



SUNDAY, JUNE 10, 2018

INTRODUCTION:

As we journey on through *The Whole Story*, we come now to the story of King Solomon, David's son, dedicating the Temple he has just built for God. 1 Kings 8 is where we will spend our time for this lesson. It's **hard for us to appreciate what a magnificent structure it was. God had made Solomon **really, really wealthy**, and the Temple he built reflected that.**

It was **huge**. It took more than **150,000 laborers** more than 8 years to construct it. Everything was **layered in gold**. According to 1 Chronicles, Solomon used more than **4000 tons** of gold and **40,000 tons** of silver. The price of what he used, in today's value, would be more than **160 trillion dollars**. That is trillion, as in "T."

But the **most awesome thing about this Temple** was when the glory of God—in a thick, luminescent cloud—descended upon it. **1 Kings 8** tells us that the **cloud was so thick**, and the glory so bright, that the priests had to leave the temple. As you read 1 Kings 8, you find this prayer that describes **what the Temple was supposed to be**: a place of refuge for Israel, and a place where the foreigner could come and find salvation. This was the height of Israel's glory.

But sadly, **Israel did not heed what Solomon's final admonition** here... In fact, **Solomon himself** did not even stay faithful to the commands, decrees and laws of God. **Solomon had a weakness, women**. 700 wives, 300 concubines. He was the wisest man ever to live, **that is insane**. And he liked exotic women, so he married all these princesses from around the world, and they **brought their foreign gods** into his house with them. And he built little temples and shrines to their gods and even began to worship them himself.

This was a **harbinger of the entire future of Israel**. Israel is going to have a **succession of kings** that, on the whole, **not only tolerated** the worship of other gods, but gave themselves entirely to them. Now, it's **easy to remove ourselves from this and think**, "Well, we don't do that anymore. I don't have any shrines of false gods set up in my house. But, there are those things, those people, those idols that we will trust before we turn to God in prayer and allow him to have control of our life.

- **So here was the deal**. When you needed something, you could ask God like Solomon tells them to do, and wait on him, or you could turn to one of these false gods. And **a lot of times people got impatient with God and lost confidence that he'd really provide**, so they turned to idols. **Sadly, that is the course Israel chose**, and because of that, God eventually **sent them into exile**, out of the Promised Land, just like he promised he would.

- The **Assyrians invaded the Northern 10 tribes of Israel in 722 B.C.** and carried them off to captivity, and then the **Babylonians came in 586 B.C.** and took captive the final two, Southern tribes...
- **I want to leave 1 Kings 8 and go to Ezekiel, because right before the Southern two tribes—where the Temple was—was carried off into captivity,** the prophet Ezekiel has this vision about the temple.
 - *And the glory of the Lord went up from the cherub to the threshold of the house, and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was filled with the brightness of the glory of the Lord. **Ezekiel 10:4***
 - *Then the glory of the Lord went out from the threshold of the house, and stood over the cherubim. ¹⁹And the cherubim lifted up their wings and mounted up from the earth before my eyes as they went out, with the wheels beside them. And they stood at the entrance of the east gate of the house of the Lord, and the glory of the God of Israel was over them. **Ezekiel 10 :18-19***
 - *And the glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the city and stood on the mountain that is on the east side of the city. **Ezekiel 11:23***
- **And you read that, and you think, is that it? Is that the last chapter? Has the glory and presence of God departed forever?**
- Your Bible doesn't end in Ezekiel. God had **determined to bring salvation** to the human race. He had made **unconditional promises** to Abraham and David, and even **Israel's failures** would not stop him from keeping that promise. Jesus came and he went to the temple—a place designed to be a place where God's glory dwelt and they perverted it. Look at what Jesus himself says about the temple...
 - *"It is written, 'My house shall be a house of prayer,' but you have made it a den of robbers." **Luke 19:46** This was supposed to be a place where foreigners from other nations found hope in me; instead, you have turned it into a place to make money for yourselves.*
- **Jesus took out a whip and cleansed it, restoring it to its original purpose...**and then he **offered himself** as a sacrifice. Not 142,000 animals, like Solomon did, but himself. Because **animal blood could never take away** sin and cleanse the heart. Only his blood could.
- **His blood would do what no Temple,** no matter how beautiful, could ever do. It would **not only cleanse our sins** but **take it away,** and **change our hearts** so that we would love and seek God and not give ourselves to idols. **And then he said** whosoever will—foreigners from any nation on earth—can come to me and pray and **find forgiveness and healing** in my name.
- The **glory of God, Ezekiel predicted,** would no longer be found in a beautiful place, the temple, but in a beautiful person, Jesus. **And anyone who comes to him, from any nation,** by faith, for forgiveness and healing for their sin, will receive it. **AND those who come to God through his name,** in prayer, God will hear.