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Solomon's Prayer of Dedication

First Kings 8:22-30 and Second Chronicles 6:12-21

Solomon's prayer of dedication DIG: Which of God's purposes had Solomon seen fulfilled already? What promises does he hope to see fulfilled in the future? Why does Solomon pray as he does in First Kings 8:27-30? Why is that so crucial? What false impression might some get about the Temple? About God's locale? Why then would people pray toward the Temple?

REFLECT: On a scale of one (Yeshua is my buddy) to ten (Ha'Shem is so holy I could never approach Him), how would you rate your reverence toward ADONAI? What would be your rule of thumb for rating yourself? In which direction do you want to grow - more casual or more formal? Why? More spontaneous or more planned out? Does posture matter in prayer?

Every request that Solomon prayed for is answered in Yeshua Messiah.



Solomon's prayer is critical for understanding **First** and **Second Kings**, in terms of both theology and literary structure. The **prayer** stands as the climax of **Solomon's** grand ambition to build **a house** for **God**. It identifies the central practical and theological question raised by that building project: **Will the God of heaven really dwell with His**

people on earth? The prayer anticipates many important events that happen later in the Bible. The situations **Solomon** describes in **his prayers** for the future forgiveness are situations that **Isra'el** will actually face later on in **her** history: military defeat, famine, and exile (**to see link click Bn - Solomon's Prayer of Intercession**). Thus, this **prayer** serves as a preview of coming events.

This **prayer** is also important for a more practical reason, however: it helps us understand **the prayers** that **Yeshua** has made for us and that we are called to offer for the Church. As we listen to **Solomon pray**, we should remember that we too have a **King** who **prays** for us. **Messiah** is the greater **Solomon** who makes royal **intercession** for our salvation. Then **Yeshua** calls us to **pray** - not for any man-made **Temple**, but for the Church **He** calls a **holy temple being built together into a spiritual dwelling-place for God (Eph 2:21-22)**.

The king at prayer: King **Solomon's Temple** was built to be a **house of prayer**, so it was only appropriate for **it** to be dedicated with such. The **prayer he** offered was one of the longest and most important **prayers** in the whole Bible. With typical wisdom, **Solomon** gives us a good biblical model of **prayer** - not just when we are dedicating a place of worship, but anytime we go to **ADONAI** in **prayer**. The dedication ceremony began with **the king blessing** both **the people** and **their God** (see **Bl - Solomon's Blessing**). This was followed by public **prayer**, "**Then Solomon** got down on **his knees on a platform that he had made** for this special occasion **in the middle of the courtyard before the bronze altar of ADONAI, and in the presence of the whole community of Isra'el he spread out his hands toward heaven (First Kings 8:22; Second Chronicles 6:12-13)**."¹⁶⁶

Who God is: And said, "**ADONAI, God of Isra'el, there is no God like You in heaven above or on earth below.**" **Solomon** is genuinely moved on this occasion. It was a day of fulfilled desires and **prayers**, a day in which **YHVH** had graciously revealed **Himself in His** Sh'khinah glory, a day of bright hope for **Isra'el** and **the house of David in their covenantal** relationship with **YHVH**. When **Solomon** praised the greatness and uniqueness of **the LORD**, it was with a full and overflowing **heart**. What particularly moved **Solomon** on this occasion was the faithfulness of **ADONAI** in carrying out **His promise**.¹⁶⁷ **You keep covenant with Your servants and show them grace, provided they live in Your presence with all their heart. You have kept Your promise to Your servant David, my father; You spoke with Your mouth and fulfilled it with Your hand;** establishing a royal dynasty that endures through **Yeshua Messiah to this day (First Kings 8:23-24; Second Chron 6:14-15)**. **God** is not just talk. **He** not only says things, **He** also does things, and when **He** does those things, **He** does what **He** said **He** was going to do. The one true

God is totally loyal, absolutely trustworthy, and incomparably faithful.

