

Containing an Uncontainable God

I. Slide1 Announce:

- A. Slide2 Ministry Opportunity: we need an assistant in the 4's/Kinder class on Wed eve's.
- B. Father/Daughter date night suggestion. Beauty & the Beast Disney remake 3/17. Plan night. Get tickets. Dinner.

II. Slide3 Intro: Containing an Uncontainable God or, The Localized Presence of God.

A. Slide4a Johann Sebastian Bach said, *All music should have no other end and aim than the glory of God and the soul's refreshment; where this is not remembered there is no real music but only a devilish hub-bub.*

1. He headed his compositions: *J.J. Jesus Juva* which means, *Jesus help me.*
2. Slide4b G.F.Handel put *S.D.G. Soli Deo Gloria* which means *Glory to God alone, at the end of a manuscript.*

- a) When the Temple was finished, Solomon held a *week long* celebration to *dedicate* it
- b) And He made sure it was *Glory to God alone!*

III. Slide5 SOLOMON'S BRINGS IN THE ARK (1-11)

- A. Slide6 The celebration begins with the bringing in of *the ark of the covenant* (& tent/Tab).
 1. We start with the ark of the covenant. *Where He comes, indwells.* It signifies His presence.
 2. Did you know He doesn't just come inside our heart...but in 1 Thes.5:23 *Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*
- B. (10,11) And there was something else that happened (fire!) see 2 Chron.7:1-5.
 1. The fire coming down from heaven also signified God's presence.
- C. Slide7 *The glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord* -
 1. *The house of the Lord* is never to be the chief focus of our attention.
 2. *The Lord of the house* is to be the focus of **all** that we do when we gather together for *worship.*

- D. The glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord [Heb *Kabod*. Gk *doxa*].
This was none other than the **Shekinah Glory**, which was often used to represent *the presence of Almighty God*.
1. The cloud was seen at the giving of the Law on Sinai. *It was...*
 2. The cloud by day, fire by night in the wilderness. *It was...*
 3. That cloud that passed by Moses in the cleft of the rock. *It was...*
 4. The same cloud that filled the Tabernacle, & filled Solomon's Temple here.
 - a) In the NT it had been 600 years since anyone had seen the shekinah glory, **but** then it was witnessed at **Jesus' Transfiguration**. Then at **Jesus' Ascension**. **And later** it will be at **Jesus' Return**.
 5. One day we will be in this same cloud... *Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.* 1 Thes.4:17
- E. The cloud, the glory = His acceptance of *this place*. *I will make my home with you.*

IV. Slide8 **SOLOMON'S SPEECH (12-21)**

- A. **Dark Cloud** - usually associated with *trouble or punishment*, **but** here suggest *the inexplicable mystery of God*.
1. Slide9 There was *no light* (man-made) in the most Holy Place.
 2. This **dark cloud** was a thick darkness that would mask God's glory, & permit man to be able to approach. [I picture it coming in darkness & then exploding in light]
- B. (14-21) The temple was a place of *testimony*, bearing witness *that God keeps His word*.
- C. The perhaps surprising consequence to the belief that **God was present in Israel** was that he was **not present outside Israel**.
1. Naaman the Syrian (rt after being healed from leprosy) he asked Elisha permit him *to take two muleloads of Israelite soil back to Syria* so that he might worship Yahweh there, *something one could not otherwise do on Syrian soil* (2 Kgs 5:17).

V. Slide10 **SOLOMON'S PRAYER (22-53)**

- A. (23) **Mercy** - keeping the covenant **and the steadfast love**.

- B. (28) **Cry** - the Hebrew word, *rinnah*, indicates a strong raising of the voice that can be either a cry of fright or a cry of joy.
- C. We see from this verse that the temple was also to be a place of **prayer**. Even for the stranger in foreigner vs.41. In Jesus's time the religious leaders would *turn the house of prayer into a den of thieves*.
- D. Slide11,12 (27) Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You. How much less this temple which I have built.
- E. **Omnipresence** - (omni = *all*) God is **unlimited** with respect to space.
1. Wayne Grudem, *God does not have size or spatial dimensions and is present at every point of space with His whole being, yet God acts differently in different places*. Systematic Theology, pg.173.
 2. Ps.139:7-10 *Where can I go from your Spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence? If I ascend into heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning, And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, Even there Your hand shall lead me, And Your right hand shall hold me.*
 3. Solomon explains, though he builds God this house, he knows God cannot be contained by any space.
 - a) *Everywhere present w/His whole being* - reminds us that we are encouraged in prayer no matter where we are. But also when it comes to worshipping Him, there really isn't some special place to worship Him.
 4. Our human spirits are **finite** spirits, they are *not now, nor ever will be* capable of being in more than 1 place at 1 time. Only an **infinite** Spirit is capable of omnipresence.
 5. God is **fully present** in every place (called His *immensity*) - We believers in California enjoy the *fulness of the presence of God* while believers in Kiev enjoy that *same presence*. [This doesn't have to do with His size, but His ability to be **fully present** everywhere]
 - a) *Thats why* we can be certain of God's undivided attention.

