

STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF SOLOMON

STUDY NUMBER 13 – 1 KINGS 8:22-61

When we talk about the subject of prayer we all have something in common. Prayer is like exercise, we talk a lot about it but we don't get too much of it done. If I were to ask every one of you "What is your greatest concern", you would say the ineffectiveness or the lack of real vital prayer that brings you total and complete satisfaction. Teacher, student alike we would say we are not satisfied. You know that statement that floats around with all the executives, "No man, when he dies, ever wished he spent more time in the office." Most men, when they die, wished they spent more time with the Lord. What is it going to take to get serious about our prayer life? To spend quality time with Him. So much of our prayer life is so selfish.

(The Complete Book of Practical Proverbs & Wacky Wit, by Vern McLellan)

A teenager's view of prayer: "There are four answers to prayer—yes, no, wait awhile, and you've got to be kidding!"
p. 190

(The Great House of God by Max Lucado)

We're often content to ask for less. We entered The Great House of God with a satchel full of requests—promotions desired, pay raises wanted, transmission repairs needed, and tuitions due.

We'd typically say our prayers as casually as we'd order a burger at the drive-through: "I'll have one solved problem and two blessings, cut the hassles, please."

p. 61

Max Lucado is describing what most of us look at with regard to prayer. It's not to deepen our relationship to get to know God but, it's to get from Him what we want and what we need.

(Inspiring Quotations compiled by Albert M. Wells, Jr.)

The less I pray, the harder it gets; the more I pray, the better it goes.

Martin Luther

p. 159

The great tragedy of life is not unanswered prayer, but unoffered prayer.

F.B. Meyer

p. 160

We think we talk to Him about it. We think we spend

time with Him. The tragedy of tragedies is un-offered prayer.

Behind every work of God you will always find some kneeling form.

Dwight L. Moody

p. 160

Prayer is behind every great ministry.

(Spiritual Intimacy for Couples by Charles & Virginia Sell)

“Prayer—secret, fervent, believing prayer—lies at the root of all personal godliness.”

William Carey

p. 98

Now that I have talked to you a little about prayer, let's look at one.

Solomon is the second born son to David and Bathsheba. Their first son came out of an affair and, as an act of judgment, God took that little boy home. They had another boy and David and Bathsheba called him Solomon, Son of Peace. God says no, his name is Jedidiah, he is the one I delight in. He is heir of the throne until David is lying on his death bed and

Adonijah, third born right to the first born tries to take the kingdom. Bathsheba and Nathan, the prophet come running in and said, “Look we are history if you don’t do something. Adonijah has already called a press conference. He has the military and the religious and they are celebrating him being king. David said that is not going to happen. Remember, Solomon is put into the kingship. He is a very young man and inexperienced. When God comes to him and says, “What would you like?” David says, I want to be wise. God says, “oh that blesses me to no end, since you didn’t ask for money and long life; and being that you didn’t ask for all of these other things I am going to give them to you too. Here is a very wise king. He has one project he needs to perform in his lifetime. The one project is to fulfill his Dad’s dream and it is to build the temple. When David found out he wasn’t going to do that and his son was, he did everything to prepare for it. He drew the plans, got the gold, silver, craftsman and everything that was needed so when Solomon became king he could build it. We know we have forty years to work with. He is king forty years. First of all it took him four years to get his kingdom secure and get that together. He had to deal with Adonijah and other stuff that David left behind when he died. It took him four years to get that done. After the four year mark in his kingdom he starts building the temple. It took him seven years to do that. By the end of year eleven of a forty year kingdom he has the temple done and it is a fabulous structure. It took him thirteen years to build his house. In answer to this prayer the

fire of God falls. What we are going to look at is **WHY** everything falls apart for him in the later part of his life. I will tell you one thing, there are not too many guys who finish well in the bible. There is just a very small group who finish well and strong.

Solomon spent thirteen years to build his house and seven years to build the temple. You might be thinking that his priorities are fouled up. **NO**, you see the government, and everything that David did, and all the resources of the kingdom built the temple. No wonder it only took seven years. He had to draw the plans, hire the architect, and satisfy a bunch of women. He built a campus. He had a building for the throne room, a place for the armory, a place for Pharaoh's daughter to live, a place for him to live so it was literally a campus and that is why it took thirteen years. We are at year 24 and he only has sixteen years left. How much time do you have left? How much do you pray in view of how much time you have left? Are you like Jonah? He doesn't pray, he runs off in the other direction. Pays the fare, goes down to the ship and goes out in the middle of a storm. Does he pray? No, he never prays. Finally he gets thrown in the water and when he gets swallowed he prays. Are you going to wait that long? Finally, get serious with God; begin to talk to Him now. We should be spending quality time with Him. If you knew that you only had sixteen years left you could get real serious because you want to know Him well. You want to go into His presence and make the transition as easy as possible.

