

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

May 21

MONDAY

Solomon prays that the temple will be a place where God carries out His rule over His people; a place where He judges the innocent and the guilty.

READ: I Kings 8:31-32

Instead of swearing upon the Bible, people in those days swore on the Temple.

"I swear, as if I were standing in the Temple, to tell the truth." And Solomon asks God to discern the truth at such times and to act justly. Be not deceived, God is not mocked. What a person sows, that he will reap. That's true in our lives and in eternity. Sow for eternity, and we will reap eternal blessings.

TUESDAY

Solomon prays that the Temple will be the place where God exercises His mercy. At times of military defeat, may it be the place where God's people fall before Him, confess their sin, and cry out for His mercy, he prays.

READ: I Kings 8:33-34

Do you notice the connection between military defeat and sin? Defeat is often explained by the words, *because they have sinned*. This is only part of the whole story, but it is a part! Some of the difficulties and defeats of life come upon us as a result of sin in our lives. They come as God's way of saying, "Look what your sin has brought upon you!" So, our response to life's problems should always include this possibility. Is God calling my attention to something in my life which is not right before Him? Is my best response to this problem now facing me to fall down on my knees and seek His forgiveness? The answer to that question at times may be YES.

WEDNESDAY

Solomon prays that the Temple will be the place where people come in time of drought and confess their sins to God. He prays that it will be a place where people are taught the right way to live.

READ: I Kings 8:35-36

When God's people confess their sin, they must also turn from it. It is then that God hears their prayer and gives His mercy. Confess and turn from it. That's the two-part response to sin in our lives. When we pray, "Lord, I have not kept you first in my life this week," that is not enough. We must turn from that and start doing those things which put God first. And, to turn from sin always results in us turning again to then Lord!

THURSDAY

Solomon prays that the Temple will be the place where people come to pray in time of famine, plague, defeat, disaster, or disease, and that each one who comes to pray will be aware of the sin in his own heart. May it be a place where people are forgiven and healed, and a place where they come to fear the Lord, he prays.

READ: I Kings 8:37-40

Solomon pictures (in vs.38) a man with a particular affliction (problem) coming before the Lord and spreading that problem out before the Lord. It's almost as if a person would lay out IOU's from a brother-in-law that he won't repay or photos of his kids who have chosen to walk away from the Lord. Is that an amazing picture! Here, God, are my greatest concerns in life. I spread them out before You. I do not know how to fix them or even how to deal with them, but I trust You with them completely. Unto You, O Lord, do I lift up the voice of my supplications!

FRIDAY

Solomon prays that God will hear those non-Jews people who come to the Temple to worship in the same way He hears the Jewish believers.

READ: I Kings 8:41-43

Solomon takes it for granted that non-Jewish people will, of course, hear of God's name and His mighty hand. It's not "if they hear" but "when they hear." Even in our day, God's purposes have not changed: God's plan is that His people would speak of Him and of His greatness to those who are not His people. And, some who hear will come to believe. It is our high calling in Christ Jesus to be calling others to Him - to be telling of His greatness!

SATURDAY

Solomon prays that God will hear the prayers of the army on the battlefield as the soldiers face towards the Temple in Jerusalem and pray.

READ: I Kings 8:44-45

Fighting battles was part of everyday life. It still is in places. Solomon prays that as they fight, God will bless them. But he doesn't say "as you go out." He says, "as you go in whatever way God sends you!" Isn't that wonderful! The steps of a godly man are guided by the Lord! He is leading you today. Your path is ordered of the Lord! And where He sends you, He has plans for you! Today, you can be useful to the Master!