

## INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

## FOURTH QUARTER: STUDIES IN JEWISH HISTORY.

## LESSON IX. THE TEMPLE DEDICATED.

B. C. 1004.]

Authorized Version.

1 Kings 8. 54-63. [Commit to memory verses 62, 63.]



54 And it was so, that when Solomon had made an end of praying all this prayer and supplication unto the LORD, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread up to heaven.

55 And he stood, and blessed all the congregation of Israel with a loud voice, saying,

56 Blessed be the LORD, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant.

57 The LORD our God be with us, as he was with our fathers: let him not leave us, nor forsake us:

58 That he may incline our hearts unto him, to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his judgments, which he commanded our fathers.

59 And let these my words, wherewith I have made supplication before the LORD, be nigh unto the LORD our God day and night, that he maintain the cause of his servant, and the cause of his people Israel at all times, as the matter shall require:

60 That all the people of the earth may know that the LORD is God, and that there is none else.

61 Let your heart therefore be perfect with the LORD our God, to walk in his statutes, and to keep his commandments, as at this day.

62 And the king, and all Israel with him, offered sacrifice before the LORD.

63 And Solomon offered a sacrifice of peace-offerings, which he offered unto the LORD, two and twenty thousand oxen, and a hundred and twenty thousand sheep. So the king and all the children of Israel dedicated the house of the LORD.

Revised Version.

54 And it was so, that when Solomon had made an end of praying all this prayer and supplication unto the LORD, he arose from before the altar of the LORD, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread forth toward heaven. And he stood, and blessed all the congregation of Israel with a loud voice, saying,

55 Ing. Blessed be the LORD, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his

57 servant. The LORD our God be with us, as he was with our fathers: let him not leave us, nor forsake us: that he may incline our hearts unto him, to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his judgments, which he com-

59 manded our fathers. And let these my words, wherewith I have made supplication before the LORD, be nigh unto the LORD our God day and night, that he maintain the cause of his servant, and the cause of his people Israel, as every day shall require:

60 That all the peoples of the earth may know that the LORD, he is God; there is none else. Let your heart therefore be perfect with the LORD our God, to walk in his statutes, and to keep his commandments, as at

62 this day. And the king, and all Israel with him, offered sacrifice before the LORD. And Solomon offered for the sacrifice of peace-offerings, which he offered unto the LORD, two and twenty thousand oxen, and an hundred and twenty thousand sheep. So the king and all the children of Israel dedicated the house of the LORD.

## EXPOSITORY NOTES.

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Verse 54. Solomon....praying all this prayer.

Solomon's prayer at the dedication is one of great length, occupying vers. 23-53 of this chapter. It is often read at the dedication of houses of Christian worship. Its three parts consist of 1) Adoration for the fulfillment of the promise to David (vers. 23, 24); 2) Prayer for its continued fulfillment, and for blessings on the concentration of worship at that place (vers. 25-30); 3) Supplication for specific blessings, as when smitten before enemies, in times of drought, famine, or plague, for the devout stranger, for success in battle and deliverance from captivity. Vers. 31-53. Before the altar. According to 2 Chron. 6. 13, Solomon during his address and prayer occupied a brazen scaffold in the midst of the court of the temple, where he was at once in presence of the altar of burnt-offering and the congregation of Israel. Kneeling....with his hands spread up to heaven. A most humble and appropriate attitude for the king while in the act of prayer. For the custom of spreading out the hands to heaven, comp. Exod. 9. 33; Ezra 9. 5; Psal. 28. 2; Isa. 1. 15.

55. **Stood, and blessed.** This benediction, uttered with a loud voice, was to some extent a recapitulation of the prayer. When the soul is intensely wrought up with religious fervor and interest, such repetitions and continuation become very natural.

56. **Hath given rest.** Israel had now first fully attained that condition of rest and peace for which Moses and his generation longed. All previous periods of rest from enemies had lacked the security and triumph realized by Solomon and his people at that hour. Not

failed one word. Such marked fulfillment of his good promise is ever a mighty strengthening of faith in God. By the hand of Moses. Comp. especially Deut. 12. 9-12.

57. **God with us....not leave us nor forsake.** Allusion to Moses also calls up these words of his in Deut. 31. 6. Comp. also Josh. 1. 5.

58. **Incline our hearts.** The heart does not naturally incline toward God, and only the divine Spirit from above can work within a disposition to turn thus toward him. **Walk....keep.** Devout inclination leads to a holy walking in the ways God has marked out for his people, and such a walk with God requires a strict observance of his commandments. Such an upright life will also be strengthened by attention not only to the letter and spirit of published commands, but also to statutes and judgments in which one may discover God's love of righteousness and hatred of all evil.

59. **Nigh unto the Lord....day and night.** There is a peculiar beauty in this thought. He desires that his words of supplication before Jehovah may abide "near Jehovah" all the time, so as never to pass from his notice; thus might they be like so many living voices making everlasting intercession for Solomon and Israel. **As the matter shall require.** The Hebrew is literally, "The word of a day in its day." That is, he would have all his words of supplication abide near Jehovah as so many living tongues, and according to the wants of each day, or, according as calamities or dangers come.