

Sermon, March 20, 2011
“The Temple of God”, 1 Kings 8:22-30
Pastor Thomas P. Bellhy

Review of the Books of History so far:

Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther

Joshua	entering, battling for, and taking possession of the “Promised Land” can only be done through the LORD your King.
Judges	The message of Judges...know your King.
Ruth	Knowing your King leads you to redemption
1 Samuel	Worldly kings have unrepentant hearts which lead to evil
2 Samuel	The true king is one after God’s own heart who loves and is obedient to the Father and teaches the people repentance.

Overview of 1 Kings:

- Takes place at some point in time during the Book of Judges, probably around 950 to 850 BC
- Author unknown, perhaps Jeremiah.
- 1 & 2 Kings originally written as one book 950-560 BC.
- The 6th book of history, 11th book of the Bible.
- **Outline of 1 Kings:**
 - 1-12 Solomon’s Reign as king over the united kingdom
 - 12-16 Israel (northern kingdom) from Jeroboam I to Ahab
Judah (southern kingdom) from Rehoboam to Asa
 - 17-22:40 Elijah and King Ahab
 - 22:41-50 Jehoshaphat, King of Judah
 - 22:51-53 Ahaziah, King of Israel

Major Themes of 1 Kings:

- The reign of Solomon and the completion of the King’s Palace and the Temple furthering the fulfillment of the Davidic covenant. David’s life and reign is used as the standard throughout 1 & 2 Kings.
- The Mosaic Covenant¹. The history of Israel’s kings are presented from a covenantal, rather than from a social, political or economic viewpoint. Assessments of the various kings are based upon their degree of obedience to the Mosaic covenant (Dt. 17:14-20). A major premise of the book is that obedience brings blessings, while disobedience results in judgment.
- The downward spiral of the kings and the people remind us of the book of Judges where the same degradation occurred. In Judges the people “did what was right in their own eyes.” In Kings the kings do the same.
- There was to be one true place of worship (Dt 12:1-14), which was to be the Temple in Jerusalem (1Kings 9:3; 2Kings 21:4,7).

While there are many lessons in 1 Kings, the one that stands as a comparison to the kings to follow is the establishment of the Temple of God.

God would direct the people where He was to be worshiped

- Almost 450 years prior to Solomon, God foretold of the place He would establish His name.
- **Deuteronomy 12:5** ⁵ *“But you shall seek the LORD at the place which the LORD your God will choose from all your tribes, to establish His name there for His dwelling, and there you shall come.*
- The people of Israel were freed from the bondage of slavery in Egypt, and wandered in the desert for 40 years. During the wilderness wanderings the people worshipped in a transportable shrine that they moved when the nation moved. Where the ark of the Covenant was kept in the tabernacle holy of holies, where the presence of God resided.
- Joshua led them into the “Promised Land” but did not conquer the Jebusites and their city Jebus.
- It was King David (400 years later; 2Sam 5) who eventually furthered the promise of the Mosaic covenant when he conquered the city of the Jebusites, Jerusalem.

¹ “NIV Archeological Study Bible”, Zondervan, p.480.

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The city of Jerusalem is the same area where another memorable event took place.

- When David took Jerusalem did he perhaps remember Dt 12, or further back in **Genesis 22:2** ² *He said, "Take now your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you."*
- The very place where Abraham was to sacrifice Isaac, the very place where Abraham's faith was true, the very place where the angel of the Lord stayed his hand with the knife and God provided the sacrifice of the ram in the bushes.
- Jerusalem had great significance in God's progressive revelation of His Christ to come.

While David conquered the city, Solomon completed David's plans for the Temple and Palace

- The Lord God kept his covenant promise to David through Solomon...
- **1 Kings 8:22-24** ²² *Then Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the assembly of Israel, and spread out his hands to heaven. ²³ He said, "O LORD, God of Israel, there is no God like you in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping covenant and steadfast love for your servants who walk before you with all their heart, ²⁴ the covenant that you kept for your servant my father David as you declared to him; you promised with your mouth and have this day fulfilled with your hand.*
- God fulfilled His promises
- The Temple, the single, official place of worship emphasized the truth that there is but one God.
- The temple had an outer court, an inner court, an outer room (the Holy Place), and an inner room (the Holy of Holies). The Holy of Holies housed the throne of God, the ark of the covenant. The entire temple was the earthly palace of the High King of Israel. In the temple the ark, which had accompanied the people in their wanderings after they left Egypt, found a resting place at last. The building of the temple was the final climax of the exodus.

There are at least three significant meanings for us today on the building of the temple:

- First, the temple signified the presence of God with the people.
1 Kings 8:27 ²⁷ *"But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Even heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you, much less this house that I have built*
We will learn later that the true King would come, the one God provided in Himself Jesus Christ. Jesus death on the cross conquered sin and death... **Matthew 27:51** ⁵¹ *And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth shook and the rocks were split.*
The Holy of Holies where the presence of God was signified was now open to His people.
1 Corinthians 3:16 ¹⁶ *Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?*
- Second, the temple showed God as house builder.
The first house God built was creation itself in Genesis 1. The temple symbolized God's people as his true house, measured out and built according to the detailed specifications of his covenant law.
1 Peter 2:4-5 ⁴ *And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God, ⁵ you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*
- Finally, the temple showed God's holiness. Only the high priest might enter the Holy of Holies, and then only once a year. God's greatness, and his separateness from sin, were graphically represented by the temple.
It is Jesus who is our great high priest who makes atonement for our sins.
Hebrews 4:14 ¹⁴ *Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.*
- God's presence is in your heart through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit,
- His presence is demonstrated through your actions as you live a life reflecting the obedience and love of Jesus Christ, God's presence is with us today as we gather in His name and sacrifice our praise, prayers, and ourselves to the Father. God is indeed with you.