**Week of January 5, 2020**

**1 Kings 8:1-13**

**Key Verse:** “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.”

(1 Kings 8:11)

**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. 2 And all the men of Israel assembled themselves unto king Solomon at the feast in the month Ethanim, which is the seventh month. 3 And all the elders of Israel came, and the priests took up the ark. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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, 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. 12 Then spake Solomon, The LORD said that he would dwell in the thick darkness. 13 I have surely built thee an house to dwell in, a settled place for thee to abide in forever.**

**Understanding the Scriptures**

Today’s lesson examines the transport of the arc of the covenant from its temporary location in the lower part of Jerusalem to its new home in the Holy of Holies in Solomon’s Temple. Earlier we studied that God did not allow David to build his Temple, but He did honor David by allowing Solomon, David’s son, to build the Temple. The Temple that Solomon built would house the arc of the covenant, which symbolized God’s presence. Before the are of the covenant was placed in the Temple it was kept in a tent or tabernacle. The tabernacle was a portable place for worship designed for the people as they were traveling towards the Promise Land. The Temple was a permanent place in which to worship God after the Israelites were at peace in their land.

It took Solomon approximately seven years to build the Temple. There is no way to really know what the Temple looked like; however, the expensive jewels, metals, delicate architecture, and carefully selected decorations described in the Bible lets us know that Solomon’s Temple was magnificent.

Solomon recalled the mistakes made in the first attempt to bring the ark to Jerusalem. The Scripture notes the special role of the “elders of Israel”, the priests, and the Levistes in the procession to the Temple: carrying the ark, the tent and all the holy vessels. The ark was placed in the inner sanctuary of the Temple. This place was known as the “Most Holy Place.” The ark was positioned directly under the wings of cherubim, which adorned the Temple. Cherubim are mighty angels. After transporting the ark safely, the priests left the inner sanctuary. What happened next was wonderful to see. The inner sanctuary of the Temple was filled with a cloud of glory. The cloud represented God’s presence, and His acceptance and approval of the Temple. God’s presence in the Temple was so intense and overwhelming that the priest could not remain inside the Temple. It was God’s presence there that really made Solomon’s Temple special.

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