

Title: **“WILL GOD INDEED
DWELL ON THE EARTH?”**
Text: 1 Kings 8:27
Subject: *God Dwelling with Men on the Earth*
Date: Sunday Morning — November 25, 2007
Tape # Z-42a
Reading: *1 Kings 8:22-66*
Introduction:

You will find my text and the title of my message in the opening line of 1st Kings 8:27. It is a question raised by Solomon, the thought of which was utterly astonishing to him. — “*Will God indeed dwell on the earth?*” If the Lord will give me grace to do so, I want to preach to you today, and every Sunday for the next five or six weeks about this astonishing thing — God dwelling upon the earth. For the next five or six weeks the whole world will be continually confronted, in one way or another, with the fact that there was a time God came to dwell on this earth in the person of our blessed Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

During this season of the year, we will all be busy with the business of shopping for gifts, decorating our houses, and planning get-togethers with family and friends. Our minds will be occupied with all the things associated with the Christmas season, I fear, with all the things associated with the season except the fact that our God indeed came here to dwell upon the earth for the everlasting salvation of his people. So I want to do what I can to focus your hearts and my own upon this

**“WILL GOD INDEED
DWELL ON THE EARTH?”**

astonishing fact that is put before us in the Book of God in the form of a question. — “*Will God indeed dwell on the earth?*”

493 years after the children of Israel came out of the land of Egypt, and 17 years after his father David had gone to Glory, Solomon finished building the temple in Zion. It took him 13 years to build it. Then, when the temple was finished and the ark of the covenant had been brought into the most holy place, the Lord God condescended to come into the temple Solomon had built. And the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord! Then, we read in 1st Kings 8:22-23...

(1 Kings 8:22-23) “And Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven: (23) And he said, LORD God of Israel, *there is* no God like thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath, who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants that walk before thee with all their heart:”

He extolled the Lord God as the only true and living God. He declared that there is no God but our God, none besides him, none like him, none to be compared to him in his nature or in his works.

- He is the Supreme Sovereign of the universe!
- He is the covenant keeping God of his people!

**“WILL GOD INDEED
DWELL ON THE EARTH?”**

- He is merciful, gracious and good!
- He is faithful and true, fulfilling all his promises to all his people!

Yet, this great and glorious God, who inhabits eternity, condescended to come into the temple and to dwell in the midst of his people upon the earth! To Solomon this was a matter of utter astonishment. (Read vv. 26-27).

(1 Kings 8:26-27) “And now, O God of Israel, let thy word, I pray thee, be verified, which thou spakest unto thy servant David my father. {**God promised David — A House — A Kingdom — And A Man to Sit on his Throne Forever!**} (27) But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?”

I remind you that this question, “*Will God indeed dwell on the earth?*” is not an expression of doubt or unbelief, but an expression of utter amazement!

Will God, who dwells on high, who humbles himself to look upon things in heaven and stoops to consider things upon the earth, will this great and glorious God condescend to dwell with men upon the earth? That is utterly astonishing! Yet, it is true. This astonishing fact

**“WILL GOD INDEED
DWELL ON THE EARTH?”**

is is what I want to proclaim to you today. — “*Will God indeed dwell on the earth?*”

PROPOSITION: The condescension of the eternal, almighty, holy and sovereign God to dwell upon earth is an astonishing act of grace. Let me show you *four astonishing facts* revealed in this text of Scripture.

THE INFINITE GOD

Here is the first thing that strikes me. — **This One who came to dwell upon the earth in the temple at Jerusalem is the Lord God omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, — The infinite God!**

On that great day, when the temple was built at Jerusalem, for the first time in history, when the ark of God was brought into the most holy place, God came down, not to visit men upon the earth, but **to dwell** upon the earth!

It is amazing that he should do so, because God is immense, the infinite God of Glory. This is what Solomon expressed — “*Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee!*” We are talking about God who fills heaven and earth with his presence, and cannot be contained by time and space, the omnipresent God! Yet, this God came to dwell upon the earth!

**“WILL GOD INDEED
DWELL ON THE EARTH?”**

God is omnipresent. He is everywhere: in heaven, earth and hell. There is no fleeing from his presence. (Psalm 138:7-12).

(Psalms 139:7-12) “Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? (8) If I ascend up into heaven, thou *art* there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou *art there*. (9) If I take the wings of the morning, *and* dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; (10) Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. (11) If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. (12) Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light *are* both alike *to thee*.”

God is everywhere by his power, upholding, maintaining, sustaining all things and performing with his own hands the works of his eternal purpose in all places. **God is everywhere by his providence,** taking care of and governing all his creatures, executing in all places at the same time his everlasting decrees. **God is everywhere by his omniscience,** beholding all things, all places, all events, all people, even the secrets of the hearts of all men at one time. (Psalm 139:1-6). — “*The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.*” (Proverbs 15:3).

