

SECOND CHRONICLES

Chapter 7

The Dedication of the Temple

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.² The priests could not enter the temple of the LORD because the glory of the LORD filled it.³ When all the Israelites saw the fire coming down and the glory of the LORD above the temple, they knelt on the pavement with their faces to the ground, and they worshiped and gave thanks to the LORD, saying, “He is good; his love endures forever.”⁴ Then the king and all the people offered sacrifices before the LORD.⁵ And King Solomon offered a sacrifice of twenty-two thousand head of cattle and a hundred and twenty thousand sheep and goats. So the king and all the people dedicated the temple of God.⁶ The priests took their positions, as did the Levites with the LORD’s musical instruments, which King David had made for praising the LORD and which were used when he gave thanks, saying, “His love endures forever.” Opposite the Levites, the priests blew their trumpets, and all the Israelites were standing.⁷ Solomon consecrated the middle part of the courtyard in front of the temple of the LORD, and there he offered burnt offerings and the fat of the fellowship offerings,^a because the bronze altar he had made could not hold the burnt offerings, the grain offerings and the fat portions.⁸ So Solomon observed the festival at that time for seven days, and all Israel with him—a vast assembly, people from Lebo^b Hamath to the Wadi of Egypt.⁹ On the eighth day they held an assembly, for they had celebrated the dedication of the altar for seven days and the festival for seven days more.¹⁰ On the twenty-third day of the seventh month he sent the people to their homes, joyful and glad in heart for the good things the LORD had done for David and Solomon and for his people Israel.

7:1–11 The Chronicler makes a significant omission of 1Ki 8:54b–61, Solomon’s blessing of the people. (TLSB)

7:1–3 Not found in 1Ki 8. The addition of the fire descending from heaven to consume the sacrifices provides the same sign of divine acceptance as was given at the dedication of the tabernacle (Lev 9:23–24) and David’s offering at the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite (1Ch 21:26; cf. 1Ki 18:38). While vv. 1–3 are unique to Chronicles, the Chronicler has omitted Solomon’s blessing of the congregation (1Ki 8:55–61). (CSB)

7:1 FIRE CAME DOWN – God is certainly under no obligation to give signs and wonders to confirm his Word to those who doubt it (Luke 11:29). All the same, there are times when God did give his believers signs to confirm and strengthen the faith he had already worked in their hearts though the Word. When this happened, it was grace upon grace, gift piled high on top of gift. And whenever God did it, it was to show his people where they should look for their help in every time of need. That is why we know that God is present wherever believers gather around Word and sacrament and that when we call on God’s name, we are not speaking into thin air but to the God who is there. (PBC)

Probably lightning. God approved the dedicatory “burnt offering and the sacrifices” with fire from heaven, an event also associated with Aaron, Elijah, and David. (TLSB)

glory of the LORD. See 5:14 and note. (*cloud ... glory of the LORD.* Cf. 7:1–3. The glory cloud represented the presence of God. It had guided Israel out of Egypt and through the desert, and was present above the tabernacle (Ex 13:21–22; 40:34–38; cf. Eze 43:1–5; Hag 2:9; Zec 1:16; 2:10; 8:3). (CSB)

7:2–3 Recalls 5:11–14 and esp Ps 136:1. This is positive proof that the Lord accepted this temple as His dwelling place. (TLSB)

7:2 *priests could not enter.* Cf 5:14. (TLSB)

7:3 *He is good ... forever.* See v. 6; 5:13. (CSB)

7:1–3 The Lord shows His approval of the temple by igniting the sacrifices and filling the temple with His glory Today, many people crave such miracles and affirmation for their work and decisions. Remember that in all things the Lord guides us through His Word, which ignites our hearts and fills our minds with His affirmation. His goodness and steadfast love are surely ours in Christ. • Move my heart to trust You, Lord, whether or not I witness miracles. Ever lead me by Your affirming Word. Amen. (TLSB)

7:4 *offered sacrifice.* Dedicatory offerings continued for seven days (cf v 8). (TLSB)

7:6 The verse is unique to Chronicles and reflects the author’s overall interest in the Levites, especially the musicians (cf. 29:26–27; see note on 1Ch 6:31–48). (CSB)

Uniquely, the Chronicler includes this note as evidence of the fulfillment of David’s plans concerning the temple musicians (1Ch 23:5; 25). (TLSB)

7:8 OBSERVED THE FESTIVAL AT THAT TIME FOR SEVEN DAYS – We in the West are accustomed to logical outlies, questions and answers, speeches in which the theme is openly stated and where no one is left in the dark as to the

point of it all. It was the Chronicler's method – somewhat more commonly found in societies where the force of the oral word is strong (even in our society where basic biblical knowledge is very limited) – simply to tell the story, and retell it, and then tell it again. But hammering away at these themes, this master craftsman of the holy writings has impressed his point on his readers without ever having to say, “Here's the point. (PBC)

from Lebo Hamath to the Wadi of Egypt. Not only were the patriarchal promises of descendants provisionally fulfilled under David and Solomon (see 1:9; 1Ch 27:23–24 and notes), but also the promises of land (Ge 15:18–21). (CSB)

The kingdom's northern and southern boundaries (“Lebo” refers to Lebanon). (TLSB)

