

# CHAPTER 6

The glory of the Lord, in the vehicle of a thick cloud, having filled the house which Solomon built, by which God manifested his presence there, he immediately improves the opportunity, and addresses God, as a God now, in a peculiar manner, nigh at hand.

**I.** He makes a solemn declaration of his intention in building this house, to the satisfaction of the people and the honour of God, both of whom he blessed (v. 1-11).

**II.** He makes a solemn prayer to God that he would please graciously to accept and answer all the prayers that should be made in, or towards, that house (v. 12-42). This whole chapter we had before, with very little variation (~~1KIN2~~ 1 Kings 8:12-53), to which it may not be amiss here to look back.

## ~~1KIN2~~ 2 CHRONICLES 6:1-11

### SOLOMON BLESSES ALL ISRAEL

It is of great consequence, in all our religious actions, that we design well, and that our eye be single. If Solomon had built this temple in the pride of his heart, as Ahasuerus made his feast, only to *show the riches of his kingdom and the honour of his majesty*, it would not have turned at all to his account. But here he declares upon what inducements he undertook it, and they are such as not only justify, but magnify, the undertaking.

**1.** He did it for the glory and honour of God; this was his highest and ultimate end in it. It was *for the name of the Lord God of Israel* (v. 10), to be *a house of habitation for him*, v. 2. He has indeed, as to us, *made darkness his pavilion* (v. 1), but let this house be the residence of that darkness; for it is in the upper world that he dwells in light, such as no eye can approach.

**2.** He did it in compliance with the choice God had been pleased to make of Jerusalem, to be the city in which he would record his name (v. 6): *I have chosen Jerusalem*. A great many stately buildings there were in Jerusalem for the king, his princes, and the royal family. If God chooses

that place, it is fit that there be a building for him which may excel all the rest. If men were thus honoured there, let God be thus honoured.

**3.** He did it in pursuance of his father's good intentions, which he never had an opportunity to put into execution: "*It was in the heart of David my father to build a house for God;*" the project was his, be it known, to his honour (v. 7), and God approved of it, though he permitted him not to put it in execution (v. 8), *Thou didst well that it was in thy heart.* Temple-work is often thus done; one sows and another reaps (~~4067~~John 4:37, 38), one age begins that which the next brings to perfection. And let not the wisest of men think it any disparagement to them to pursue the good designs which those that went before them have laid, and to build upon their foundation. Every good piece is not an original.

**4.** He did it in performance of the word which God had spoken. God had said, *Thy son shall build the house for my name;* and now he had done it, v. 9, 10. The service was appointed him, and the honour of it designed him, by the divine promise; so that he did not do it of his own head, but was called of God to do it. It is fit that he who appoints the work should have the appointing of the workmen; and those may go on in their work with great satisfaction who see their call to it clear.

## ~~4162~~ 2 CHRONICLES 6:12-42

### SOLOMON'S PRAYER TO GOD

Solomon had, in the foregoing verses, signed and sealed, as it were, the deed of dedication, by which the temple was appropriated to the honour and service of God. Now here he prays the consecration-prayer, by which it was made a figure of Christ, the great Mediator, through whom we are to offer all our prayers, and to expect all God's favours, and to whom we are to have an eye in every thing where we have to do with God. We have opened the particulars of this prayer (1 Kings 8) and therefore shall now only glean up some few passages in it which may be the proper subjects of our meditation.

**I.** Here are some doctrinal truths occasionally laid down. As,

**1.** That the God of Israel is a being of incomparable perfection. We cannot describe him; but this we know, there is *none like him in heaven or in earth*, v. 14. All the creatures have their fellow-creatures, but the Creator has not his peer. He is infinitely above all, and *over all, God blessed for ever*.

**2.** That he is, and will be, true to every word that he has spoken; and all that serve him in sincerity shall certainly find him both faithful and kind. Those that set God always before them, and *walk before him with all their hearts*, shall find him as good as his word and better; he will both keep covenant with them and show mercy to them, v. 14.

**3.** That he is a being infinite and immense, whom the heaven, and heaven of heavens, cannot contain, and to whose felicity nothing is added by the utmost we can do in his service, v. 18. He is infinitely beyond the bounds of the creation and infinitely above the praises of all intelligent creatures.

**4.** That he, and *he only, knows the hearts of the children of men*, v. 30. All men's thoughts, aims, and affections, are naked and open before him; and, however the imaginations and intents of our hearts may be concealed from men, angels, and devils, they cannot be hidden from God, who knows not only what is in the heart, but the heart itself and all the beatings of it.

**5.** That there is no such thing as a sinless perfection to be found in this life (v. 36): *There is no man who sinneth not; nay, who doeth good and sinneth not*; so he writes, agreeable to what he here says, <sup><2020></sup>Ecclesiastes 7:20.

**II.** Here are some suppositions or cases put which are to be taken notice of.

**1.** He supposed that if doubts and controversies arose between man and man both sides would agree to appeal to God, and lay an oath upon the person whose testimony must decide the matter, v. 22. The religious reverence of an oath, as it was ancient, so, it may be presumed, it will continue as long as there are any remains of conscience and right reason among men.

