

1 Ki 8:33 "When thy people Israel be smitten down before the enemy, because they have sinned against thee, and shall turn again to thee, and confess thy name, and pray, and make supplication unto thee in this house: 34 Then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy people Israel, and bring them again unto the land which thou gavest unto their fathers."

Solomon prays to God to forgive Israel, when they turn away from God, and are overcome by their enemies and carried away captive. Begging God to forgive Israel's sins and return them to the land of promise when they repent and pray toward the temple.

How can this be applied to our lives, as children of God in the New Testament Church? It applies to us as it did to the nation Israel. How? The New Testament Church is the kingdom of God on earth. Wherefore, when any portion of the organized church of God on earth turns from God to unbelief, they are already overcome by satanic evil. When God afflicts their consciences and they turn back to him, They can pray to Jesus, of which the temple is a picture, and Jesus will hear their prayer of faith and deliver them. We can also apply this in a personal application.

35 "When heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; if they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, when thou afflictest them: 36 Then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Israel, that thou teach them the good way wherein they should walk, and give rain upon thy land, which thou hast given to thy people for an inheritance."

Solomon prays that when Israel sins and God sends drought upon them as punishment, and Israel recognizes their sin and confesses it before God, looking and praying toward the temple, he asks God to teach them the good way and forgive them, and send rain and make the earth fruitful once more.

When the organized church has a dry spell, and they do not get to hear the preaching of the true gospel, and they realize that they are in a great drought and repent and confess their sin, Please, King Jesus, hear thou in heaven and forgive them. Not only forgive them, but teach them the good way wherein they should walk, fill their hearts and minds with the word of God, and send the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ to them once again, and remember they are thy people, for whom thou gavest thy life upon the earth.

37 "If there be in the land famine, if there be pestilence, blasting, mildew, locust, or if there be caterpillar; if their enemy besiege them in the land of their cities; whatsoever plague, whatsoever sickness there be; 38 What prayer and supplication soever be made by any man, or by all thy people Israel, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart, and spread forth his hands toward this house: 39 Then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive, and do, and give to every man according to his ways, whose heart thou knowest; (for thou, even thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men;) 40 That they may fear thee all the days that they live in the land which thou gavest unto our fathers."

Now Solomon brings forth a conglomerate of sins, which Israel may commit, and acknowledges that the Holy God must bring plagues of judicial judgment upon them for their sins. Yet, Solomon pleads to God that if they repent and pray toward this temple where your name is known, please forgive them, and instill reverent fear for you in their hearts, and return your blessing unto them.

We point out that King Solomon asks of God, whether it be an individual or the nation, please hear and forgive. This reminds us that Jesus is not only the Christ of the individual: Jesus is also King of the New Testament Church. Remember, Solomon says each man recognizes the plague in his own heart. This sets the example that it is necessary for an individual to go to God in prayer with repentance, so God will continue their communion. When this individual has been restored to the joy of the God's salvation, they can then assist others to understand why God has sent a plague and they may also repent. This process will continue until the whole congregation sees their individual plagues and the reason for them. Then, the whole church body can repent and pray to God for his continued communion and favor.

41 "Moreover concerning a stranger, that is not of thy people Israel, but cometh out of a far country for thy name's sake; 42 (For they shall hear of thy great name, and of thy strong hand, and of thy stretched out arm;) when he shall come and pray toward this house; 43 Hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for: that all people of the earth may know thy name, to fear thee, as do thy people Israel; and that they may know that this house, which I have builded, is called by thy name."

Solomon acknowledges that even strangers shall hear of the name of the Lord and his greatness. Solomon says strangers shall come to this land of promise seeking the blessings of the one true and living God. Solomon prays that when they come, hear thou their prayers also, and answer them with lovingkindness and blessing, that your most holy name may continue to be glorified upon all the earth. Solomon prays for the strangers to come to the same knowledge of God as Israel.

This is a prophetic picture of the New Testament Church, and the engrafting of the Gentiles into the favor of God. This is a good example of why we should be praying for those who are not a part of the New Testament Church. Remember on the Day of Pentecost these words at the close of the chapter: **Ac 2:47 "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."** We are to pray for the salvation of the unregenerate. Why? Remember the scripture in **Ac 2:46-47; 46 "And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, 47 Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."** When there is unity in the New Testament Church, and all the church is praising God, Jesus will give us favor in the eyes of the world, and will add to the church those for whom he died upon the cross.

44 "If thy people go out to battle against their enemy, whithersoever thou shalt send them, and shall pray unto the LORD toward the city which thou hast chosen, and toward the house that I have built for thy name: 45 Then hear thou in heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause. 46 If they sin against thee, (for there is no man that sinneth not,) and thou be angry with them, and deliver them to the enemy, so that they carry them away captives unto the land of the enemy, far or near; 47 Yet if they shall bethink themselves in the land whither they were carried captives, and repent, and make supplication unto thee in the land of them that carried them captives, saying, We have sinned, and have done perversely, we have committed wickedness; 48 And so return unto thee with all their heart, and with all their soul, in the land of their enemies, which led them away captive, and pray unto thee toward their land, which thou gavest unto their fathers, the city which thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for thy name: 49 Then hear thou their prayer and their supplication in heaven thy dwelling place, and maintain their cause, 50 And forgive thy people that have sinned against thee, and all their transgressions wherein they have transgressed against thee, and give them compassion before them who carried them captive, that they may have compassion on them: 51 For they be thy people, and thine inheritance, which thou broughtest forth out of Egypt, from the midst of the furnace of iron: 52 That thine eyes may be open unto the supplication of thy servant, and unto the supplication of thy people Israel, to hearken unto them in all that they call for unto thee. 53 For thou didst separate them from among all the people of the earth, to be thine inheritance, as thou spakest by the hand of Moses thy servant, when thou broughtest our fathers out of Egypt, O Lord GOD."

