

1 Chronicles 22-27

Ch 22 continues on in the context of Ch 21. You recall David took a Census of the people of Israel, and that census seemed to surface from pride and a desire to know how powerful he personally had become. Rather than simply trusting in the strong arm of the Lord David began to lean on and trust in the arm of flesh, taking pride in his great accomplishments. and So the Lord struck Israel and David immediately acknowledged his sin and sought forgiveness. and God forgave him, but anytime we reap we sow, there are ramifications that take place based upon the choices that we make. and God gave David a choice 3yrs famine, 3 months being driven by his enemies, or 3 days plague. David said, "I don't want to fall into the hands of man, but rather let me fall into the hands of the Lord because His mercies are great." So David chose the 3 days plague. and The Lord began to smite the land, 70,000 men fell. David looked up and saw the angel of the Lord standing between heaven and earth with his sword outstretched over Jerusalem and he said, "I'm the one who has sinned, let please Your judgment be upon me and upon my family, but not upon these people, they haven't done anything." But it's impossible for you and me to sin and it not affect the lives of everyone around us, our sin hurts other people, period. and Sometimes great #'s of people. But you recall that the Lord told the prophet Gad to have David go and purchase the threshing floor of Ornan (that was the place where the Lord stayed His judgment, where He held the angel back) and David was to build an altar and make atonement there for his sin. and Upon doing that the angel sheathed his sword, the sacrifice for sin sheathed the sword of God's judgment.

It was just a real powerful picture there of worship, and intercession. You recall Ornan wanted to *give* David his threshing floor, and everything else he needed to make his offering to the Lord. But David said, "No, I'm not going to give to the Lord that which belongs to you and I refuse to sacrifice to the Lord with that which costs me nothing, I'm paying the full price." and Of course we spoke of what it means to worship the Lord, and give to the Lord from the heart in our worship to the Lord as opposed to our cast offs and leftovers. But David also serves to illustrate for us there kind of a type of Christ whereby the greater than David, the Son of David didn't shortchange the situation, or look to get away with doing the least *He* possibly could to make a sacrifice for sin. But rather He paid the *full price* in His sacrifice that the plague of sin and death might be with drawn from us in Him.

Well, upon all that taking place, the Lord directing David to sacrifice there, to purchase the ground there, the angel of the Lord sheathing his sword there David realized that *that* was the place where God desired to have His temple built. You remember that the Lord had told the children of Israel through Moses, "*...when you cross over the Jordan and dwell in the land which the LORD your God is giving you to inherit, and He gives you rest from all your enemies round about, so that you dwell in safety, then there will be the place where the LORD your God chooses to make His name abide. There you shall bring all that I command you: your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, the heave offerings of your hand, and all your choice offerings which you vow to the LORD.*" Deut 12:10-12

Upon all this taking place, when God directed him here, told him to purchase that plot of ground and sacrifice to him there, it clicked in David, the lights came on. “This is the place that God desires to meet with us; this is the place that God has chosen to make His name abide.” and So it was established to build the temple right there.

Vs1

Oh there was no temple there, no permanent altar there, but David knew, “This is the place.”

Now today we realize that there’s no place in particular no special place, or some place that’s more spiritual than another that we’re to meet with the Lord, and offer praise and worship *to* the Lord. Sure the bible teaches that we’re to assemble together as a corporate body, but whether that be in this place, or another place, that’s a peripheral issue. Now our worship to God doesn’t ascend from a particular *place* but rather a particular *position* of the heart. Jesus said, “...*the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.*” John 4:23-24 So that is our call, that’s God’s direction for *us*, for David in this day, and for the children of Israel God had appointed a place that they were to meet with Him, and this was it.

Again this is just an incredible testimony of how God can take those things would otherwise ruin us and bring something redemptive out of them. He can take those things that are meant for evil and turn them for our good, His glory, only God can do that.

Vs2-4

So David used the best materials, and the best laborers regardless of whether or not they were people of the covenant. It wasn’t Jews exclusively that worked on and constructed the temple, but Gentiles helped in the project as well, and David didn’t contract exclusively from Israelis, he had cedars brought in from Tyre and Sidon. So understand that when it comes to Christian business practices, that if it’s on your heart to work with and contract exclusively to bros and sisters in the Lord that’s fine, but it’s not sin to simply hire out the best laborers and the people with the best materials even if they’re not believers.

Vs5-6

Couple things here, #1 I like the fact that David is breathing purpose and vision into his son Solomon. He’s letting his son know that God has a great plan and purpose for his life, so many young people walk around today not knowing who they are or what their purpose is, with out hope being with out God in the world. and If I were to sight one major weakness in David’s life (though there were a few as with all of us) but one of his areas that he really seemed to fall short in was with his family, his home life. There was all kinds of inner struggles in his family and for the most part though he was an incredible leader on a national level, his family suffered. But here he gives us a shining example and I think it’s one we do well to grab hold of and incorporate as parents.

