

SANCTUARY, SABBATH, SHALOM

First Presbyterian Church of Bakersfield
2026 Sept-Nov Sermon Series Study Guide

2 Chronicles 7:1-10 (NIV)

1 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, 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 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.

Sanctuary: Sacred Space

OPEN

- What was the most fun party you’ve ever attended? Why was it so fun?
- In 2 Chronicles 5 & 6, the Israelites complete the building of the temple and King Solomon prays a beautiful prayer of dedication. He asks God to arise and come to His resting place. Now read 2 Chronicles 7:1-10.

STUDY

- How does God respond to Solomon’s prayer in verses 1-3? What impact did it have on the priests and the people?
- What would the scene in verses 4-7 have looked, smelled, & sounded like?
- What other details are added by verses 8-10?
- Why was the festival so long? (Note: try to calculate how long it might have taken them to sacrifice that many animals!)
- What thoughts and feelings did the Israelites take home with them?
- Using clues from this passage, what made the temple such an important part of the Jewish experience of God?
- When and where do you experience God the most? What places, events, feelings, habits, people, actions help you enter into that “sacred space”?
- What makes it difficult to enter?
- What are some ways we can help create sanctuary and sacred space for those around us?

PRAY

- Spend time in prayer now, asking God to help you, individually and as a group, enter and create sacred space in the coming week.