

**Monday, July 22**

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**2 Chronicles 6:12 - 8:10**

**6 12** Then Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in front of the entire community of Israel, and he lifted his hands in prayer. **13** Now Solomon had made a bronze platform 7 feet long, 7 feet wide, and 4 feet high and had placed it at the center of the Temple's outer courtyard. He stood on the platform, and then he knelt in front of the entire community of Israel and lifted his hands toward heaven. **14** He prayed, "O LORD, God of Israel, there is no God like you in all of heaven and earth. You keep your covenant and show unfailing love to all who walk before you in wholehearted devotion. **15** You have kept your promise to your servant David, my father. You made that promise with your own mouth, and with your own hands you have fulfilled it today. **16** "And now, O LORD, God of Israel, carry out the additional promise you made to your servant David, my father. For you said to him, 'If your descendants guard their behavior and faithfully follow my Law as you have done, one of them will always sit on the throne of Israel.' **17** Now, O LORD, God of Israel, fulfill this promise to your servant David. **18** "But will God really live on earth among people? Why, even the highest heavens cannot contain you. How much less this Temple I have built! **19** Nevertheless, listen to my prayer and my plea, O LORD my God. Hear the cry and the prayer that your servant is making to you. **20** May you watch over this Temple day and night, this place where you have said you would put your name. May you always hear the prayers I make toward this place. **21** May you hear the humble and earnest requests from me and your people Israel when we pray toward this place. Yes, hear us from heaven where you live, and when you hear, forgive. **22** "If someone wrongs another person and is required to take an oath of innocence in front of your altar at this Temple, **23** then hear from heaven and judge between your servants—the accuser and the accused. Pay back the guilty as they deserve. Acquit the innocent because of their innocence. **24** "If your people Israel are defeated by their enemies because they have sinned against you, and if they turn back and acknowledge your name and pray to you here in this Temple, **25** then hear from heaven and forgive the sin of your people Israel and return them to this land you gave to them and to their ancestors. **26** "If the skies are shut up and there is no rain because your people have sinned against you, and if they pray toward this Temple and acknowledge your name and turn from their sins because you have punished them, **27** then hear from heaven and forgive the sins of your servants, your people Israel. Teach them to follow the right path, and send rain on your land that you have given to your people as their special possession. **28** "If there is a famine in

the land or a plague or crop disease or attacks of locusts or caterpillars, or if your people's enemies are in the land besieging their towns—whatever disaster or disease there is— **29**and if your people Israel pray about their troubles or sorrow, raising their hands toward this Temple, **30** then hear from heaven where you live, and forgive. Give your people what their actions deserve, for you alone know each human heart. **31** Then they will fear you and walk in your ways as long as they live in the land you gave to our ancestors. **32** “In the future, foreigners who do not belong to your people Israel will hear of you. They will come from distant lands when they hear of your great name and your strong hand and your powerful arm. And when they pray toward this Temple, **33**then hear from heaven where you live, and grant what they ask of you. In this way, all the people of the earth will come to know and fear you, just as your own people Israel do. They, too, will know that this Temple I have built honors your name. **34** “If your people go out where you send them to fight their enemies, and if they pray to you by turning toward this city you have chosen and toward this Temple I have built to honor your name, **35** then hear their prayers from heaven and uphold their cause. **36** “If they sin against you—and who has never sinned?—you might become angry with them and let their enemies conquer them and take them captive to a foreign land far away or near. **37** But in that land of exile, they might turn to you in repentance and pray, ‘We have sinned, done evil, and acted wickedly.’ **38** If they turn to you with their whole heart and soul in the land of their captivity and pray toward the land you gave to their ancestors—toward this city you have chosen, and toward this Temple I have built to honor your name— **39** then hear their prayers and their petitions from heaven where you live, and uphold their cause. Forgive your people who have sinned against you. **40** “O my God, may your eyes be open and your ears attentive to all the prayers made to you in this place. **41** “And now arise, O LORD God, and enter your resting place, along with the Ark, the symbol of your power. May your priests, O LORD God, be clothed with salvation; may your loyal servants rejoice in your goodness. **42** O LORD God, do not reject the king you have anointed. Remember your unfailing love for your servant David.”

**7 1** When Solomon finished praying, fire flashed down from heaven and burned up the burnt offerings and sacrifices, and the glorious presence of the LORD filled the Temple. **2** The priests could not enter the Temple of the LORD because the glorious presence of the LORD filled it. **3** When all the people of Israel saw the fire coming down and the glorious presence of the LORD filling the Temple, they fell face down on the ground and worshiped and praised the LORD, saying, “He is good! His faithful love endures forever!” **4** Then the king and all the people offered sacrifices to the LORD. **5** King Solomon offered a sacrifice of 22,000 cattle and 120,000 sheep and goats. And so the king and all the people dedicated the Temple of God. **6** The priests took their assigned positions, and so did the Levites who were singing, “His faithful love endures

