



21 DAYS OF PRAYER

04

DAY 04

JANUARY 12, 2023

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KEY SCRIPTURES

I Kings 8:12–61

It was a great day of celebration! No expense was spared, all the leaders and all the people were assembled, and the sacrifices offered to God were too numerous to be counted. Solomon's magnificent temple was finished and was being dedicated to the Lord. It was a day to remember.

Have you ever had a day like that – a significant day of accomplishment? How did you celebrate? Solomon offered sacrifices to God, and Solomon prayed. Now, many of the prayers in the Bible are short; this one wasn't. What do we learn about God and about prayer from I Kings 8: 12–61?

Where does God live? Solomon begins his prayer by remembering that when Israel was in the wilderness, God's presence was in a cloud – the cloud on Mount Sinai and the cloud that led them day by day. Now the cloud of God's glory had filled the temple (I Kings 8: 10 & 11), but Solomon realized that God cannot be confined to a building regardless of how beautiful it might be. In verse 27 he declares “the heavens, even the highest heavens, cannot contain God”. Our God is bigger, greater and grander than even our universe. When we pray,

we should remind ourselves of the greatness of our God. Verse 23 reads “ - - there is no God like you in heaven above or on earth below”. Our God is unique. There is no other God worthy even to be compared. Verse 60 says “The Lord is God; there is no other”.

What kind of a God is He? He is a covenant keeping God (Verse 23). He is a promise keeping God (Verse 24). I really like verse 56 which states “Not one word has failed of all the good promises He gave”. One of my favourite portions of Scripture is Romans 4: 20 & 21 “ Abraham did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that what God had promised, He was able also to perform”. Hebrews 10:23 assures us “He who promised is faithful”, so when we pray, let's pray with faith, grounded in the promises of God.

God is great, God is faithful and God is kind. I Kings 8:23 tells us that God's covenant is a covenant of love. Others translate this verse as showing God's mercy or God's loving kindness. God is not only great, He is also good; not only majestic, but also merciful. Our prayers should begin, not with our needs, but with God's character.

But what did Solomon the wisest man in the world, pray for? He asked that God would not leave them. Thankfully, in this regard, we already have God's sure promise in Hebrews 13: 5 which reads "God has said 'I will never leave you, nor will I ever forsake you'". Hebrews is quoting Deuteronomy 31:6: the whole verse says "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified—for the Lord your God goes with you; He will never leave you nor forsake you".

Let's stand strong in the light of His presence!

We also join Solomon in praying for forgiveness when we fail God, for protection from our enemies, and for restoration when the Lord disciplines us. Solomon's real prayer is that God will hear and answer their prayers, and help them walk in the path of righteousness. That's our prayer too.

REFLECTIONS

- ▶ Can you remember a day when you had reason to celebrate?
How did you celebrate? Did you thank God?
- ▶ What is something that you can celebrate today?
- ▶ What fills you with wonder about the bigness, the majesty and the goodness of God?
- ▶ What are some of the promises of God that are significant to you?
- ▶ Do you have an awareness of God's presence?
Does knowing that God is with you give you strength and courage?

PRAYER

Dear Heavenly Father, today I worship you for your might and your majesty. You created the heavens and the earth; yet you have sent your Holy Spirit to live in me. Thank you for being present in my life. Please help me to be a show window of your love and your glory to those around me. Please shine your beauty through me. Thank you for being a covenant keeping God. Help me to rest in your promises. Today, I celebrate your goodness to me. Thank you. Amen.

