, when they were stopped ministering. No person can stand in the midst of the glory of the LORD. They will fall on their face in worship, as the priests did.

Verses 12-21: "Solomon's" dedicatory address (2 Chron. 6:1-42), takes the form of praise to "God" for His faithfulness to His "people" and to the terms of the covenant with "David". All that Solomon had accomplished had really been done by God's hand (verse 15).

See (2 Chron. 6:1-11).

Verses 12-13: Solomon's solemn declaration was addressed to the Lord. Solomon recognized the thick darkness as the manifestation of the Lord's gracious presence among His people (Exodus 19:9; 20:21; Lev. 16:2), and affirmed that he had built the temple so that the Lord could dwell there in the glory of thick darkness.

**1 Kings 8:12 "Then spake Solomon, The LORD said that he would dwell in the thick darkness."**

Perceived by this symbol that the Lord was come into his house to take up his dwelling in it. And then seeing the priests and people in consternation at it; spake the following words to their comfort.

"The Lord said that he would dwell in the thick darkness": And now was fulfilling his promise, and therefore to be considered not as a token of his displeasure, but of his gracious presence. This was done for the greater awe of the divine Majesty, and to denote the darkness of the former dispensation. Reference may be had to (Leviticus 16:2), or rather this was now said by the Lord. That is, it appeared to be his resolution and determination to dwell in this manner; the Targum is "the Lord is pleased to cause his Shekinah or divine Majesty to dwell in Jerusalem, in the temple there. This was imitated by the Heathens; hence the Lacedemonians had a temple dedicated to Jupiter Scotitas, or the dark, as Pausanias relates. And the Indian Pagans to this day affect darkness in their temples, and are very careful that no light enters into them but by the door, which is commonly strait and low, and by little crevices in the windows.

Solomon was overwhelmed that the LORD had obviously accepted the house he had built. The smoke was so thick, that it looked like darkness. Solomon was aware the LORD was in the midst of the darkness.

**1 Kings 8:13 "I have surely built thee a house to dwell in, a settled place for thee to abide in for ever."**

Turning himself from the priests and people, he quieted with a few words, he addressed the Lord; having built a house for him, for his worship and glory. With this view, that he might dwell in it, he was now, by the above token, fully assured it would be a habitation for him.

"A settled place for thee to abide in for ever": Which is observed in distinction from the tabernacle of Moses, which was often removed from place to place, otherwise this did not continue forever. Though Solomon might hope it would, at least unto the times of the Messiah. And indeed such a building on this spot, for such use, did continue so long, excepting the interval of the seventy years' captivity in Babylon.

As magnificent as the temple was, it was but an earthly house. Solomon's desire was for the LORD to live with his people. The temple was just a place for the Ark to rest. God is omnipresent (everywhere all at the same time). He could not be contained in this temple. He is pleased that Solomon and His people have built the temple, but it cannot, and will not house the LORD in His entirety.

Verses 14-21: Solomon turned around from addressing the Lord and spoke to the assembly of Israel gathered at the temple. Solomon (in verses 15-19), rehearsed the story of (2 Sam. 7:12-16), and claimed that he, having built the temple, had become the fulfillment of God's promise to this

father David (verses 20-21). However, Solomon's claim was premature because the Lord later appeared to him declaring the necessity of obedience for the establishment of Solomon's throne (9:4-9), an obedience which would be lacking in Solomon (11:6, 9-10).

**1 Kings 8:14 "And the king turned his face about, and blessed all the congregation of Israel: (and all the congregation of Israel stood;)"**

He was before the altar (1 Kings 8:22), with his face to that first, and looking towards the Holy and the Most Holy Place, filled with the cloud and glory. And now he turned himself and stood with the altar behind him, and looking to the court of the people.

"And blessed all the congregation of Israel": either blessed the Lord before them, or he prayed for blessings for them. Or congratulated them upon the Lord's taking up his residence in the temple, which was so great an honor and favor to them.

"And all the congregation of Israel stood": Ready to receive the king's blessing, and in honor of him, and reverence to the divine Being. The Jews say that none might sit in the court but the kings of the house of David.

The congregation was in honor of the occasion. Solomon blessed the people.

**1 Kings 8:15 "And he said, Blessed [be] the LORD God of Israel, which spake with his mouth unto David my father, and hath with his hand fulfilled [it], saying,"**

All praise and glory, honor and blessing, be ascribed to the Lord; who had afresh shown himself to be Israel's covenant God, by taking up his residence among them in the temple he had filled with his glory.

"Which spake with his mouth to David my father, and hath with his hand fulfilled it": Who graciously promised him he should have a son that should build a house for him, and which he had by his power and providence faithfully performed. Or rather which spake concerning David, so Noldius; for God did not speak with his mouth to David, but to Nathan, of him.

"Saying": As follows.

This praise to the LORD is spoken in front of Nathan and the people. David had been the beloved of the LORD. He did not allow David to build the temple, because he was a warrior. David had asked to build the temple and God fulfilled it in David's son, Solomon.

**1 Kings 8:16 "Since the day that I brought forth my people Israel out of Egypt, I chose no city out of all the tribes of Israel to build a house, that my name might be therein; but I chose David to be over my people Israel."**

This was now, about four hundred and eighty eight years prior (see 1 Kings 6:1).