Let me tell you about this prayer as we are dedicating the temple. It is divided into three parts. One of the first things you learn when you pray is you PRAISE GOD before you ever petition HIM. “Our Father in Heaven, hallowed be your name”. You adore Him, you praise Him, you magnify Him with your heart, then you petition Him. Right in the middle of prayer we are going to have seven petitions and then He is going to pronounce the Benediction with the blessing on the people. In this lesson I am going to be jumping back and forth between Chronicles and Kings. Do you understand the difference between Kings and Chronicles? Kings is a politician writing, Chronicles is a priest. You get the religious aspect in Chronicles and you get the political aspect in Kings. Once in a while I am going to be teaching from both but, this lesson I will be teaching from is the political aspect. I will mention the religious once in a while when it is relevant. On the top of your page you might want to write the parallel passage 2 Chronicles 6:12. The dedication prayer is in the Chronicles passage. You might want to read it when you get home.

v. 22 Then Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord in front of the whole assembly of Israel, spread out his hands toward heaven

The Chronicles passage tells us one thing they built him a platform that is seven and one-half feet square and they covered it with bronze. It is four and one-half

feet high off the ground so everyone in Israel could see him as he is standing there. He is facing toward the altar of sacrifice. The first thing you need to know about prayer is you don't have any access in God's presence until you come to the altar of sacrifice. That little lamb was sacrificed, sin was dealt with and then you had access into the presence of God. You and I must behold the lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Romans 5:2:

Romans 5:2 through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.

He faces this altar as he begins to raise his hands to pray. Now, at sometime during this prayer, we don't know when he kneels. He is standing now with his hands toward heaven. I think when he is getting ready to petition he gets down on his knees. But, when he gets ready to pronounce the Benediction at the end, he gets back up and blesses the people. These first verses he praises the Lord:

v. 23 and said: "O Lord, God of Israel, there is no God like you in heaven above or on earth below—you who keep your covenant of love with your servants who continue wholeheartedly in your way.

If you are looking for some clues in this prayer, and you are trying to find something that will help Solomon, what would you find in that verse? [If you

continue wholeheartedly in your way.] Is there anybody in the bible who continued wholeheartedly in the way of the Lord? Remember that eighty-five year old guy by the name of Caleb? He and Joshua were the only two who got to go into the land. They were the ones who reported about the Kadesh Barnea. When Caleb is eighty-five years old he comes to Joshua and says “it is my turn to go in and I want Hebron. Remember the testimony of the three different guys. Moses said the thing about Caleb that you will always remember is that he wholeheartedly followed the Lord. Caleb said of himself, “the reason I am here tonight and the reason I am blessed Joshua 14:8:

Joshua 14:8 but my brothers who went up with me made the hearts of the people melt with fear. I, however, followed the Lord my God wholeheartedly.

Joshua 14:13-14 Then Joshua blessed Caleb son of Jephpunneh and gave him Hebron as his inheritance. So Hebron has belonged to Caleb son of Jephpunneh the Kenizzite ever since because he followed the Lord, the God of Israel, wholeheartedly.

What does it mean to wholeheartedly follow the Lord?

Coach Bill McCartney, in his book Sold Out say's it's Philippians 3:7-8:

Philippians 3:7-8 But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ.

v. 24 You have kept your promise to your servant David, my father; with your mouth you have promised and with your hand you have fulfilled it as it is today.

Isn't that good about the Lord? A promise made is a promise kept. It is a promise with **HIS MOUTH** and **HE ACCOMPLISHES** with **HIS HAND** because nothing is too hard for our great **GOD** when **HE** has made a promise. **HE** is faithful to perform it.

v. 25 "Now Lord, God of Israel, keep for your servant David my father the promises you made to him when you said, 'You shall never fail to have a man to sit before me on the throne of Israel, if only your sons are careful in all they do to walk before me as you have done.'

Condition, same blessings David has experienced will be his sons if they will be willing to walk before me as you have done. This is where the Chronicles passage helps so much. **2 Chronicles 6:16 IF ONLY YOUR SONS ARE CAREFUL IN ALL THEY DO TO WALK BEFORE ME AS YOU HAVE DONE – WALK IN MY LAW.**

Solomon you are praying some stuff that you need to remember. I ask myself this question and I would ask you too, how far along are you in the school of obedience? How much do you really have a desire to do and be obedient to the word of God as you know it and, as it is revealed to you? As with James you would say I am a doer of the word and not just a hearer only. I love YOUR WORD.

v. 26 And now, O God of Israel, let your word that you promised your servant David my father come true.

Notice how he magnifies the Lord in verse 27.

v. 27 “But will God really dwell on earth? The heavens, even the highest heaven, cannot contain you. How much less this temple I have built!

