

JULY 14

1 Chronicles 16:37-18:17

1 Chronicles 16:37-43

This is a continuation from yesterday showing that David, as king, took the lead in organizing and designing the worship. One mark of all godly kings in Judah was that they personally invested in and organized the worship of the people. For the rulers of Israel, returning to the land after the exile, Ezra was emphasizing the need for them to model spiritual involvement and worship for the people.

Vs. 39-40 This is interesting. There was the tent in Jerusalem for the ark, and there was the tabernacle in Gibeon. This is why David had two high priests, Abiathar and Zadok. The question is why the tabernacle was in Gibeon and the ark was in Jerusalem. Sacrifices were being made in both places. I wonder if David had the tabernacle placed in Gibeon during the civil war, so that it would have been outside of Judah in the territory of Benjamin, Saul's tribe. When Solomon was worshipping to God and received the promise of wisdom, Solomon was at Gibeon. Somehow I think God allowed this, but didn't necessarily approve. Hezekiah and Josiah removed all the high places and made the altar in Jerusalem the only place to sacrifice or worship.

1 Chronicles 17

Today, in this very select history for the returning exiles, comes the Davidic promise. David sought the glory and honor of God, and God honored David with this promise. The importance of this promise in the OT is rivaled only by the promise to Adam and Eve and the promise to Abraham. These were redemptive promises, even if at times, Israel only understood them as nationalistic. Even in Romans 1, as Paul introduces himself, he includes David's name in the description of the gospel. The Messiah is the eternal ruler who was promised by God to come through the house and lineage of David.

As you read this chapter, what do you think Ezra was trying to say to the new generation entering the land of promise?

Vs. 1-2 It apparently bothered David that he now lived comfortably in a permanent house made of cedar, but the Lord was represented by a tent. Nathan assumed that everything David desired would be blessed.

Vs. 3-15 This is the promise or covenant with David.

Vs. 11-12 These verses transform this promise into something that could only be fulfilled by God Himself. To reign forever meant that this son would have to live forever. Solomon fulfilled v. 11, but only Jesus could fulfill v. 12. This was a part of the confused Jewish theology Jesus lived with during His ministry. They understood this theologically, but couldn't accept it in reality. For example, in John 1:49 Nathanael answered and said to Jesus, *Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!* It was one thing to say that the Messiah would be God's eternally living Son; it was another thing to meet God's eternally living Son and like Him and follow Him.

Vs. 16-27 This entire chapter is inspiring. Out of all the earthly confusion we have read about regarding Samuel and Saul and David, suddenly the plan of God clearly comes to the forefront. You wonder as you read this how much David understood of God's plan of redemption. We know from what we've read in 2 Samuel, that David lost perspective because of his sin with Bathsheba and Uriah and began to worry and obsess about which son would fulfill this.

I'm reminded of what Jesus said to His disciples in Luke 10:24, *For I tell you that many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.* And think of our privilege. As disciples in the harvest we have been saved by this plan. We know the Messiah; we can explain the plan of salvation to others, and we have been called to

become ambassadors of this truth. We dare not let our downfall be that, knowing all of this, we take it for granted and hide our light.

1 Chronicles 18

We've seen that David fought battles and God gave him the victory, establishing David's house. But, we haven't yet seen what Ezra is trying to emphasize about David that these people should model.

Vs. 1-8 We've read about these battles before, but notice vs. 7-8. Even though David was told he couldn't build the temple, it was still his passion to see this done. David knew a temple would be built and that Solomon would do it. In everything that David did, he still had that desire burning in his heart. He wanted God's presence near him, and he wanted God's presence to be the center of Israel's existence. This is what made David a man after God's own heart. This is an example of David's passion for God showing through. Whereas Solomon made himself rich by acquiring gold and precious metals, David began to stockpile these metals for the building of the temple.

Vs. 9-11 Even the gifts David was given went into the treasury for the temple.

Vs. 12-13 It was just mentioned that David carried away the wealth of Edom and the other nations. Apparently it was Abishai who was responsible for the campaign that brought Edom into submission.

Vs. 14-17 Here is David again - leading, guiding, organizing and serving Israel, the people of God. Notice in v. 17 it says that David made his sons officials in his government as they came to adulthood. In 2 Samuel 8:18 it says they were priests, but "officials" is what was meant. They became like governors and judges, mediators for the people.

When David comes and sits before the Lord in 1 Chronicles 17:16, he asks the question every disciple of Jesus should ask, *Who am I?* When we read those first few verses of Romans 1, we realize that we have been called to belong to Christ and have been appointed to take the news of this salvation to the lost and dying. That should be a cause for feeling just as David felt when he was told that God would pour out kindness and honor upon him. In many ways, the kindness and honor God has shown us is so much greater. Jesus told His disciples in Matthew, *But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. For truly, I say to you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.* (Matt. 13:16-17) We are those disciples of honor who have been saved, who see and hear and have the privilege of working with our Savior in the harvest.