That is to pass on God's vision and letting them know that God is going to use their life in an awesome way. When I'm praying for my kids (of course Greg is a little beyond the tucking in phase now) but it's not uncommon for me to pray in that way in their hearing, "God I know you've got a great plan for their lives, and I pray that they would grab hold of it and glorify You *through* it." We need to give our children that sense of purpose, that God has a plan for them (because He does).

#2 David shares another great principle, when it comes to our labor in the Lord, we don't hold back and there's no skimping. (Vs 5) He says, "The house to be built for the Lord must be exceedingly magnificent." Translation, "We're not going to do this ½ way, ½ hearted, .5 or shortchanged." and This kind of goes along with what we were developing last week about God being worthy of our 1st fruits. and That applies across the board, whether it be our time, our efforts/energies, resources or whatever. When we're doing something for the Lord, we go all out. I hear it all the time (and I love it) but it usually comes from a misunderstanding of this principle right here. But when it comes to the various things we do as a ministry, the last couple of years we've done the family day outreach for the downtrodden in our area.

We'll hear, "You just give away hundreds of sets of school supplies, free airbrushed T-shirts, you feed 500 or so people, do worship, devotions, games, so and so forth, man that seems like a lot of work." and It is, but what we do for the Lord we want to be *exceedingly magnificent*, or with V.B.S. or the Harvest Party, we gave away bikes, food, candy, had the petting zoo, the paintball tent, countless hours spent in preparation, and 700 or so people were blessed in Jesus name and I've heard over and over again how blessed people were, and all the comments about how people went all out. and That is such a glorious testimony, because we don't want to hold back in those things we do *unto* and for the glory *of* the Lord.

Even when it comes to our building and grounds, sure there's still things to be done, but several people wanted me to do less, not spend that much or whatever, now we're by no means over the top, we're very casual and approachable. But we're not going sacrifice quality, or shortchange our efforts in what we do that we're going to tag God's name on. and That's just biblical, and it's not that environment is what it's all about, but it's about doing our best from the heart with out compromise to the glory of Jesus Christ and That's what David is communicating here, he didn't just set up a pole barn and say, "Well that'll work, what else do people need?" No way, the best materials (The cedars of Lebanon we're renown) 1,000s of tons of gold, and 10,000s of tons of silver, brass beyond measure, iron, marble and all the rest. and He passed this vision and this heart on the Solomon, God is deserving of our very best (and Solomon caught the vision and ran with it.)

Vs7-10

Of course the name Solomon means, "Peace." Now I don't want you to think that because David was a man of war that that was what God didn't approve or that it was somehow sin for David to defend Israel or to war against his enemies. God (contrary to popular opinion) isn't always against war, as a matter of fact there are many times throughout the scriptures that

He led Israel to go to war. It was in part how He'd mete out judgment against various nations. In a very real respect much of David's ministry was in warfare. The idea that God is communicating here is that when it came to His name and what He wanted people to associate His name with it wasn't warfare that He wanted people to identify Him with. Struggles or stress, bloodshed and battles, but rather God desired to be identified with peace and rest, because that's His heart towards man. Sure if man doesn't respond there's judgment, but God's 1st desire is that of peace, the offer of rest. Remember what Jesus said? *"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."* Matt 11:28 That's God's heart towards humanity, so Solomon was to build the temple.

Vs11

What's the purpose behind prosperity? Productivity in the kingdom, that you may build the house of the Lord your God.

Vs12-13

So this is much like the passing of the torch from Moses to Joshua. David tells Solomon to be strong and of good courage, not to fear nor be dismayed. He's encouraging Solomon to trust in the fact that God is in control and that God will be a shield about Him and a strong tower for him. and You might note the pathway to prosperity here in Vs 13, and I'm not simply referencing material type prosperity though I suppose if God wants to do that that's great. But the pathway to spiritual prosperity is found herein as well, take care to fulfill the statutes and judgments with which the Lord charged Moses. Or another way to understand that, "Study God's Word, and obey God's Word." Remember when David didn't know and didn't do it? Uzza died because he reached out his arms to steady the ark from falling off the cart, David wasn't doing what God's Word instructed. Then he searched the matter out, found out what the Word said and he did it, then he prospered.

Now would he have prospered if he knew what it said, but then did his own thing? No, it's not in being a hearer, one who knows it, the keys is found in being a doer of the word and not a hearer only. Remember James said, *"... be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves."* James 1:22 On down in Vs 25 he said, *"...he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does."* James 1:25

Vs14-16

David took his mission to prepare the work very seriously, he didn't pout because he couldn't build it, but instead he took every measure to prepare the way for the one who would. Gathered materials, prepared some of the materials, had the blue prints drawn up, accumulated the vast resources, gained peace and rest through war all around, purchased the building site.