WILL GOD REALLY DWELL ON EARTH? He did in the tabernacle. He is going into the temple. At Christmas time he dwells in Jesus. The word “tabernacle” among us.

John 1:14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the Glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

He is dwelling right now. Do you know where? In your heart if you know Him because you are the temple of

the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 3:16 Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you.

You know, people do see Jesus in us because of the smile on our faces and the joy in our hearts. He does dwell on earth and He lives in us. That is the way he designed life through the relationship.

v. 28 Yet give attention to your servant's prayer and his plea for mercy, O Lord my God. Hear the cry and the prayer that your servant is praying in your presence this day.

There are three key words for prayer in that verse? There is the word PRAYER, PLEA and the word CRY. I wrote them all down and realized that we use, all three of those, at different times depending on the temperature of our circumstances. When everything is going great we say our prayers. When things get a little bit rough we start to make a PLEA, a call for help! But when the wagon turns over and things start to fall apart we cry and the Hebrew word is "a ringing cry". We fill the ears of God with the concerns we have. So the level of the intensity determines the kind of word that describes what we are doing when we pray.

v. 29 May your eyes be open toward this temple night and day, this place of which you said, 'My name

shall be there,' so that you will hear the prayer of your servant prays toward this place.

Now here comes verse 30. This is the verse upon which everything turns because after verse 30 we get into the seven petitions, one right after another.

v. 30 Hear the supplication of your servant and of your people Israel when they pray toward this place. Hear from heaven, your dwelling place, and when you hear, forgive.

Every one of these seven petitions has to do with FOREGIVENESS. It's the sense of being able to FORGIVE. Jesus hanging on the cross, what is the first thing he says. They drive the spikes in His Hands and in His Feet and he says, 'Father, forgive them for they don't know what they are doing'. Here, is the KEY ISSUE. When you come into the presence of God you must deal first with FOREGIVENESS, before anything else will happen.

2 Chronicles 7:14 If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

Daniel was such a righteous, godly prophet. Listen to his prayer:

Daniel 9:19 O Lord, listen! O Lord, forgive! O Lord,

Hear and act! For your sake, O my God, do not delay, Because your city and your people bear your Name.”

GOD FORGIVES, GOD HEARS and GOD ACTS in the situation. I will give you a little clue. When you get to verse 31 there are two words that help you understand the Seven Petitions that are in his prayer. Don't think just because these are Old Testament petitions that they don't relate to you. Every one of them relate to each of us. Lets see what we can learn from these Petitions. The KEY WORDS are “WHEN” and “THEN”. Petition one is in verse 31.

v. 31 “When a man wrongs his neighbor and is required to take an oath and he comes and swears the oath before your altar in this temple,

v. 32 then hear from heaven and act. Judge between your servants, condemning the guilty and bringing down on his own head what he has done. Declare the innocent not guilty, and so establish his innocence.

In other words we are just asking God to be God in inner personal relationships. When someone is guilty, then let the axe come down upon his own head. If he is innocent then let him be innocent.

If your integrity is right and your heart is right and, your motivation is right then you can trust God. You can trust God that He is going to be there to walk with

you through the situation because; he is the arbiter of inner personal relationships. You know that He is going to be there for you as His child. That is the first petition.

The second is a petition with regard to the matter of defeat in battle. You are saying I haven't been in a battle lately. Oh yes, you have. We are in a battle every day. You either win or lose. Look at the principle.

v. 33 “When your people Israel have been defeated by an enemy because they have sinned against you, and when they turn back to you and confess your name, praying and making supplication to you in this temple,

v. 34 then hear from heaven and forgive the sin of your people Israel and bring them back to the land you gave to their fathers.

Is there a time in the nation of Israel when they got whipped? Why did they get whipped? Do you remember in Joshua 6 when they go across the land and win that great battle? They march around Jericho. The surveillance crew comes to Joshua and say; we don't need to send the whole army up there because Ai is a small group. So Joshua listens and sends a few soldiers. That night they came back and there were thirty-six fatalities among the soldiers and Joshua was on his face and said:

Joshua 7:7 And Joshua said, “Ah Sovereign Lord, why did you ever bring this people across the Jordan to deliver us into the hands of the Amorites to destroy us?

Joshua 7:10 The Lord said to Joshua, “Stand up? What are you doing down on your face? Israel has sinned; they have violated my covenant, which I commanded them to keep. They have taken some of the devoted things; they have stolen, they have lied, they have put them with their own possessions.

Remember what they found out the next day. Achan stole some stuff he wasn't suppose to and buried it in the floor of his tent. By nightfall he and his whole family were burned and were under a pile of rocks. The next day they win at Ai.

