**Week of January 19, 2020**

**1 Kings 8:22-30, 52-53**

**Key Verse:** “23 And he said, LORD God of Israel, there is no God like thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath, who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants that walk before thee with all their heart:”

(1 Kings 8:23)

**22 And Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven: 23 And he said, LORD God of Israel, there is no God like thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath, who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants that walk before thee with all their heart: 24 Who hast kept with thy servant David my father that thou promised him: thou spakest also with thy mouth, and hast fulfilled it with thine hand, as it is this day. 25 Therefore now, LORD God of Israel, keep with thy servant David my father that thou promised him, saying, There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit on the throne of Israel; so that thy children take heed to their way, that they walk before me as thou hast walked before me. 26 And now, O God of Israel, let thy word, I pray thee, be verified, which thou spakest unto thy servant David my father. 27 But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have built? 28 Yet have thou respect unto the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication, O LORD my God, to hearken unto the cry and to the prayer, which thy servant prayed before thee today: 29 That thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day, even toward the place of which thou hast said, My name shall be there: that thou mayest hearken unto the prayer which thy servant shall make toward this place. 30 And hearken thou to the supplication of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, when they shall pray toward this place: and hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place: and when thou hearest, forgive.**

**52 That thine eyes may be open unto the supplication of thy servant, and unto the supplication of thy people Israel, to hearken unto them in all that they call for unto thee. 53 For thou didst separate them from among all the people of the earth, to be thine inheritance, as thou spakest by the hand of Moses thy servant, when thou brought our fathers out of Egypt, O Lord GOD**

**Understanding the Scriptures**

Last week, we learned that Solomon blessed the people and emphasized God’s faithfulness in allowing the completion of the Temple-a fulfillment of God’s promise to David. This week, the lesson focuses on Solomon’s dedication prayer. The prayer includes remembrance of two covenants: the Davidic covenant and the covenant at Mount Sinai. Solomon began his prayer by lifting and stretching out his hands, as he stood before the altar of the Lord in front of the entire community of Israel. Solomon praised God for His faithfulness in keeping His promise to Solomon father, David. Solomon glorified God with his words, recounting God’s promises. God had promised Israel that He would love and take care of them through the generations. Seven times, the prayer declares that God does not dwell in the Temple but in heaven. Solomon realized that God could not be contained in a physical structure. Although the Temple completion was an important accomplishment for Israel, Solomon asked God to always receive prayers offered in the Temple or directed toward it. The Temple would serve as a place of contact- a place where people would reverence God and pray. Solomon earnestly wanted God to hear and receive prayers that were directed at the Temple and invited God to dwell there.

Solomon established a pattern for how prayer would be received at the Temple. Solomon requested that God receive prayers that were made in the Temple, as well as prayer directed toward the Temple. These direction in prayer, physically directed toward Jerusalem and the Temple, became the standard practice of prayer within the Jewish religious culture. As he began the prayer, Solomon concluded this second part of the prayer (verse 53) by connecting the completion of the Temple of the history of Israel’s exodus from Egypt.

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