He did his very best, and he encouraged Solomon not to be content even with that but to add to it, expand upon it. But this speaks to us in that maybe I'm not called or cut out to be a missionary or in ministry full time vocationally, but I don't have to pout about that or just do nothing then. I can get behind, come along side and help those whom God *has* called to that work. Get involved to the degree that you can. David says, "Man I've done as much as I possibly can, I've taken great pains to accumulate resources for you, now use them wisely. and Solomon obviously being a young guy and overwhelmed at the enormity of the task that lie in front of him took his dad's advice. David said, "May the Lord give you wisdom and understanding," (which is something we all need) but remember when the Lord appeared to Solomon? What did he ask for? Wisdom, he knew that he wasn't in himself able to take on such a feat as what had been entrusted to him, but he needed that supernatural guidance from the Lord. and Of course God honored his request and gave him wisdom beyond measure. and The bible tells us that if we lack wisdom that all we have to do is ask and God will be well pleased to give it to us.

Vs17-19

Finally David spoke to the leaders of Israel, exhorted them to come along side and support Solomon. Why? Because he knew that even the greatest leader couldn't single handedly accomplish a great task, when God calls a leader, He calls other leaders around that person to come alongside and support the work. and David rounds out his exhortation with a reminder of the proper priorities, before anything is done don't neglect your personal relationship with the Lord. Set your heart to seek Him before your set in motion to *serve* Him. Seek the Lord, spend time with the Lord, then serve the Lord with all your heart, and continue to seek Him while you're serving Him. It's quite possible to set your heart and soul to seeking the Lord *while you are* serving the Lord. and That's what we're to do, God help us that we never neglect setting our heart and soul toward seeking Him, even in the midst, or perhaps I should say *especially* in the midst of serving Him.

Ch 23

Vs1-5

So as David's life draws to a close he really steps up the organization and administration, and we're told in 2nd Chronicles 29 that the prophets Nathan and Gad were instrumental in directing David according to the Word of the Lord. We serve a God of order. Now there are going to be significant chunks of these next several Ch's that we'll be just skimming past, but what we glean in the big picture is that David was a man with vision and initiative. He caught the vision of organization and administration from the Lord, and then he took the initiative to implement what God was showing him. He was a doer, we need to be doers of God's Word.

We need to be open to God moving in fresh ways in our lives, there were some changes taking place here. and This could've really rattled some cages because they were about to do things differently than they'd ever done them. and I'm not sure why (other than the fact that we're creatures of habit) but anytime something starts being done differently than we've done it before, instantly people have a tendency to freak out. But the Levites were ready to follow along with the flow of something new, doing ministry a little bit differently than in the way that they'd previously been accustomed.

David took 24,000 of them who were to be on rotation with respect to the happenings in and with regards to temple service. 6,000 would be scattered about as officers and judges having a keen grasp on God's Word, 4,000 would be on rotation as gatekeepers, and 4,000 would be dedicated to leading people into worship and giving praise to the Lord on instrument which David made for giving praise. and I love that about David, he was so gifted on multiple levels, he was a man both of warfare and of worship. and Really that's the same thing in several respects that God has called each of us to be, we're all to fight the good fight of faith, we don't wrestle flesh and blood, but powers, principalities, spiritual hosts of wickedness in heavenly places. and We're to be a people of worship, in spirit and truth with all that we are as unto the Lord. David's life was earmarked by warfare and worship.

Vs6

Now these families within the sons of Levi were separated hundreds of yrs earlier as well in the days of Moses. The Gershonites were the family responsible for taking care of the animal skins that covered the tabernacle. The Kohathites were to take care of all the furniture (lampstand, table of showbread, the ark etc) they were responsible for the tending to and transportation of all the articles of furniture. and The Merarites tended to the structural aspects, the pillars, and boards, so on and so forth.

Now down in Vs 12 you'll note the family of Kohath, in Vs 13 you see that Aaron was of that particular family and it was through the sons of Aaron that the priesthood was set apart. So every priest was a Levite, but not every Levite was a priest, you had to be of the lineage of Aaron, notice Vs 13.

Vs13

What were the responsibilities of the priests? #1 That he should sanctify the most holy things; he was to have an active concern for holiness, he was to discern between what was holy and what was not which means holiness had to be apart of his personal life. The bible tells us that we're to be holy for the Lord our God is holy, we should have an active concern for holiness. #2 He was to burn incense before the Lord, of course we know that the burning of incense in the scriptures is a picture of prayer. The bible calls us to be a people of prayer, "... *praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints--*" Eph 6:18

#3 To give the blessing in His name forever, that is they stood to reflect and represent the Lord to the people, and God desired that they bless the people in His name forever. Of course we're the representatives of Jesus Christ to this world, and God desires us to be a blessing in His name. Ok, we have long list of names here, look at Vs 24.