I am just telling you if you are not winning much in your life and your experiencing defeat a lot it is probably because of sin. When you will trust in Jesus Christ and confess your sins before Him and you get your heart right before Him God will begin to give you the victory. May be some of the critical areas of your personal life where you have been harassed and defeated so much comes right back to the bottom line. There is something to be dealt with before you can experience the JOY of VICTORY with an adequate CHRIST providing the victory is yours because; all of the resources are in place. The problem wasn't with

God at Ai. The problem was with Israel. Achan, to be specific had to be dealt with before the victory can be there. Solomon knew that so he prayed for that in this wonderful prayer.

When you get to verses 35 and 36 you get to the third petition.

v. 35 “When the heavens are shut up and there is no rain because your people have sinned against you, and when they pray toward this place and confess your name and turn from their sin because you have afflicted them,

Can I ask you something? Does God need El Nino? He is sovereign of the seasons and sovereign of the weather. When things aren't going right He can turn off the clouds. Have we ever seen that in the bible?

1 Kings 18:20 Elijah went before the people and said, “How long will you waver between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him.”

There are a lot of verses:

Leviticus 26:18-20 ‘If after all this you will not listen to me, I will punish you for your sins seven times over. I will break down your stubborn pride and make the sky above you like iron and the ground beneath you like bronze. Your strength will be

spent in vain, because your soil will not yield its crops, nor will the trees of the land yield the fruit.

Deuteronomy 11:16-17 Be careful, or you will be enticed to turn away and worship other gods and bow down to them. Then the Lord's anger will burn against you, and he will shut the heavens so that it will not rain and the ground will yield no produce, and you will soon perish from the good land the Lord is giving you.

Deuteronomy 28:23-24 The sky over your head will be bronze, the ground beneath you iron. The Lord will turn the rain of your country into dust and powder; it will come down from the skies until you are destroyed.

v. 36 then hear from heaven and forgive the sin of your servants, your people Israel. Teach them the right way to live, and send rain on the land you gave your people for an inheritance.

Is God just limited to weather when he tries to get our attention about disobedience and sin in our life?

Look at the next petition verse 37.

v. 37 "When famine or plague comes to the land, or blight or mildew, locusts or grasshopper, or when an enemy besieges them in any of their cities, whatever disaster or disease may come.

Remember when David had three years because the economic situation got terrible.

David came in 2 Samuel 21:1:

2 Samuel 21:1 During the reign of David, there was a famine for three successive years, so David sought the face of the Lord. The Lord said, “It is on account of Saul and his blood-stained house; it is because he put the Gibeonites to death.”

David had to handle the Gibeonites' situation that he had inherited from Saul's prior reign before the RAIN came and it did. All these wonderful things tell us that God is very specific. It might be that each of us need to be on our faces before God to discover what it is that is keeping the blessing from God being poured out on our individual lives. You know the best phrase in this prayer is in the next verse.

v. 38 and when a prayer or plea is made by any of your people Israel—each one aware of the afflictions of his own heart, and spreading out his hands toward this temple—

Are you aware of the afflictions of your own heart? Am I aware of the afflictions of my heart? You would be if you knew what they were.

I said Lord, what are the afflictions of my heart?
The Lord said, SIN is the first one. We've all sinned and come short of the Glory of God.

SELFISHNESS is the second one when you are living for yourself. Everything that rises and sets during the day is centered around you.

The worst one of all is SATISFACTION with all of the here and now instead of the hereafter.

SIN, SELFISHNESS, SATISFACTION. We are aware of the afflictions of our heart. But have you ever been around somebody who has never, in his or her life, admitted that they are wrong and made a mistake. Whenever they come into contact with you they are denying, defending, excusing and rationalizing everything. Each one aware of the afflictions of his own heart. Now, you are saying, but, I don't know what mine are?

Psalm 139:23-24 Search me, O God, and know my heart, test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

Psalm 26:2-3 Test me, O Lord, and try me, examine my heart and my mind, for your love is ever before me, and I walk continually in your truth.

He will reveal as you humble yourself before Him and ask Him to. When you think of John Newton you always think of Amazing Grace don't you? What a great hymn. The further away you are from God the more you feel that you don't really need Him because you got it all together and everything is fine.

(Charles Haddon Spurgeon quotes:)

...John Newton when he wrote,--

“Physician of my sin-sick soul,
To thee I bring my case;
My raging malady control,
And heal me by Thy grace.”

“Pity the anguish I endure,
See how I mourn and pine;
For never can I hope a cure
From any hand but Thine.”

“Lord, I am sick, regard my cry,
And set my spirit free;
Say canst Thou let a sinner die,
Who longs to live to Thee”

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A person who is more broken and who walks with God is not living in denial with regard to afflictions of his heart.

v. 39 then hear from heaven, your dwelling place.