**“WILL GOD INDEED
DWELL ON THE EARTH?”**

(Psalms 139:1-6) “O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known *me*. (2) Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. (3) Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted *with* all my ways. (4) For *there is* not a word in my tongue, *but*, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether. (5) Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. (6) *Such* knowledge *is* too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot *attain* unto it.”

Yet, this immense, omnipresent, omniscient Lord God came to dwell upon the earth. When we consider who he is, we might well cry with Solomon, “*Will God indeed dwell on the earth?*”

- Heaven is his throne. The earth is his footstool; but this great King of glory came to dwell upon his footstool!
- The earth, this round ball of water and clay, is a suitable habitation for man and beasts. — “*The heaven, even the heavens, are the LORD’S: but the earth hath he given to the children of men*” (Psalm 115:16). Yet, God came to dwell upon the earth!

This fact is even more astonishing when we remember that the earth is defiled, corrupted and cursed by sin (Genesis 3:17-18).

**“WILL GOD INDEED
DWELL ON THE EARTH?”**

(Genesis 3:17-18) “And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed *is* the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat *of* it all the days of thy life; (18) Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;”

The earth is marked for burning. It is “*reserved to fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.*” (2 Peter 3:7). Yet, God who is holy came to dwell upon this sin-cursed earth!

The inhabitants of the earth, among whom God came to dwell, are fallen, depraved, sinful, cursed sons and daughters of Adam. When the Lord God condescended, time and again, to look upon the inhabitants of the earth, he declared, — “*They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no not one.*” (Psalm 14:3; 53:1-3). **It would be a marvelous act of condescension and mercy for God to...**

- look upon man on the earth with tolerance.
- visit fallen man on the earth. (Psalm 8:4).

Yet, our text declares that God who is purity, holiness and light, came to dwell with man upon the earth! That is simply astonishing!

**“WILL GOD INDEED
DWELL ON THE EARTH?”**

Surely, if this great God came to dwell with men upon the earth in Solomon’s temple, **he came not to receive** something from man, **but to do something great and good for man**. He came to bestow something grand and glorious upon man, which man could not have until God came to “*dwell on the earth!*”

But that temple in which the Lord God appeared in Solomon’s day 3000 years ago is gone forever. So it is obvious that the presence of God dwelling in Solomon’s **foreshadowed and prefigured greater things yet to come, which are even more astonishing!**

THE INCARNATE GOD

So, *second*, I want you to see that **our text refers to the marvelous incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ and his dwelling on the earth to work out the salvation of his people.**

“*Will God*” the Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, “*dwell on the earth?*” **Indeed, he has and he does. This is marvelous in our eyes!** This is astonishing indeed (2 Corinthians 8:9).

(2 Corinthians 8:9) “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.”

**“WILL GOD INDEED
DWELL ON THE EARTH?”**

Jesus Christ is God; yet he tabernacled upon the earth in our nature (John 1:1, 14).

(John 1:1) “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

(John 1:14) “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”

Moses’ tabernacle was a type of Christ’s human nature. His humanity is “*the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man*” (Hebrews 8:2). **The temple** which Solomon built, into which God came and dwelt, was also a type of our Savior’s human nature. He said, “*Destroy this temple (referring to his body) and in three days I will raise it up*” (John 2:19).

- Christ is “*the true God*” (I John 5:20).
- He is “*the great God*” (Titus 2:13).
- He is “*the brightness of the Father’s glory, and the express image of his Person*” (Hebrews 1:3; Philippians 2:5-6; Colossians 2:9).
- He is the Maker of all things, our Creator (Colossians 1:16-17).
- Jesus Christ, our Savior, is “*over all, God blessed forever.*” (Romans 9:5).

**“WILL GOD INDEED
DWELL ON THE EARTH?”**

He is high above all nations, great above all creatures, and exalted above all creation (Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 1:4-6).

(Philippians 2:9-11) “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: (10) That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth; (11) And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

(Hebrews 1:4-6) “Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. (5) For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son? (6) And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.”

All the angels of God are called upon to worship him because he is their Creator. All men, good and bad, are subject to him. He dwells, and always has dwelt, in the highest heaven. He “*rideth upon the heavens of heavens, over al God, blessed forever*” (Psalm 68:32-25). Therefore, he is called, “*the Lord from heaven.*” (1 Corinthians 15:47). **Christ Jesus is that One who came**

**“WILL GOD INDEED
DWELL ON THE EARTH?”**

down from heaven to do his Father’s will; and he was in heaven while he was here upon the earth doing his Father’s will (John 3:13).

(John 3:13) “And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, *even* the Son of man which is in heaven.”