7:9 *eighth day.* The final day of the Feast of Tabernacles (see 5:3 and note; Lev 23:36; Nu 29:35). (CSB)

solemn assembly. Work would stop for the festival. (TLSB)

dedication of the altar. The Chronicler emphasizes the temple as a place of sacrifice as well as prayer. (TLSB)

seven days ... seven days. The dedication had run from the 8th to the 14th day of the month, and the Feast of Tabernacles from the 15th to the 22nd day. The Day of Atonement was on the 10th day of the 7th month (Lev 16; cf. 1Ki 8:65–66). (CSB)

7:10 Differs slightly from 1Ki 8:66. Note the emphasis on David and Solomon as a continuous headship of Israel. (TLSB)

The Lord Appears to Solomon

¹¹ When Solomon had finished the temple of the LORD and the royal palace, and had succeeded in carrying out all he had in mind to do in the temple of the LORD and in his own palace, ¹² the LORD appeared to him at night and said: “I have heard your prayer and have chosen this place for myself as a temple for sacrifices. ¹³ “When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command locusts to devour the land or send a plague among my people, 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. ¹⁵ Now my eyes will be open and my ears attentive to the prayers offered in this place. ¹⁶ I have chosen and consecrated this temple so that my Name may be there forever. My eyes and my heart will always be there. ¹⁷ “As for you, if you walk before me as David your father did, and do all I command, and observe my decrees and laws, ¹⁸ I will establish your royal throne, as I

covenanted with David your father when I said, ‘You shall never fail to have a man to rule over Israel.’¹⁹ “But if you^a turn away and forsake the decrees and commands I have given you^b and go off to serve other gods and worship them,²⁰ then I will uproot Israel from my land, which I have given them, and will reject this temple I have consecrated for my Name. I will make it a byword and an object of ridicule among all peoples.²¹ And though this temple is now so imposing, all who pass by will be appalled and say, ‘Why has the LORD done such a thing to this land and to this temple?’²² People will answer, ‘Because they have forsaken the LORD, the God of their fathers, who brought them out of Egypt, and have embraced other gods, worshipping and serving them—that is why he brought all this disaster on them.’”

7:12–22 The Lord visited Solomon a second time. The first visit was at Gibeon (1:3–13). (TLSB)

7:12 *appeared to him.* The second time God appeared to Solomon; the first was at Gibeon (1:3–13; 1Ki 9:2). (CSB)

7:13–16 Unique to 2Ch; the Lord’s response to specific petitions of Solomon’s prayer (6:26–31; 1Ki 8:35–40). Its inclusion serves the larger purpose of validating the temple as the place not only of sacrifice but also of prayer, and it brings forward the theme of repentance and restoration following rebellion and retribution. (TLSB)

7:13–15 Unique to Chronicles. These verses illustrate the writer’s emphasis on immediate retribution (see Introduction to 1 Chronicles: Purpose and Themes). The Chronicler subsequently portrays the kings in a way that demonstrates this principle (see v. 22). (CSB)

7:14 See, e.g., 12:6–7, 12. (CSB)

called by My name. In the blessing of the priests, the Lord’s name was placed on the people. (TLSB)

I HEAR...AND WILL FORGIVE – At the beginning of his response, God assures Solomon that he will indeed answer his penitent people’s prayers. Words like these are meant to give us the heart to take our needs to God in prayer. Through the Word we understand that God hears us not because our words have been finely crafted, nor because we have proven ourselves worthy of an audience with so great a Lord. He hears us because he has promised. Luther once ended a prayer saying, “It is not the worthiness of my prayer but the certainty of your truth that makes me firmly believe that (your answer to my requests) will be and remain yes and amen.” (PBC)

humble ... pray ... seek ... turn. The Lord uses a string of verbs to emphasize the actions of sincere repentance. *hear ... forgive ... heal.* Second string of verbs emphasizes the Lord's response to His people's repentance. (TLSB)

7:15 Cf 1Ki 8:52. (TLSB)

7:16 MY HEART WILL ALWAYS BE THERE – God also promised that he would always have his heart set on the temple. Though the building made by hands has long since disappeared, God's promise did not fail. Again we hear God's own voice declare in the NT, "This is my Son, whom I have chosen, listen to him" (Luke 9:35). In Christ we find God's gracious heart laid bare. (PBC)

Because the people repeatedly rebelled, the special role of the temple did not last.

7:17–18 See 1Ki 9:4–5. Such words as these reinforced ancient Israel's Messianic hopes. (CSB)

A definite messianic reference is found in the "man to rule Israel" (cf Mi 5:2), a stronger statement than in 1Ki 9:5. The everlasting nature of David's kingship would not be fulfilled by just any descendant, including Solomon. It would be fulfilled in the great and final Son of David, who lived and died but also rose again and lives forever.

7:19–22 See 1Ki 9:6–9. – In this section the Chronicler has let God himself give us the outline for the rest of his book. Israel and her kings will be unfaithful. They will worship other gods and disobey God's law. As a consequence, king and temple, people and land will bear the marks of God's wrath. The Chronicler wrote these words both to encourage and to warn the people of his own generation. A temple building alone was no guarantee of safety and well-being in the Land of Promise. As serious as God was in his promise of love, he was just as serious in his threats against those who despised his love by disobeying his law. (PBC)

The Lord anticipated the people's rebellion and the exile, recorded at the end of 2Ch. "From the beginning He has utterly uprooted all idolatry. Because of idolatry, He has uprooted both heathen people and Jewish people. To this day He overthrows all false worship, so that all who remain therein must finally perish" (LC I 35). (TLSB)