**2.** He supposed that, though Israel enjoyed a profound peace and tranquillity, yet troublesome times would come. He did not think the mountain of their prosperity stood so strong but that it might be moved; nay, he expected sin would move it.

**3.** He supposed that those who had not called upon God at other times, yet, in their affliction, would seek him early and earnestly. “When they are in distress they will confess their sins, and confess thy name, and make supplication to thee.” Trouble will drive those to God who have said to him, Depart, v. 24, 26, 28.

**4.** He supposed that strangers would come from afar to worship the God of Israel and to pay homage to him; and this also might reasonably be expected, considering what worthless things the gods of the nations were, and what proofs the God of Israel had given of his being Lord of the whole earth.

### **III.** Here are petitions very pertinent.

**1.** That God would own this house, and have an eye to it, as the place of which he had said that he would put his name there, v. 20. He could not, in faith, have asked God to show such peculiar favour to this house above any other if he himself had not said that it should be his rest for ever. The prayer that will speed must be warranted by the word. We may with humble confidence pray to God to be well pleased with us in Jesus Christ, because he had declared himself well pleased in him — *This is my beloved Son*; but he says not now of any house, “This is my beloved place.”

**2.** That God would hear and accept the prayers which should be made in or towards that place, v. 21. He asked not that God should help them whether they prayed for themselves or no, but that God would help them in answer to their prayers. Even Christ's intercessions do not supersede but encourage our supplications. He prayed that God would hear from his dwelling-place, even from heaven. Heaven in his dwelling-place still, not this temple; and thence help must come. *When thou hearest forgive*. Note, The forgiveness of our sins is that which makes way for all the other answers to our prayers, *Removendo prohibens* — *The evil which it drives away it keeps away*.

**3.** That God would give judgment according to equity upon all the appeals that should be made to him, v. 23, 30. This we may, in faith, pray for, for we are sure it shall be done. God sitteth on the throne judging right.

**4.** That God would return in mercy to his people when they repented, and reformed, and sought unto him, v. 25, 27, 38, 39. This we also may, in

faith, pray for, building upon the repeated declarations God has made of his readiness to accept penitents.

**5.** That God would bid the strangers welcome to this house, and answer their prayers (v. 33); for, if there be in duty, why should there not be in privilege one law for the stranger and for one born in the land?

~~<122>~~Leviticus 24:22.

**6.** That God would, upon all occasions, own and plead the cause of his people Israel, against all the opposers of it (v. 35): *Maintain their cause*; and again, v. 39. If they be the Israel of God, their cause is the cause of God, and he would espouse it.

**7.** He concludes this prayer with some expressions which he had learned of his good father, and borrowed from one of his psalms. We had then not in the Kings, but here we have them, v. 41, 42. The whole word of God is of use to direct us in prayer; and how can we express ourselves in better language to God than that of his own Spirit? But these words were of use, in a special manner, to direct Solomon, because they had reference to this very work that he was now doing. We have them, ~~<123>~~Psalm 132:8-10. He prayer (v. 41),

**(1.)** That God would take possession of the temple, and keep possession, that he would make it his resting-place: *Thou and the ark*; what will the ark do without the God of the ark — ordinances without the God of the ordinances?

**(2.)** That he would make the ministers of the temple public blessings: *Clothe them with salvation*, that is, not only save them, but make them instrumental to save others, by offering the sacrifices of righteousness.

**(3.)** That the service of the temple might turn abundantly to the joy and satisfaction of all the Lord's people: *Let thy saints rejoice in goodness*, that is, in the *goodness of thy house*, ~~<124>~~Psalm 65:4. "Let all that come hither to worship, like the eunuch, go away rejoicing." He pleads two things, v. 42.

**[1.]** His own relation to God: "*Turn not away the face of thy anointed.* Lord, thou hast appointed me to be king, and wilt not thou own me?"

**[2.]** God's covenant with his father: *Remember thy mercies of David thy servant* — the *piety* of David towards God (so some understand it and so the word sometimes signifies), his pious care of the ark, and concern for it

(see ~~401~~ Psalm 132:1, 2, etc.), or the *promises* of God to David, which were mercies to him, his great support and comforts in all his troubles. We may plead, as Solomon does here, with an eye to Christ: — “We deserve that God should turn away our face, that he should reject us and our prayers; but we come in the name of the Lord Jesus, *thy anointed, thy Messiah* (so the word is), *thy Christ*, so the LLX. Him thou hearest always, and wilt never *turn away his face*. We have no righteousness of our own to plead, but, Lord, *remember the mercies of David thy servant*.” Christ is God's servant (~~341~~ Isaiah 42:1), and is called *David*, ~~315~~ Hosea 3:5. “Lord, remember his mercies, and accept us on the account of them. Remember his tender concern for his Father's honour and man's salvation, and what he did and suffered from that principle. Remember the promises of the everlasting covenant, which free grace has made to us in Christ, and which are called *the sure mercies of David*,” ~~355~~ Isaiah 55:3 and ~~413~~ Acts 13:34. This must be all our desire and all our hope, all our prayer and all our plea; for it is all our salvation.