Forgive and act; deal with each man according to all he does, since you know his heart (for you alone know the hearts of all men),

Listen to Luke 16:15:

Luke 16:15 He said to them, “You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of men, but God knows your hearts. What is highly valued among men is detestable in God’s sight.

Jeremiah 17:10 “I the Lord search the heart and examine the mind, to reward a man according to his conduct, according to what his deeds deserve.

v. 40 so that they will fear you all the time they live in the land you gave our fathers.

When you see the word “*fear*” it’s to be afraid of God. Lets change the word to “*respect*”. I would like to translate this “*so they will respect the relationship they have with you*”. So I came up with five things that the fear of the Lord really is involved in:

- 1) I must recognize that I have a responsibility of my relationship to Him. I realize that I have a responsibility to this relationship. Just like you are married to someone you have a responsibility till death do us part in that relationship.

- 2) You must respect what he desires for your life. You are in a relationship, he knows you well and he created you for a specific purpose. You fear him by respecting what he desires for your life.
- 3) It is your responsibility to respond in obedience when he tells you what to do. The whole issue in the garden when Jesus said, “not my will but yours be done.
- 4) I have to repent when I have been disobedient.
- 5) I must realize that retribution is just when God gives me consequences for my disobedience.

Petition five is verse 41.

All of a sudden he begins to open his prayer up to a world wide prayer:

v. 41 “As for the foreigner who does not belong to your people Israel but has come from a distant land because of your name—

He opens it up and starts praying for the whole world. Why is Solomon so concerned on this Prayer of Dedication to pray for the foreigners who are going to come. The Lord said, “Have you looked at his family line recently?” You know who his Great, Great

Grandma was? Her name was Rehab, she was a prostitute. She was living in the city of Jericho. She hid a few slaves and as Paul Harvey would say, here is the rest of the story ... Rehab ended up marrying a little Jewish boy by the name of Salmon. Their relationship had a baby boy by the name of "Boaz". Boaz happened to marry a little Moabite girl that came back with Naomi from the land of Moad. They got married and had a little baby by the name of "Obed". Obed had Jesse. Jesse had David and twenty-six generations later you have Jesus Christ. So right in his own family are two foreign women, Rehab and Ruth. So it is fitting that he would pray that the nation would include these.

v. 42 for men will hear of your great name and your mighty hand and your outstretched arm—when he comes and prays toward this temple.

You see those three things. You want the people to know of YOUR GREAT NAME: EL LSHADDAI; the LORD ALMIGHTY.

YOUR MIGHTY HAND; HE IS THE CREATOR AND THE SUSTAINER.

YOUR OUTSTRETCHED ARM; NOTHING IS TOO HARD FOR YOU!

v. 43 Then hear from heaven, your dwelling place, and do whatever the foreigner asks of you, so that all the peoples of the earth may know your name and fear you, as do your own people Israel, and may

know that this house I have built bears your Name.

Petition Six he is praying they will experience victory in battle.

v. 44 “When your people go to war against their enemies, wherever you send them, and when they pray to the Lord toward the city you have chosen and the temple I have built for your Name,

v. 45 then hear from heaven their prayer and their plea, and uphold their cause.

You see that phrase “*uphold their cause*”. It is three times in these last verses. You can always count on God upholding your cause when it is His cause.

I found this little statement:

(God’s Little Devotional Book by Honor Books, Inc.)

God intervenes in the affairs of
men by invitation only.

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When they go to battle, God is ready with all the resources necessary to bring the victory.

Exodus 17:10-12 So Joshua fought the Amalekites as Moses had ordered, and Moses, Aaron and Hur

went to the top of the hill. As long as Moses held up his hands, the Israelites were winning, but whenever he lowered his hands, the Amalekites were winning. When Moses' hands grew tired, they took a stone and put it under him and he sat on it. Aaron and Hur held his hands up—one on one side, one on the other—so that his hands remained steady till sunset. So Joshua overcame the Amalekite army with the sword.

Joshua 10:7-14 So Joshua marched up from Gilgal with his entire army, including all the best fighting men. The Lord said to Joshua, “Do not be afraid of them; I have given them into your hand. Not one of them will be able to withstand you. After an all-night march from Gilgal Joshua took them by surprise. The Lord threw them into confusion before Israel, who defeated them in a great victory at Gibeon. Israel pursued them along the road going up to Beth Horon and cut them down all the way to Azekah and Makkedah. As they fled before Israel on the road down from Beth Horon to Azakah, the Lord hurled large hailstones down on them from the sky, and more of them died from the hailstones than were killed by the sword of the Israelites. On the day the Lord gave the Amorites over to Israel, Joshua said to the Lord in the presence of Israel: “O sun , stand still over Gibeon, O moon, over the Valley of Aijlaon. So the sun stood still, and the moon stopped, till the nation avenged

itself on its enemies, as it is written in the Book of Jashar. The sun stopped in the middle of the sky and delayed going down about a full day. There has never been a day like it before or since, a day when the Lord listened to a man. Surely the Lord was fighting for Israel.