F. **Slide13** (35,36) In the context of the *no rain* Scenario God said, 2 Chron.7:14-16 NLT
Then if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and restore their land. 15 My eyes will be open and my ears attentive to every prayer made in this place. 16 For I have chosen this Temple and set it apart to be holy - a place where my name will be honored forever. I will always watch over it, for it is dear to my heart.

1. **Now read 2 Chron.7:16** again in relation to **our bodies** being the house/ the temple/the dwelling place of God.

G. **Slide14 DEDICATION** *devote - consecrate*

H. Reminds me of the farmer's cow that became pregnant with **twins**. His wife encouraged him, since God blessed him w/2, to **dedicate** 1 cow to the Lord.
 So, he raised them both the same, but then 1 got sick. In caring for him he went out to the barn & found it had died. His wife saw him come into the house discouraged, she asked what happened. He responded, *the Lord's cow just died*.

I. **Dedication** - We need to make sure that *whatever we dedicate to the Lord* is a **milestone** but never a **millstone**. That it only begins a greater work & isn't the end of a finished work.

1. **What value is a dedicated temple w/o a dedicated people?**
2. **What hypocrisy for a business man** to *dedicate his business* to the Lord, but not his business practices.
 - a) **Eg.** a fish on the business card, *but not* the Lord in his heart.
3. **What hypocrisy for a family** to *dedicate their home* to the Lord, but not their family practices.
 - a) **Eg.** a formal house dedication, *but not* the heart/home dedication.
4. **What hypocrisy for a ministry leader** to *dedicate his ministry* to the Lord, but not himself.
 - a) **Eg.** an open house ceremony, *but not* an open heart.

J. I've done **baby**/parent dedications, **church** dedications, **house** dedications, even **business** dedications.

1. Regarding a **house**...What's the most important part of a house? (foundation, plumbing, electrical?) **No**, the **hearts** of the people who live there.
2. That's what **David** said when he was *dedicating his house to the Lord*.
 - a) If you want to wreck your **house**, start wrecking your **home**. If you want to wreck your **home**, start wrecking your **heart**. **But** if you want your **house** & your **home** to be *all that God wants it to be*, **then** make your **heart** **perfect**.

K. **SlideX Read Psalm 101:1-5**

L. To dedicate your **house**, you must dedicate your **home**. To dedicate your **home**, you must dedicate your **heart**.

1. David wanted *a perfect heart*. (i.e. blameless)
 - a) As opposed to *a perverse heart* (4). **Or** a opposed to *a proud heart* (5).
2. **What is a Perfect heart?** – not sinless **but** sincere, w/o pretense.
 - a) John called it *walking in the light*. 1 Jn.1:5-10
 - b) It has to do w/*integrity, wholeness, oneness*...a heart not divided.

M. (1) **I will** (9 x's). **And shall** (6 x's)

1. This is *not so much* what he actually **is** as what he ought to **be**.
2. 2nd Samuel tells the story of his **short falls** in his family & w/**his appointments** to office. (Absalom, Amnon)
3. **Its principles here** are applicable *to all persons in authority* in **any age**.

N. (2) **Heart** – Your heart affects your home...**both** need to be dedicated to the Lord.

1. (Phillips Brooks) *Strength of character may be acquired at work, but beauty of character is learned at home. There the affections are trained. There the gentle life reaches us, the true heaven life. In one word, the family circle is the supreme conductor of Christianity.*

O. **Within my home** – it seems much easier to walk perfectly among strangers than in one's house.

1. *What we are at home, we are indeed.*
2. **Are you a saint abroad, but a devil at home?**

3. King David does not try to compartmentalize his ethics. He's accountable to *the same God* at **work** as at **home**.
4. Understand that in *the home-life* God is educating & training you for the greatest victories.
 - a) No need to run to *conventions, sermons, or books* on the subject, *resolve to walk in your house w/a perfect heart*.
 - b) Seek *the blameless heart* in your home-life, *then* God will come to you & dwell beneath your roof, as He did in Bethany (Mary, Martha, Lazarus).
5. So, the king pledges himself to *a godly morality* from *the inside out*.