forever!” They accompanied the singing with music from the instruments King David had made for praising the LORD . Across from the Levites, the priests blew the trumpets, while all Israel stood. **7** Solomon then consecrated the central area of the courtyard in front of the LORD ’s Temple. He offered burnt offerings and the fat of peace offerings there, because the bronze altar he had built could not hold all the burnt offerings, grain offerings, and sacrificial fat. **8** For the next seven days Solomon and all Israel celebrated the Festival of Shelters. A large congregation had gathered from as far away as Lebo-hamath in the north and the Brook of Egypt in the south. **9** On the eighth day they had a closing ceremony, for they had celebrated the dedication of the altar for seven days and the Festival of Shelters for seven days. **10** Then at the end of the celebration, Solomon sent the people home. They were all joyful and glad because the LORD had been so good to David and to Solomon and to his people Israel. **11** So Solomon finished the Temple of the LORD, as well as the royal palace. He completed everything he had planned to do in the construction of the Temple and the palace. **12** Then one night the LORD appeared to Solomon and said, “I have heard your prayer and have chosen this Temple as the place for making sacrifices. **13** At times I might shut up the heavens so that no rain falls, or command grasshoppers to devour your crops, or send plagues among you. **14** Then if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and restore their land. **15** My eyes will be open and my ears attentive to every prayer made in this place. **16** For I have chosen this Temple and set it apart to be holy—a place where my name will be honored forever. I will always watch over it, for it is dear to my heart. **17** “As for you, if you faithfully follow me as David your father did, obeying all my commands, decrees, and regulations, **18** then I will establish the throne of your dynasty. For I made this covenant with your father, David, when I said, ‘One of your descendants will always rule over Israel.’ **19** “But if you or your descendants abandon me and disobey the decrees and commands I have given you, and if you serve and worship other gods, **20** then I will uproot the people from this land that I have given them. I will reject this Temple that I have made holy to honor my name. I will make it an object of mockery and ridicule among the nations. **21** And though this Temple is impressive now, all who pass by will be appalled. They will ask, ‘Why did the LORD do such terrible things to this land and to this Temple?’ **22** “And the answer will be, ‘Because his people abandoned the LORD, the God of their ancestors, who brought them out of Egypt, and they worshiped other gods instead and bowed down to them. That is why he has brought all these disasters on them.’”

**8 1** It took Solomon twenty years to build the LORD ’s Temple and his own royal palace. At the end of that time, **2** Solomon turned his attention to rebuilding the towns that King Hiram had given him, and he settled Israelites in them. **3** Solomon also fought against the town of Hamath-

zobah and conquered it. **4** He rebuilt Tadmor in the wilderness and built towns in the region of Hamath as supply centers. **5** He fortified the towns of Upper Beth-horon and Lower Beth-horon, rebuilding their walls and installing barred gates. **6** He also rebuilt Baalath and other supply centers and constructed towns where his chariots and horses could be stationed. He built everything he desired in Jerusalem and Lebanon and throughout his entire realm. **7** There were still some people living in the land who were not Israelites, including the Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites. **8** These were descendants of the nations whom the people of Israel had not destroyed. So Solomon conscripted them for his labor force, and they serve as forced laborers to this day. **9** But Solomon did not conscript any of the Israelites for his labor force. Instead, he assigned them to serve as fighting men, officers in his army, commanders of his chariots, and charioteers. **10** King Solomon appointed 250 of them to supervise the people.

### **Romans 7:14 - 8:8**

**7 14** So the trouble is not with the law, for it is spiritual and good. The trouble is with me, for I am all too human, a slave to sin. **15** I don't really understand myself, for I want to do what is right, but I don't do it. Instead, I do what I hate. **16** But if I know that what I am doing is wrong, this shows that I agree that the law is good. **17** So I am not the one doing wrong; it is sin living in me that does it. **18** And I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. I want to do what is right, but I can't. **19** I want to do what is good, but I don't. I don't want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway. **20** But if I do what I don't want to do, I am not really the one doing wrong; it is sin living in me that does it. **21** I have discovered this principle of life—that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong. **22** I love God's law with all my heart. **23** But there is another power within me that is at war with my mind. This power makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me. **24** Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death? **25** Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord. So you see how it is: In my mind I really want to obey God's law, but because of my sinful nature I am a slave to sin.

**8 1** So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. **2** And because you belong to him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death. **3** The law of Moses was unable to save us because of the weakness of our sinful nature. So God did what the law could not do. He sent his own Son in a body like the bodies we sinners have. And in that body God declared an end to sin's control over us by giving his Son as a sacrifice for our sins. **4** He did this so that the just requirement of the law would be fully satisfied

for us, who no longer follow our sinful nature but instead follow the Spirit. **5** Those who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things, but those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit. **6** So letting your sinful nature control your mind leads to death. But letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace. **7** For the sinful nature is always hostile to God. It never did obey God's laws, and it never will. **8** That's why those who are still under the control of their sinful nature can never please God.

### **Psalm 18:1 - 15**

**18 1** I love you, LORD ; you are my strength. **2** The LORD is my rock, my fortress, and my savior; my God is my rock, in whom I find protection. He is my shield, the power that saves me, and my place of safety. **3** I called on the LORD, who is worthy of praise, and he saved me from my enemies. **4** The ropes of death entangled me; floods of destruction swept over me. **5** The grave wrapped its ropes around me; death laid a trap in my path. **6** But in my distress I cried out to the LORD ; yes, I prayed to my God for help. He heard me from his sanctuary; my cry to him reached his ears. **7** Then the earth quaked and trembled. The foundations of the mountains shook; they quaked because of his anger. **8** Smoke poured from his nostrils; fierce flames leaped from his mouth. Glowing coals blazed forth from him. **9** He opened the heavens and came down; dark storm clouds were beneath his feet. **10** Mounted on a mighty angelic being, he flew, soaring on the wings of the wind. **11** He shrouded himself in darkness, veiling his approach with dark rain clouds. **12** Thick clouds shielded the brightness around him and rained down hail and burning coals. **13** The LORD thundered from heaven; the voice of the Most High resounded amid the hail and burning coals. **14** He shot his arrows and scattered his enemies; great bolts of lightning flashed, and they were confused. **15** Then at your command, O LORD, at the blast of your breath, the bottom of the sea could be seen, and the foundations of the earth were laid bare.

### **Proverbs 19:24 - 25**

**19 24** Lazy people take food in their hand but don't even lift it to their mouth. **25** If you punish a mocker, the simpleminded will learn a lesson; if you correct the wise, they will be all the wiser.