2 Chronicles 20:17 You will not have to fight this battle. Take up your positions; stand firm and see the deliverance the Lord will give you, O Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Go out to face them tomorrow, and the Lord will be with you.”

Over and over in places, God withheld their cause.

Now the final Petition is in verses 46-51. It is amazing to me Solomon is like a prophet. He is praying that God will bring them back from captivity and this is future. The kingdom is still united.

Look at verse 46 “when they sin against you.” It is not “if they sin against you.

v. 46 “When they sin against you—for there is no one who does not sin—and you become angry with them and give them over to the enemy, who takes them captive to his own land, far away or near;

Because He knows they sin, we all sin. He says:

v. 47 and if they have a change of heart in the land where they are held captive, and repent and plead with you in the land of their conquerors and say, 'We have sinned, we have done wrong, we have acted wickedly';

v. 48 and if they turn back to you with all their heart and soul in the land of their enemies who took them captive, and pray to you toward the land you gave their fathers, toward the city you have chosen and the temple I have built for your Name;

You look at all those verses and they kind of all go together. What I found were eight things that will guarantee that you can have a brand new beginning with God. If you really want to get serious about your walk with God, these are the eight things that should grab you right out of the text.

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| 1) "have a change of heart," | V.47 |
| 2) "repent" | V.47 |
| 3) "plead with the Lord in your repentance | V.47 |
| 4) acknowledge "we have sinned." | V.47 |
| 5) "we have done wrong," | V.47 |
| 6) "we have acted wickedly," | V.47 |
| 7) 'THEY TURN BACK TO YOU WITH ALL THEIR HEART,' | V.48 |
| 8) they "PRAY TO YOU" | |

v. 49 then from heaven, your dwelling place, hear their prayer and their plea, and uphold their cause.

When it is HIS cause HE will uphold their cause.

v. 50 And forgive your people, who have sinned against you; forgive all the offenses they have committed against you, and cause their conquerors to show them mercy.

v. 51 for they are your people and your inheritance, whom you brought out of Egypt, out of that iron-smelting furnace.

I always get tickled when I think about Moses and the golden calf. Remember when Moses goes up on Mt. Sinai to get the tablets, he comes down and what has Aaron done, he built a golden calf and they are dancing around and worship. Moses gets so ticked he throws down the stones and they break and shatter in pieces. The next day he goes up the mountain and God is so mad and God says, "I am going to wipe them out, we are going to start all over again." Do you remember what Moses says, "Lord they are your people." The Lord says, "No, they are your people". They are playing ping-pong with the people of God. Who are they? So Solomon doesn't want to be mistaken. Look at that last phrase in verse 51: whom you brought out of Egypt, out of that iron-smelting furnace. They were in the iron-smelting furnace, are you in the iron-smelting furnace? God takes us in the furnace to change our burdens into

benefits and blessings when we are just willing to trust Him. Shadrack, Meshack and Abednego had to go through the fiery furnace.

Isaiah 48:10-11 See, I have refined you, though not as silver; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction. For my own sake, for my own sake, I do this. How can I let myself be defamed? I will not yield my glory to another.

1 Peter 4:12-13 Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his Glory is revealed.

(Detours, Tow Trucks, and Angels in Disguise; Finding Humor and Hope in Unexpected Places by Carol Kent)

“The refiner is never very far from the mouth of the furnace when his gold is in the fire.”

Charles Spurgeon

p. 129

(The Seeking Heart: Volume 4: The Library of Spiritual Classics by Fenelon)

Do not resist what God brings into your life. Be willing to suffer if that is what is needed. Over-activity and stubbornness will only increase your anguish.

p. 3

This next verse is so special.

v. 52 “May your eyes be open to your servant’s plea and to the plea of your people Israel, and may you listen to them whenever they cry out to you.

Lord, I want your eyes and ears. I want your eyes on this place and I want your ears to hear. I want you to look, I want you to listen to people who come here.

The reason is

v. 53 For you singled them out from all the nations of the world to be your own inheritance, just as you declared through your servant, Moses when you, O Sovereign Lord, brought our fathers out of Egypt,

Here comes the blessing.

v. 54 When Solomon had finished all these prayers and supplications to the Lord, he rose from before the altar of the Lord, where he had been kneeling with his hands spread out to heaven.

v. 55 He stood and blessed the whole assembly of Israel

in a loud voice saying:

v. 56 “Praise be to the Lord, who has given rest to his people Israel just as he promised. Not one word has failed of all the good promises he gave through his servant Moses.

v. 57 May the Lord our God be with us as he was with our fathers; may he never leave us nor forsake us

What is the answer to that?