He never ceased to be God, though he dwelt upon the earth in human flesh! This is an amazing fact — Jesus Christ, who is God, the Maker of all things, the Ruler of all things, dwelling in the highest heaven, “*over all God, blessed forever,*” has come to dwell on the earth! — “*Will God indeed dwell on the earth?*” Yes! He most certainly will; and he certainly has! **But why? — Why did God come to dwell upon the earth in human flesh?** What was the purpose of the incarnation?

Christ came into this world **to fulfill the covenant** he made with the Father on our behalf before the world began (Hebrews 10:5-17). It was proposed to him in the everlasting covenant that he should assume our nature, dwell upon earth with mortal men as a man, to bring in everlasting righteousness and put away the sins of his people by the satisfaction of justice by the sacrifice of himself. He agreed to it, and said, — “*Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me; I delight to do thy will, O my God*” (Psalm 40:7-8). He came in human nature, he came into the world, he came to dwell among

**“WILL GOD INDEED
DWELL ON THE EARTH?”**

men, to do his Father’s will, to obtain redemption for lost sinners.

This was proposed; and to this he agreed. Therefore, he is represented as one, from eternity, rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth, in which he had agreed to dwell, where those people would dwell for whom he became a Surety and a Savior. And from everlasting, his delights were with the sons of men (Proverbs 8:22-31).

We have many examples of his appearing on the earth long before he dwelt here.

- In Eden, immediately after the fall (Genesis 3:8-15)
- To Abraham in the plains of Mamre (Genesis 18)
- To Jacob as the Angel of the Lord (Genesis 32:24-30)
- To Moses in the Burning Bush (Exodus 3)
- To Manoah and His Wife, declaring his name to be “*secret and wonderful*” (Judges 13)
- To Isaiah (Isaiah 6)
- With the Three Hebrews (Daniel 3)

These appearances of Christ were pledges and tokens of God’s promise, assuring his people that God would indeed dwell on the earth. They indicated the pleasure and delight the Son of God had in the work he would do, desiring and anticipating the time when he could come to dwell with and redeem his people.

**“WILL GOD INDEED
DWELL ON THE EARTH?”**

Besides these pre-incarnate appearances of Christ, which gave hints of our Lord’s coming, **there were numerous, clear prophecies of it.**

- “The Seed of the Woman” (Genesis 3:15)
- “My Redeemer” (Job 19:25)
- “His Salvation” (Psalm 85:9-13)
- “Immanuel” (Isaiah 7:14)
- “A Child Born, A Son Given” (Isaiah 9:6)
- “The Substitute” (Isaiah 53)

Then, in the fulness of time, according to all these hints and prophecies, Christ came into the world! —
“The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us!”

“He came not by any change of place, for that is impossible; but by taking to his divine Person the human nature. For we are not to entertain such gross sentiments of him, as though, when he became incarnate, he moved from place to place, from heaven to earth; for even when he had assumed our nature and dwelt among us, he was in the bosom of the Father.” — *John Gill*

Be sure you understand this — Though the Son of God assumed and took into everlasting union with himself our nature, though *“the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,”* he never ceased to be God!

**“WILL GOD INDEED
DWELL ON THE EARTH?”**

“*Will God indeed dwell on the earth?*” **This is indeed astonishing!** That One by whom the earth was made has come to dwell on the earth he made. — “*He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not*” (John 1:10). Compared to him, the whole earth and all its inhabitants “*are as nothing, less than nothing, and vanity*” (Isaiah 40:17). He sits upon the circle of the earth, and all its inhabitants are grasshoppers before him. Yet, he came, the great God, to dwell among men!

The wonder of the incarnation only increases as we contemplate it. Look what he came into the world to do. He came to work out the salvation of his people, to seek and to save that which was lost. He came to save lost sinners, lost in Adam, so lost that they could never find their way to God. Christ came to save sinners, the worst of sinners, the chief of sinners! He came and dwelt among men upon this earth to save us! And it is written of him, — “**He shall not fail**” (Isaiah 42:4). What did Christ come to do? Here are five things revealed in the Scriptures.

1. The Lord Jesus came to save his people from their sins (Matthew 1:21).
2. The Son of God came to redeem us from the curse of the law (Galatians 3:13; 4:4-5), to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself!

**“WILL GOD INDEED
DWELL ON THE EARTH?”**

3. Our Lord Jesus Christ came here to be made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in him (2 Corinthians 5:21).
4. Christ Jesus the Lord came here to redeem unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works (Titus 2:14).
5. Our blessed Savior came to bring many sons to glory (Hebrew 2:10).

When he had finished the work he came here to do, he laid down his life. After his resurrection from the dead, he was received up into heaven in the sight of all the Apostles. There Stephen saw him standing at the right hand of God. There every believer, by faith, beholds him crowned with glory and honor, at the right hand of the Majesty on high. There he must sit and reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. Then, at the time of the restitution of all things, he will come again. — *“To them that look for him, he shall appear the second time, without sin unto salvation”* (Hebrews 9:28).

