

JULY 16

1 Chronicles 22-23

1 Chronicles 22

This chapter adds some interesting information and perspective to what we have read before. Before you read what I've written below, read chapter 22 and see what questions or observations you come up with. This is a very rich chapter, full of information and it gives us David's words to Solomon.

Now from Ezra's perspective, other than the fact that this gives the returnees some great historical insight, I wonder what Ezra's purpose was for including this. The entire chapter is devoted to David's preparation for building the temple. I wonder if it was known among the people that for all of the good he had done, Solomon was the first king to lead the nation into idolatry. It could be that the temple had a kind of "strike" against it because of this. Since Solomon died as a bitter, backslidden idolater, I'm wondering if Ezra wanted to correct the notion that the temple was Solomon's idea. Having read 1 Kings and about Solomon building the temple, we stand here viewing this with the same surprise that Ezra's readers had. It was really David who did the greatest amount of preparation for the temple. David couldn't build it, but David devoted the last years of his life to amassing materials, making drawings, organizing labor, enlisting the support of the political and religious leaders of Israel, and then, carefully instructing Solomon on what to do. Ezra is showing them that although David was not allowed to build the temple, he prepared the next generation to do it. David, the king of promise, the "man after God's own heart," was responsible for the temple.

What this gives us is some interesting perspective on Solomon. Before David became sick and bedridden, he spent hours with Solomon to pass on these instructions. We read of Solomon in 1 Kings, organizing for the building of the temple, not realizing that this wasn't all Solomon; it was David.

This chapter also gives some added perspective to Adonijah's attempt to become king. According to this chapter, after David knew where the temple would be built, he spent years making it clear that Solomon would be his heir and that he would build the temple. David commanded all the leaders of Israel to help Solomon build the temple. So then, Adonijah, Abiathar and Joab staging the coup in the first chapter of 1 Kings was really a crass, intentional act of treason. They thought that because David was a fading, tottering, old man, they could get away with this. If not for God, via Nathan, Solomon would not only have been passed by, but also would have been killed.

In the gap between 2 Samuel and 1 Kings, you don't have any of this information about David preparing for the building of the temple. This is pretty cool.

Vs. 1-5 David realized that in God telling David to build an altar on this threshing floor, God was showing David where the temple should be. I believe that even prior to the census, David was already planning for the temple and that he already knew Solomon would build it. First Chronicles 18:8 happened years before this event and mentions David amassing a large quantity of bronze which Solomon later used in the temple.

Vs. 6-10 This is David's charge to Solomon to build the temple. Notice that this is David before he was a tottering old man who couldn't get warm. That, or God, gave David an amazing second wind before he died.

Vs. 11-16 There are lots of interesting things here. God told David that Solomon would build the temple.

Vs. 12-13 This is a charge for Solomon to seek discretion or wisdom and for him to keep the law of the Lord. I wonder if this is where Solomon got the idea to ask God for wisdom.

V. 14 According to the Bible Knowledge Commentary-OT, p. 612, we are talking about 3,750 TONS of gold and 37,500 TONS of silver. You really wonder why Solomon felt the need to keep collecting gold all his life. He seems to have been a man of excesses.

Vs. 17-19 This was David's charge to the leaders of Israel to help Solomon. Interestingly, David commanded them to seek the Lord.

1 Chronicles 23

V. 1 Between chapters 22 and 23 you have the fun and games of 1 Kings 1-2:9. Again, what Ezra is showing here is that it was the godly king David who organized those who were to serve Israel in the worship of God in the temple.

Vs. 2-6 This was the general organizing of the Levites. David took as much interest in the organization of worship, as he did in the building of the temple. David wasn't just a warrior and musician; he was an organizing animal. Sometimes, very disorganized people are very "together" in the area of their passion. In the last years of David's life, he pursued his passion: loving and following God. The text makes it look here that David did this organizing work after he made Solomon king. If so, God did give him an amazing last surge of strength. My guess would be that David already had much of this organization in place during the preceding years. This is the David who validates the statement, "a man after God's own heart."

Vs. 7-23 Here Ezra shows why the genealogies of the Levites were so important. David reorganized the Levites (except for the priests) for service in the temple according to their major families.

Vs. 24-32 Originally, God didn't number the Levites who were under thirty. In v. 26 David changed that because there was no longer a need to move the tabernacle. The temple would be the permanent home of the Lord, the ark and of the worship of Israel. He would enlist the Levites, giving them new duties and raising the level of the daily worship in the temple.

In one sense, Ezra was making disciples. He was helping a new generation find the calling of their heritage. I think he wanted this new nation to pursue God with the life passion of David. David didn't just gather raw materials and draw up building plans; he was also totally involved in wanting to see God honored by the worship of the people. David was now seen as the planner, with God, of the temple.