Hebrews 13:5 Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God said, “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.”

v. 58 May he turn our hearts to him, to walk in all his ways and to keep the commands, decrees and regulations he gave our fathers.

May I ask you a question? What if Solomon had done that? That’s Proverbs 3:5-6.

Proverbs 3:5-6 Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.

That is almost exactly what he is praying for. Oh if it had been true of him what a different story we would

have to write.

v. 59 And may these words of mine, which I have prayed before the Lord, be near to the Lord our God day and night, that he may uphold the cause of his servant and the cause of his people Israel according to each day's need,

There is the third reference UPHOLD THE CAUSE. It was in Verse 45, Verse 49 and now Verse 59. Just like the manna came down from heaven each day.

v. 60 so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the Lord is God and that there is no other.

Now are you ready for the tragedy. The last verse.

v. 61 But your hearts must be fully committed to the Lord our God, to live by his decrees and obey his commands, as at this time.

What is wrong with that verse? Is there anything that troubles you about that verse? You see what troubles you is the teacher or preacher who says, YOU, YOU, YOU and he never identifies. Oh if he would have prayed that our hearts must be fully committed to the Lord our God. Your hearts have to be committed to the Lord our God. Loyalty of the heart would have changed so much of the biography we are going to be seeing in the days before us.

**(The Complete Book of Practical Proverbs & Wacky Wit
by Vern McLellan)**

**Don't bother to give God instructions; just report
for duty.**

Corrie ten Boom

p. 18

Does the Lord answer prayer? I have one last story.

**2 Chronicles 7:1 When Solomon finished praying,
fire came down from heaven and consumed the
burnt offering and the sacrifices and the glory of
the Lord filled the temple.**

**LESSON #1: When we begin to pray, our focus should
be upon the Father in praise.**

**LESSON #2: Lord, help us to be like Caleb and to
continue "wholeheartedly in Your way."**

**LESSON #3: Lord, with "Your mouth You have
promised" much in our Savior and You will fulfill
what You have promised with Your hand.**

**LESSON #4: Lord, as we come to You in prayer, make
each of us aware of the afflictions of our own
hearts.**

LESSON #5: Lord, it is amazing that You know our

hearts and that You still love us.

LESSON #6: With the Psalmist we would say, “Test me, O Lord, and try me, examine my heart and my mind, for your love is ever before me, and I walk continually in your truth” (Psalm 23:2-3).

LESSON #7: Lord, may You be able to uphold our cause
Because our cause is Your cause.

LESSON #8: Lord, thank You for the furnace experiences in our lives when You are in the process of purifying our minds and hearts.

LESSON #9: Lord, thank You that we can always count upon Your presence.

LESSON #10: Lord, help us to desire more than anything to put You first in our lives, to walk in Your ways, and to be obedient to Your Word.

LESSON #11: Lord, thank You for the confidence we have that You are there to meet each day’s need.

LESSON #12: Lord, may our hearts be fully committed to the Lord our God and that we are living by Your Word.

STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF SOLOMON

STUDY NUMBER THITEEN – 1 KINGS 8:22-61

8:22 Then Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord in front of the whole assembly of Israel, spread out his hands toward heaven

8:23 and said: "O Lord, God of Israel, there is no God like you in heaven above or on earth below— you who keep your covenant of love with your servants who continue wholeheartedly in your way.

8:24 You have kept your promise to your servant David my father; with your mouth you have promised and with your hand you have fulfilled it—as it is today.

8:25 "Now Lord, God of Israel, keep for your servant David my father the promises you made to him when you said, 'You shall never fail to have a man to sit before me on the throne of Israel, if only your sons are careful in all they do to walk before me as you have done.'

8:26 And now, O God of Israel, let your word that you promised your servant David my father come true.

8:27 "But will God really dwell on earth? The heavens, even the highest heaven, cannot contain you. How much less this temple I have built!

8:28 Yet give attention to your servant's prayer and his plea for mercy, O Lord my God. Hear the cry and the prayer that your servant is praying in your presence this day.

8:29 May your eyes be open toward this temple night and day, this place of which you said, 'My Name shall be there,' so that you will hear the prayer your servant prays toward this place.

8:30 Hear the supplication of your servant and of your people Israel when they pray toward this place. Hear from heaven, your dwelling place, and when you hear, forgive.

8:31 "When a man wrongs his neighbor and is required to take an oath and he comes and swears the oath before your altar in this temple,

8:32 then hear from heaven and act. Judge between your servants, condemning the guilty and bringing down on his own head what he has done. Declare the innocent not guilty, and so establish his innocence.

8:33 "When your people Israel have been defeated by an enemy because they have sinned against you, and when they turn back to you and confess your name, praying and making supplication to you in this temple,

8:34 then hear from heaven and forgive the sin of your people Israel and bring them back to the land you gave to their fathers.