Solomon's praise would also be our praise, because **Isra'el's** experience is our experience. **God** is still **the LORD** of **heaven and earth** - **the Ruler** of all that is. Nevertheless, **He** is also *our God* - the one that **Yeshua** called **My Father and your Father, My God and your God (John 20:17)**. Through faith in **Yeshua Messiah**, we have a personal relationship with the **God** of the universe. **He** is our **God** and we are **His people**.¹⁶⁸

What God will do: Praise to **the LORD** as the one and only faithful **God** is the context for everything we ask in **prayer**. We start by acknowledging **God** for who **He** is. Then we ask **God** to do what **He** has said **He** was going to do, knowing that **He is the Promise Keeper**. **Now therefore, ADONAI, God of Isra'el, keep what You promised to Your servant David, my father, when You said: "You will never lack a man in my presence to sit on the throne of Isra'el, if only Your children are careful about what they do, so that they live by My Torah, just as You have lived in My Presence."** Now therefore, **ADONAI, God of Isra'el, please let Your word, which You spoke to Your servant David, my father, be confirmed (First Kings 8:25-26; Second Chronicles 6:16-17)**.

People sometimes think of **prayer** as a way of asking **God** for things they want. Certainly it is appropriate to tell **the LORD** what we need. But **prayer** is also a way of asking **God** for the things that **God** wants, and the way we know what **He** wants is by believing **His promises**, as **Solomon** did. When **the king prayed** for the throne of **Isra'el**, **he** was not pursuing **his** own ambitions, but standing on **the promises of God**. **YHVH** had vowed that one day **David** would have **a son to sit on his royal throne**, on the condition of continued obedience. Now **King Solomon** was **praying** that **God** would honor that vow. As the royal **son of David**, **he** was counting on **God** to keep **His promise**. Looking to the future, **he** asked **God** to confirm **His** word by securing **his throne**. Ultimately, **Solomon's prayers for the house of David** were answered in **the Person** and work of **Yeshua Messiah**, who is **David's** royal descendant and **the King of the kingdom of God**.

If we can trust **God** to keep the big **promises** of the coming **Kingdom**, then surely we can trust **Him** to keep all the smaller **promises** **He** has made to us in **Messiah**, and then **pray** on that basis. Yet sometimes this is precisely the difficulty: although we believe that **God's Kingdom** will come, we have trouble believing that **He** will help us resolve the \$500 dispute with the insurance company, or give us the grace to deal with the irritating person we have to work with every day. Instead, what we ought to do is take a firm stand on **the promises of God**. **He** has **promised** to forgive our sins, provide for our basic needs, and give us something useful to do in the world. So, we should **pray** for wisdom, to be filled with **the**

Spirit, and put us in the right place to use our gifts for **His** glory. When we **pray** this way, **He** will surely answer, for we are asking **God** to do the very things **He** has **promised** to do.¹⁶⁹

The big question: Right in the middle of **his** prayer, **Solomon** asked a profound theological question. After praising **God** and **praying** for **Him** to keep **His** promises, **Solomon** posed the most important question **he** could ask about **the Temple** **he** had just completed for **ADONAI**. **Will the God of heaven really live with His people on earth (First Kings 8:27; Second Chronicles 6:18b)?** After all, what would **the Temple** be without its **God**? We sometimes ask the same question about our own personal ministry: Is **God** really with us or not? Is **He** involved in what we are doing, or are we operating on our own? Sooner or later, everyone asks the same question at the personal level, especially in times of crisis: Are **You** really there, **Lord**, and are **You** really here, in my situation, or not?¹⁷⁰

As far as **the Temple** was concerned, **the king** knew he couldn't put **God** in a box, even a box as big and beautiful as **the Temple**. The whole idea was absurd. **Why, Solomon** said: **heaven itself, even the heaven of heavens, cannot contain You; so how much less this house I have built?** After raising the big question of **God's** presence **on earth**, **he** proceeded to offer a **prayer** inviting the presence of the very **God** that **he** knew **he** could not contain. **Even so, ADONAI my God, pay attention to Your servant's (Solomon's) prayer and plea, listen to the cry and prayer that Your servant is praying before You today, that Your eyes will be open toward this house night and day - toward the place where You said You would put Your name - to listen to the prayer Your servant will pray toward this place.** The basic principle is that now when **the Jews** pray, they will be **praying** towards **the Temple** no matter where **they** happen to be in the world. **Yes, listen to the pleas of Your servant, and also those of Your people Isra'el when they pray toward this place. Hear from where You live in heaven; and when You hear, forgive (First Kings 8:28-30; Second Chronicles 6:18b-21).**