As we work to make disciples, who make disciples, I think it is good to focus on the passion of David and of Paul pursuing God, but even more to focus on Jesus. His passion for the harvest and intensity in following the Father is what we all need to keep our hearts ignited, from generation to generation, as we work until our Lord returns.

Romans 3:9-31

This is one of those portions in Romans where it is worth memorizing more verses than just Romans 3:23.

V. 9 *Under sin* means under the power of sin. Paul will talk more about this in Romans 7; for example, Romans 7:23, *but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members*. Sin is a spiritual sickness responsible for the acts that we call "sin." The sin within us can only be fully cured by the resurrection. That is why the resurrection is a great hope for us, finally freeing us from this sickness.

Vs. 11-18 This seems hard, but it is the truth about sin. We are totally ruined by it. In the OT, leprosy was the physical disease that symbolized sin. It was incurable and it permeated all of the body and life.

Paul is showing some of his knowledge of Scripture, particularly The Psalms, bringing together several different portions of the OT. Apparently after he came to faith, everywhere he studied the Scripture, he saw our helplessness.

Because it says that no one seeks after God, you hear some people say that there are no "seekers." Since the Bible has commands to seek God, it seems that there must be something we need to understand in these verses. In Kings, for example, God did many things through Elijah and Elisha; and He expected people to turn their hearts to Him, to seek Him. Most didn't, but some did. God gave them something to initiate the seeking. Without God's input there would be no seeking; but once God reveals Himself in some way, then it becomes a possibility. We can either come to Him or ignore Him. I think the words, *no one seeks for God*, express that our depravity is so deep that without His help and grace and kindness, throwing crumbs and boulders in front of us, we would never seek Him because of the deep blindness of our hearts. If we sought anything naturally, it would never be Him. This would hold true for all of these, including doing good. I don't think we understand how much work God does in the world to nudge the hearts of all people. The only thing He can't do is to make people come to Him and love Him. Other than that, He can lead His children in kindness to someone who needs it.

Vs. 19-20 In God's own words, no human being will be justified by doing good, not even religious good. God considers everyone accountable to Him because of the law. He has revealed himself in the Word, in nature and in what is left of His image in us, written on our hearts. There is enough to hold us responsible and to judge us, but nothing to save us. That comes through Jesus.

Vs. 20-25 This is a great portion to memorize. The more you go over it in your mind, the more you understand the flow and the truth of these words. *Propitiation* means that the payment Jesus made fully satisfied God's justice. His payment by blood, His sacrifice, because He was man and God, had an infinite effect that would cover every sin committed for all time, for those who by faith would receive Him as their Savior.

Vs. 25-26 I've hinted to the drama going on to see if God is really righteous. Since God had *passed over* sins ages ago without a real payment for those sins, everyone was wondering how God could righteously forgive sin. This was the mystery of Christ and the incarnation. The principalities and powers were all holding their breath, thinking God couldn't possibly cover sin without violating His own sense of holiness and justice. He did it!!!

Vs. 27-31 How would you explain what Paul is saying here? It seems that what Paul is saying is that there is no ground to think that because a Jew is a Jew, he has a better position in terms of forgiveness and salvation. Reliance on the law only gets you judged, not saved. Salvation is, and always was, through faith. God shows no partiality. All men are saved by faith. But this faith doesn't destroy the law; it proves the importance of the law.

As disciples knowing that salvation is through faith, the pressure should be off of us. We are not the agents of faith. We are the messengers of the Word. Sometimes we put so much pressure on ourselves to say "it" well, that we could get the idea that salvation rests on us and our explanation. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 2:1-5, *And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. ²For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. ³And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, ⁴and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, ⁵so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.* We just need to get the message out there, and let the Father worry about who is ready to respond and be drawn toward His Son.

Psalm 12

It says that this psalm is written by David. Thinking back over David's life, when do you think he might have encountered something this devastating that it would have prompted this song?

Vs. 1-2 Because of v. 1, I wonder if this was the death of Samuel. David was on the run, and would be for the next 10 years. Saul was free to kill priests and do whatever was necessary to instill fear in the people, in order to keep the crown.

Vs. 3-4 I think that the lying and flattery was in Saul's government, promoting Saul and justifying hunting David.

Vs. 5-6 Since this isn't talking about God refining us, what is the point of what this verse says? It seems that because God's Word is holy, it cannot fail. If the poor are oppressed, there will definitely be action, somehow, sometime, against the oppressor. God's Word can't fail.

Vs. 7-8 Can you imagine singing this in a worship service? Maybe it had a catchy melody. Since it was used in worship, what exactly is this psalm exalting and why would this be something important to remember in worship?

Proverbs 19:13-14

It is hard to see the connection in all of this, but I say "amen" to the last one. It's hard to know where stuff comes from...a foolish child, a bitter wife, inherited wealth or talent. Sometimes you can find a cause, but sometimes it seems like it's just there. But you know for sure, that if you have a good wife, you have been blessed by God. Amen!