THE INDWELLING GOD

However, and this is my *third* point, **though he has gone to heaven to make intercession for us, our Lord still dwells upon the earth.** He who is God our Savior is the infinite God, the incarnate God, and the indwelling God. When Solomon saw God come into the temple he had built, and said in astonishment, — *“Will God indeed*

**“WILL GOD INDEED
DWELL ON THE EARTH?”**

dwell on the earth?” he was looking beyond that temple to what the temple it represented — the church and people of the living God, his spiritual temple. So, our text refers to God dwelling among his people in grace. — This is what the old puritans used to reverently call, “the Divine presence!” Read the Savior’s words about this, and rejoice.

(John 14:16-20) “And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; (17) *Even* the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. (18) I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. (19) Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. (20) At that day ye shall know that I *am* in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.”

(John 16:7) “Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.”

(John 17:22-23) “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

**“WILL GOD INDEED
DWELL ON THE EARTH?”**

world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.”

(John 17:25-26) “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.”

(John 16:33) “These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”

- Christ dwells with his church (Matthew 18:20), as a father in his house to teach, protect, and provide discipline.
- Every true local church is the house and temple of God, the dwelling place of the Almighty (1 Corinthians 3:16; Ephesians 2:20-22).
- Particularly, the Lord God, in the person of and by the Spirit of Christ, dwells in the hearts of all true believers (John 14:18).
- The Father comes and makes his abode with us (2 Corinthians 6:16).
- The Spirit comes and dwells as our Comforter (John 14:26).

**“WILL GOD INDEED
DWELL ON THE EARTH?”**

- The Son dwells in our hearts by faith (Ephesians 3:17).

Imagine that! What an astonishing fact — the Lord Jesus Christ dwells and lives in his saints upon the earth! He dwells not in our heads only, not in our lips only, but in our hearts.

- He dwells where sin dwells — In our hearts!
- He dwells where he is often slighted — In our hearts (Song of Solomon 5).
- He dwells where his Holy Spirit is often grieved — In our hearts!
- Our God, the Lord Jesus Christ, dwells in us permanently!

No wonder Solomon spoke with such astonishment —
“*Will God indeed dwell on the earth?*”

THE IMMACULATE GOD

Once more, our text refers to the fact that **there is a day coming when God will dwell with his people upon the earth in the immaculate perfection of everlasting glory and bliss** (Job 19:25-27; Revelations 21:1-22:6).

(Job 19:25-27) “For I know *that* my redeemer liveth, and *that* he shall stand at the latter *day* upon the earth: (26) And *though* after my skin *worms* destroy this *body*, yet in my flesh shall I see God: (27) Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes

**“WILL GOD INDEED
DWELL ON THE EARTH?”**

shall behold, and not another; *though* my reins be consumed within me.”

(Revelation 21:1-7) “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. (2) And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. (3) And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be* their God. (4) And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. (5) And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. (6) And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. (7) He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.”

(Revelation 21:22) “And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.”

**“WILL GOD INDEED
DWELL ON THE EARTH?”**

(Revelation 21:23-27) “And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb *is* the light thereof. (24) And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. (25) And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. (26) And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. (27) And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life.”

(Revelation 22:1-6) “And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. (2) In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, *was there* the tree of life, which bare twelve *manner of* fruits, *and* yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree *were* for the healing of the nations. (3) And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: (4) And they shall see his face; and his name *shall be* in their foreheads. (5) And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall

**“WILL GOD INDEED
DWELL ON THE EARTH?”**

reign for ever and ever. (6) And he said unto me, These sayings *are* faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must shortly be done.”

- Christ is coming again. — “*Behold, he cometh!*”
- When he appears, he will judge the world and save his people.
- He will make all things new, removing from his creation all the consequences of sin.
- On the earth God shall dwell forever with men and we shall dwell forever with our God!
- In that great, eternal world, when God makes all things new, we shall forever dwell upon an immaculate earth, in immaculate beauty, with the immaculate God, in all the glory of his being and in all the glory Christ bestowed upon us by virtue of our immaculate union with him!
- Little wonder that when the Apostle Paul spoke of this hope, he called it, “*the blessed hope!*”

**“WILL GOD INDEED
DWELL ON THE EARTH?”**

APPLICATION

“Will God indeed dwell on the earth?” This is astonishing grace indeed — “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich” (2 Corinthians 8:9). — Oh, what richness awaits us!

Throw open the doors of your heart to him, and God will come in to dwell with you (Revelations 3:20).

- Unbeliever!
- Believer!
- Forever!

Amen.