8:35 "When the heavens are shut up and there is no rain because your people have sinned against you, and when they pray toward this place and confess your name and turn from their sin because you have afflicted them,

8:36 then hear from heaven and forgive the sin of your servants, your people Israel. Teach them the right way to live, and send rain on the land you gave your people for an inheritance.

8:37 "When famine or plague comes to the land, or blight or mildew, locusts or grasshoppers, or when an enemy besieges them in any of their cities, whatever disaster or disease may come,

8:38 and when a prayer or plea is made by any of your people Israel—each one aware of the afflictions of his own heart, and spreading out his hands toward this temple—

8:39 then hear from heaven, your dwelling place. Forgive and act; deal with each man according to all he does, since you know his heart (for you alone know the hearts of all men),

8:40 so that they will fear you all the time they live in the land you gave our fathers.

8:41 "As for the foreigner who does not belong to your people Israel but has come from a distant land because of your name—

8:42 for men will hear of your great name and your mighty hand and your outstretched arm—when he comes and prays toward this temple,

8:43 then hear from heaven, your dwelling place, and do whatever the foreigner asks of you, so that all the peoples of the earth may know your name and fear you, as do your own people Israel, and may know that this house I have built bears your Name.

8:44 "When your people go to war against their enemies, wherever you send them, and when they

pray to the Lord toward the city you have chosen and the temple I have built for your Name,

8:45 then hear from heaven their prayer and their plea, and uphold their cause.

8:46 "When they sin against you—for there is no one who does not sin—and you become angry with them and give them over to the enemy, who takes them captive to his own land, far away or near;

8:47 and if they have a change of heart in the land where they are held captive, and repent and plead with you in the land of their conquerors and say, 'We have sinned, we have done wrong, we have acted wickedly';

8:48 and if they turn back to you with all their heart and soul in the land of their enemies who took them captive, and pray to you toward the land you gave their fathers, toward the city you have chosen and the temple I have built for your Name;

8:49 then from heaven, your dwelling place, hear their prayer and their plea, and uphold their cause.

8:50 And forgive your people, who have sinned against you; forgive all the offenses they have committed against you, and cause their conquerors to show them mercy;

8:51 for they are your people and your inheritance, whom you brought out of Egypt, out of that iron-smelting furnace.

8:52 "May your eyes be open to your servant's plea and to the plea of your people Israel, and may you listen to them whenever they cry out to you.

8:53 For you singled them out from all the nations of the world to be your own inheritance, just as you declared through your servant Moses when you, O Sovereign Lord, brought our fathers out of Egypt."

8:54 When Solomon had finished all these prayers and supplications to the Lord, he rose from before the altar of the Lord, where he had been kneeling with his hands spread out toward heaven.

8:55 He stood and blessed the whole assembly of Israel in a loud voice, saying:

8:56 "Praise be to the Lord, who has given rest to his people Israel just as he promised. Not one word has failed of all the good promises he gave through his servant Moses.

8:57 May the Lord our God be with us as he was with our fathers; may he never leave us nor forsake us.

8:58 May he turn our hearts to him, to walk in all his ways and to keep the commands, decrees and regulations he gave our fathers.

8:59 And may these words of mine, which I have prayed before the Lord, be near to the Lord our God day and night, that he may uphold the cause of his servant and the cause of his people Israel according to each day's need,

8:60 so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the Lord is God and that there is no other.

8:61 But your hearts must be fully committed to the Lord our God, to live by his decrees and obey his commands, as at this time."

CONCLUSION:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular passage?

LESSON #1: When we begin to pray, our focus should be upon the Father in praise.

LESSON #2: Lord, help us to be like Caleb and to continue “wholeheartedly in Your way.”

LESSON #3: Lord, with “Your mouth You have promised” much in our Savior and You will fulfill what You have promised with Your hand.

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experiences in our lives when You are in the process of purifying our minds and hearts.

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LESSON #12: Lord, may our hearts be fully committed to the Lord our God and that we are living by Your Word.

QUESTIONS:

1. Read 1 Kings 8:22-61 and in your own words pull out the main thought of this passage.

2. What do you think is meant by the phrase “who continue wholeheartedly in your way” in verse 23?

3. What is the condition, in verse 25, for the Lord keeping His promises to Israel?

4. What is Solomon asking the Lord to do in verse 30?

5. What is Solomon asking the Lord to do in verse 36?

6. What do you think Solomon means by the phrase in verse 38, “each one aware of the afflictions of his own heart”?

7. What do you think Solomon means by the phrase “uphold their cause” in verses 45 & 49?

8. Outline the conditions that Solomon gives to the people in verse 61.

9. What verse in the study has meant the most to you?

10. What lesson have you learned from this study?