"I chose no city out of all the tribes of Israel to build a house, that my name might be therein": He had chosen one in his mind from all eternity; but he had not made known this choice, nor the place he had chosen. He gave hints by Moses, that there was a place which he should choose, or declare he had chosen to put his name in, but did not express it (Deut. 12:5). But now it was a clear case that he had chosen Jerusalem. And that was the city he always had in view (see 2 Chron. 6:6).

"But I chose David to be over my people Israel": To be their king, and to him he gave the first hint of the place where the temple was to be built (1 Chron. 22:1). And he chose no man, and his family with him, before him, to rule over Israel, and be concerned in such a work (see 2 Chron. 6:5).

This is what the LORD had told David. God had not wanted them to have a king, but when they insisted on having a king like the other nations around them, so He gave them Saul. God was not pleased with Saul, because he did not obey the commandments of God. God sought out David to rule over his people. He was a man after God's own heart. God was pleased with David, and God was with him as the ruler of all Israel.

**1 Kings 8:17 "And it was in the heart of David my father to build a house for the name of the LORD God of Israel."**

His mind was disposed to it, his heart was set upon it, and he had taken up a resolution.

"To build a house for the name of the Lord God of Israel": For his worship and service, for his honor and glory (2 Sam. 7:3).

David wanted to build the LORD God a house, but he was not allowed to, because he was a man of war. With as much conflict as there was, it would have been impossible for David to work on the temple. David desired this in his heart so greatly that God promised him he would let his son, Solomon, build the temple.

**1 Kings 8:18 "And the LORD said unto David my father, Whereas it was in thine heart to build a house unto my name, thou didst well that it was in thine heart."**

By Nathan the prophet.

"Whereas it was in thine heart to build a house unto my name, thou didst well that it was in thine heart": His design was good, and so far it was acceptable to the Lord, that he thought of such a thing, though it was not his pleasure that should do it, as follows.

**1 Kings 8:19 "Nevertheless thou shalt not build the house; but thy son that shall come forth out of thy loins, he shall build the house unto my name."**

This is implied in the question found in (2 Sam. 7:5).



"But thy son that shall come forth out of thy loins, he shall build the house unto my name": Which is expressed in (2 Sam. 7:12).

God knew that David loved Him with all his heart. He was very pleased at the condition of David's heart.

**1 Kings 8:20 "And the LORD hath performed his word that he spake, and I am risen up in the room of David my father, and sit on the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised, and have built a house for the name of the LORD God of Israel."**

To David, concerning his son's building the temple.

"And I am risen up in the room of David my father, and sit on the throne of Israel, as the Lord promised": Succeeded him in the kingdom.

"And have built a house for the name of the Lord God of Israel": The temple he had now finished; and thus the promise to David was punctually fulfilled, that he should have a son that should succeed him in the throne, and build the house of the Lord.

Absalom had actually sought to be king, but Solomon never did. Solomon did not even ask to be king. He, like David, was chosen of God for this purpose. He was a man of peace, and there was plenty of time to build the Ark a permanent home. Solomon was chosen by David to be king. He was not even aware of this until he heard Nathan calling him king. Solomon was not conceited. He knew it was the LORD's love for David that put him into this position. He spoke of himself, as being as a little child in wisdom to lead the people. God miraculously endowed him with wisdom more than any other man of his time. God placed in the mind and heart of Solomon, the ability to build the temple.

**1 Kings 8:21 "And I have set there a place for the ark, wherein [is] the covenant of the LORD, which he made with our fathers, when he brought them out of the land of Egypt."**

The Most Holy Place.

Wherein is the covenant of the Lord": The two tables of stone, on which were the covenant of the Lord, as the Targum.

"Which he made with our fathers, when he brought them out of the land of Egypt": As in (1 Kings 8:9).

The purpose of the temple was to house the Ark. This was to be a permanent dwelling place. The tables with the Ten Commandments had been received by Moses, while they were on the way to the Promised Land. God had given specific instructions on how to build the Ark to contain the commandments. This temple in Jerusalem would be the first permanent house for the Ark.

## **1 Kings Chapter 8 Questions**

1. Who did Solomon call to be in attendance, when the Ark was moved?
2. Jerusalem is known as \_\_\_\_\_.
3. What month was the feast?
4. What is the feast, probably?
5. What month on our calendar would be their 7th month?
6. Who carried the Ark?
7. How did they carry it?
8. What did they bring to the temple, besides the Ark?
9. What tribe had God set aside, to care for the things of the tabernacle, or temple?
10. What did they sacrifice before the Ark?
11. What did the Ark symbolize?
12. Where would the Ark be placed?
13. Why is it mentioned, they removed the staves from the Ark?
14. What was in the Ark?
15. What else should have been in the Ark?
16. When the priests came out of the Most Holy Place, what happened?
17. What effect did the presence of the LORD have on the priests?
18. In verse 13, what does Solomon say he has done for the LORD?
19. Why was David not allowed to build the temple?
20. Who blessed the congregation?
21. Who had God spoken to, in verse 15?
22. God chose \_\_\_\_\_ to lead His people Israel.
23. What had been in the heart of David?
24. Who chose for Solomon to build the temple?
25. Which of David's sons wanted to be king?

26. What was the purpose of the temple?

27. Where had they received the Ten Commandments?