Solomon prays that when God sends them to battle, he will sustain them and give them victory. Solomon knows that Israel will sin against God, as they are prone to do, and he asks of God: when they sin against you and you send them into captivity in other lands, even then, if they repent with their whole heart, have compassion upon them, and give them favor in the sight of their enemies, for they are thy people, called by thy name. They are thine inheritance, and as such they should be separated from the rest of the world and recognized as thy people.

Here, we see a prophetic picture of Jesus praying for the New Testament church and its salvation. Jesus knows that we are men with inherited sin natures, and even though that nature has been overcome with the new nature of Christ in us, we will sometimes yield ourselves to that old nature and fall in sin. Jesus reminds us, as Solomon is reminding Israel, we have a daily battle to fight against our old inherited sin nature, and we need to send up our prayers to Jesus for his divine protection from our own sin nature, which is a daily battle. As Solomon reminds Israel to pray toward this place where God has placed his name, in that age of the law, that God would hear in heaven and answer their prayers. Where does the New Testament Church pray toward? They

pray toward the eternal heaven, the city where Jesus dwells, and he has built a house for all of God's people. Jesus has already prayed for our protection, but we must pray to Jesus for his continued protection in our daily warfare, that the cause of Christ might be maintained upon the earth.

Solomon prays that when the people sin, and are overcome by the enemy: when they realize they have sinned and repent, hear their prayer and deliver them. So, it is in the New Testament Church. As we look around at organized religion on earth. We see many denominations and churches turning from God and being carried away captive, into the foreign lands of satanic worship. Not only should the true believers in those organizations turn toward the eternal heaven in prayer, but we, who have not been overcome, should also be praying for them. After all, there are people of God everywhere, as seen in **Re 5:9 "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; 10 And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth."** We, all of God's people, are the inheritance of Jesus Christ, who bought us and redeemed us by his own shed blood.

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 up to heaven."

We have here, one of the postures for prayer that are found in scripture. We remember that when Solomon began giving thanks to God for keeping his covenant word he was standing. However, when he started to pray, he gets upon his knees and lifts his hands to heaven, bowing to the mighty presence of God.

In summation of the prayer of King Solomon, we ask the readers to go back through the prayer, and the commentary, and make personal application to your own life as a Christian. In the place of the ark of the covenant, which is the life blood of the temple, put Jesus Christ, who is the life blood of the New Testament church. We face the same temptations as Israel did in a spiritual and sometimes in a natural sense. We fail God in the same ways that Israel did. And we always need to be brought to recognition of our failures and to be given repentant hearts, that we may pray through Jesus Christ, to God the Father, and find grace in his sight.

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."

King Solomon now arises from his prayer before God and turns to Israel and blesses the congregation, reminding Israel of their responsibility as individuals, and as a nation before God. Reminding them that if they desire the blessing of God, they must apply their lives completely to serving God. This same message surely applies to our lives as children of God and the New Testament Church. After all, Jesus prayed to God the Father, for all of God's people to be kept by the hand of God, no matter what their situation, seen in **Joh 17:15, 24; 12 "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. 13 And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. 14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 17 ¶ Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. 18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. 19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. 20 ¶ Neither pray I for these**

alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; 21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. 22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: 23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. 24 ¶ Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. 25 O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. 26 And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them." Thank you, King Jesus, for we know that God the Father heareth thee always.

63 "And Solomon offered a 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. 64 The same day did the king hallow the middle of the court that was before the house of the LORD: for there he offered burnt offerings, and meat offerings, and the fat of the peace offerings: because the brasen altar that was before the LORD was too little to receive the burnt offerings, and meat offerings, and the fat of the peace offerings. 65 And at that time Solomon held a feast, and all Israel with him, a great congregation, from the entering in of Hamath unto the river of Egypt, before the LORD our God, seven days and seven days, even fourteen days. 66 On the eighth day he sent the people away: and they blessed the king, and went unto their tents joyful and glad of heart for all the goodness that the LORD had done for David his servant, and for Israel his people."

Solomon offers a multitude of sacrifices to God and dedicates the house of the Lord. King Solomon also dedicated the middle court and used it for sacrifices, because the altar of sacrifice could not hold all the sacrifices Solomon offered. Solomon then held a feast with Israel for fourteen days, and on the fifteenth day he sent Israel home rejoicing in God fulfilling his promise to King David and for the goodness of the Lord.

Surely this scene gives us the picture of the finished work of Jesus Christ, who prayed that God would save us here in this world, not out of tribulations but deliver us through them. When his purpose for each child of God is completed, he shall call them to their long-sought home in heaven. Finally, when all the people of God have finished all the work that God has for them to do, we will be dismissed from these earthly temples, changed into immortal, incorruptible, and glorified bodies like that of Jesus, and be carried away to the New Jerusalem to be with God forever: all because of the prayer and finished work of Jesus Christ, our Saviour and King. Hallelujah! Praise, ye the Lord! Amen!