Romans 2:1-24

In this chapter Paul is working toward what he's going to say in chapter three, that we are all condemned and guilty before God because that we are all under the power of sin. The only answer to the condemnation of man and the power of sin will be faith in Christ. Paul is also defusing any sense that Jews or those who follow the law are better than those who "only" know Christ.

In your observations, notice how Paul is building an atmosphere of coming judgment.

Vs. 1-5 This could apply to any person who is a judge of others, Jew or Gentile. Knowing what is right doesn't free anyone from the power of sin. Thinking we are better than others because we "know" makes us hypocrites because that same power of sin is still roaring through our veins. Knowing right from wrong doesn't save you. Only Christ saves and only the Spirit can aid us against sin. There is no ground for pride in our salvation.

Vs. 6-11 might give the "idea" that there might be something someone could "do" for acceptance before God, but this is just Paul setting up his argument for man's hopelessness in chapter 3.

Look ahead to the end of what Paul is saying here in v. 16 and notice the basis of this judgment.

Judgment is according to Jesus Christ. That will mean "by faith in Christ." I was reading this morning in John 6 that when the people asked Jesus, "*What must we do, to be doing the works of God?*" Jesus answered them, "*This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.*" That is the only *work* that works: belief in Jesus, welcoming Him as Savior and Lord. In John 6, Jesus is taking their view of works and saying that there is no work, only faith in Him.

Notice too that in this section, Paul is beginning to show that since God shows no partiality, the Jews and the Gentiles are equal. All are lost and all are saved by faith in Christ.

Vs. 12-16 This is some amazing information. Even those who don't know the Law of Moses/God are responsible for the law. The law's most important components are written on the hearts of humans, since we are all created in the image of God. This goes back to Romans 1:19-20. All mankind is without excuse before God. Notice that judgment is a part of the gospel. That is one of the reasons God has left us here in the harvest, to warn people.

Vs. 17-23 Now, although there is a tone in this letter as if Paul is writing to a completely Jewish audience, he is not. This is one of a few instances where Paul addresses and names a particular group in the church in Rome. Paul will again address the Jews in chapter 7 and then the Gentiles in chapter 11. It was a mixed congregation of people. The point here was that the Jews were so shot through with sin, the spiritual disease, that there was no way they should feel safe or better or saved because they were Jews.

The contradictions between belief and behavior are also famous in the church today. A theoretical Christianity is powerless. We are not better off for all the videos, books, preachers and podcasts we have. We still need to be in the Word daily and humbly following our Lord every day, pouring out our lives to make disciples of those He is seeking. That is the only way we stay in His presence and care, by staying close to Him.

It could be that there were Jews in the church who were either not yet saved, or they were Jewish Christians who were still very rooted in the law. These "law abiding" people were a deep threat to understanding the grace of the gospel and the saving faith in Christ alone. Paul is doing some very thorough theological re-orientation here for those stuck on the law. Paul will level the playing field and show that neither Jew nor Gentile has any hope without faith in Christ, and that even in the OT, salvation was based solely on faith.

One trap that we fall into as Christians is thinking that we are better than "sinners." That attitude will keep us from being effective for Jesus in the harvest. Humbled disciples know that the disease of sin still rages in this body of death. It is only by grace, by the daily cleansing of the Word, by following the leading of the Spirit that we are able to do anything that is half-way honoring and glorifying to God. It is pure grace and purely by His help. As Jesus said, *apart from me you can do nothing*. Paul said to the Corinthians, *What have you that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if it were not a gift?* (1 Cor. 4:7, RSV) Knowing the gift draws you in love to the Savior who is, in fact, still working in the harvest.

Psalm 10:16-18

This is the very intense ending of the psalm. There is a kind of spiritual affliction that comes from seeing the harvest, and sensing our call to serve God in the harvest. The work is important and it is desperate. That is why Jesus could tell His disciples, in Luke 6:21, *Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you shall be satisfied. Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh*. We don't have to be afflicted now, but we will gladly be afflicted now because we understand the grace given to us, the amazing grace and love in the gospel and the coming judgment on those who have not yet responded.

Vs. 16-18 Since God is the King forever, and He is also the cure for all that will come in the "forever" part of this life, now is the time to face affliction and put aside our interests and work in the harvest reaching the lost, making disciples who make disciples.

Proverbs 19:8-9

Truth or lies. Is a person living according to reality or closing their eyes to reality? Christians get ruined too. And pretending that there is no harvest is the same as saying there isn't one. Jesus said in Luke 8:21, *My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it.* For a disciple, the "it" always involves following their Savior into the harvest. Submitting to His reality and truth shows we love Him, and, according to v. 8, that we love our own souls. Hmmm. And we will discover good.