This is the very thing that **God** desires to do. **He** loves to listen to **His** children **pray**, and for the sake of **His Name**, **He** loves to answer our **prayers**. **He** is not blind and deaf, like the other gods to whom people **pray**. This is one of the reasons **He** is so incomparable; **He** is a looking and listening **God**, a **God** who sees and **hears**. Yes, **the LORD** is transcendent, the high ruler of **heaven**, but **He** is also near us and **He hears** us when we **pray**. **Heaven is My throne, ADONAI** says: **and the earth is my footstool; what is the house that you would build for Me, and what is the place of My rest? . . . But this is the One to whom I will look; he who is humble and contrite in spirit (Isaiah 66:1-2).**¹⁷¹

God's answer in Messiah: Every request that **Solomon prayed** for is answered in **Yeshua Messiah**. **He** is the ultimate answer to **Solomon's** question: **Will the God of heaven really live with His people on earth?** Yes, **Yeshua** is **Immanuel**, which means "**God with us**" (**Matthew 1:23**). **God the Son** became flesh in the person of **Yeshua Messiah**. **He** came as a man to live among our fallen race, to die for our sins on the cross, and then to rise again so that we could **live** with **Him** forever. Yes, in **Messiah**, **God** has **really lived with us on earth**.

Yeshua is also the ultimate fulfillment of **Solomon's** example. Just as **King Solomon** **prayed** for **His people**, so **King Yeshua** **prays** for us as our eternal intercessor (**Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25**). In the days of **Solomon**, the **LORD** put **His Name** on **His Temple**. Today **He** puts **His Name** on us as the living **temple of the Ruach Ha'Kodesh** (**Ephesians 2:21-22**). As **the people of God**, we bear **the Name** of **Messiah** in the world. So **Yeshua** **prays** for us, making royal intercession, asking that **God the Father** would turn **His heart** toward us, opening **His eyes and ears** to the needs of the Church.

These are **prayers** that **God** loves to answer. **His eyes** are always open to our needs. **His ears** are always open to our cries. **Call to Me, He says, and I will answer you (Jeremiah 33:3; also see Psalm 91:15 and Jeremiah 29:12)**. This is true for **the people of God** as individual believers. **God** knows our situation exactly; **He** is always watching to see what happens to **His** children. **He** is also listening to **hear** our **prayers, night and day**. **He hears** the requests we make from our beds, when we have quiet time to think, and easily get overwhelmed by the troubles of this life. **He hears the prayers** we make throughout the day, in the push and pull of daily life. **Night and day, God** always **hears** us when we **pray**.¹⁷²

*Dear Heavenly **Father**, Praise **You** for listening to the prayers of **Your** children. **But whoever did receive Him, those trusting in His name, to these He gave the right to become children of God (John 1:12)**. **You** are sovereign and over the whole world - yet **You** are such a wonderful Heavenly **Father** to listen to the prayers of each of **Your** children. Though **You** live outside of time, still it is so amazing that **You** really care for each of **Your** children, listen to their prayers and then act on what they ask for, when it is according to **Your** will! **Now this is the confidence we have before Him - that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us - whatever we ask - we know that we have the requests we have asked from Him (First John 5:14-15)**.*

*I desire to glorify **Your** name in my life. May **You** guide each detail of my life and give me*



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*wisdom on how to handle everything that comes my way, so that I may bring **You** honor and glory. Please go ahead of me, guiding what I say, what I do and think so that I may abundantly bless **You**. **You** know my needs. Please give me what I need and I will offer a sacrifice of praise to **You** for being such a wonderful, faithful and loving **father**! It is a joy to trust **You** for my needs and to always have the joy of your continually walking alongside me. **For God Himself has said: I will never leave you or forsake you (Hebrews 13:5c.)** Praise **You** always! In Yeshua's holy name and power of **His** resurrection. Amen*