Vs24-26

You see things were going to be different, but that's ok, we should be open to God doing a new and fresh work, even using our lives in a manner that's different than He used to do. You also probably noted that David lowered the age of serving from 30 to 20.

No doubt in part because there was much more to do now than what there was previously and in part because God was just doing a new work, getting some younger people in there serving Him, being trained up in their lives set apart to Him. and I like that, God has blessed us with a well rounded fellowship (age wise) but even still I'd like to see even more younger people getting stirred up and involved seeking and serving the Lord. Being trained up in leadership positions for a life led in service to the Lord.

Vs26-30

How convicting is that? How do we start our everyday, and how do we end our evening, whining and griping, moaning and groaning, or giving thanks and praise to the Lord? It's real easy for us to slip into that "Debbie downer" frame of heart and mind. We're never happy, always critical, nothing positive to say about anything, and that's completely unbiblical, God help us to be transformed from such a disposition. The bible tells us that in everything we should give thanks, for such is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Yet I wonder how often that's actually a reality for each of us? and I would imagine it would be a real cure for the critical spirit if we were to just simple offer thanks and praise to the Lord each morning as we start our day, and each evening before we sign off. Just ask the Lord to give you a heart of praise and thanksgiving.

Vs31-32

So the Levites served in many ways like the NT deacon, connected closely to the priesthood, being there for the people, praying for the priests and the people, coming alongside to meet real practical needs, an incredibly valuable and much needed area of service.

Ch 24

Ch 24 begins by breaking down the priesthood. In Vs 1 we see the son's of Aaron, of course Nadab and Abihu were killed by the Lord for offering profane fire before the Lord and you can read of that in Lev Ch 10. Now they didn't have any kids, so the breakdown begins with Aaron's 2 other sons Eleazar and Ithamar, now there were more sons that came through Eleazar than Ithamar so David divided it up accordingly 16 by Eleazar and 8 through Ithamar. So there was to be 24 divisions serving on the average of 2 weeks per year, of course this would keep things fresh and keep them from growing insensitive to the holy nature of what they were doing. and They were divided up by lot, the lot was cast and that determined which group served at what time (in what order). and This system was still in effect at least in part clear up until the time of Christ because you remember Zacharias was on his rotation serving in the temple when Gabriel appeared to him and told him that he'd have a son in reference to J.B. and He served in the division of Abijah whom you find in Vs 10 (the seventh division interestingly enough) and you find that whole happening there in Luke Ch 1.

The rest of this Ch lists the various names of the people of Levi and how they cast lots for their order of service just as their brothers the sons of Aaron did. and They didn't respect rank, or seniority, the older and the younger cast lots the same. and That was kinda cool because should the older and younger be paired up, you'd have some real opportunity for discipleship taking place there.

Ch 25

Ch 25 deals with the musicians, the worship leaders. Just a couple things I'd have you note from this Ch.

Vs1

Then it begins to list them out, but notice that they speak of the worship leaders as those who prophesy with stringed instruments and cymbals. Now we note from 1 Cor 14 that prophesy is edification, exhortation and comfort to men. and This in large part is a real aspect of what worship leaders do.

Worship edifies the body, it stirs or exhorts the body into action, and there's real comfort found in our time of worship. and Often times there doesn't even need to be words sang, oh certainly words can minister powerfully, but often times even during the time that music is just playing. The Spirit is edifying and exhorting and ministering comfort to the body, and in that sense worship musicians often prophesy on the stringed instruments, on the cymbals, keyboards or horns. and That's why it's important that as musicians we seek to play skillfully before the Lord, because we don't want to always be quenching the Spirit by hitting wrong notes and breaking the flow. It happens occasionally (welcome to humanity) but we like that to be the exception rather than the norm.

But he lists here Asaph who had 4 sons, Jeduthun who had 6 sons who prophesied with the harp to give thanks and praise to the Lord. Then in Vs 4 we read of Heman who had 14 sons and 3 daughters. Notice Vs 5

Vs5-8

You see they mixed it up, the skillful were able to train the students being mixed and mingled together. But what grabbed my attention was the fact that Heman had 17 kids and everyone of them were under the direction of their father. He had a full time ministry, and a fulltime plus some family and yet everyone of his kids were under his direction, and followed him in the ministry. What an amazing testimony, they weren't against him, in rebellion before him, they were under his direction, and they gave themselves to serving the Lord as well.

Ch26

Ch 26 deals with the gatekeepers, who were the gatekeepers? They were the ones much like our modern day ushers who kept order, safety and security in the happenings of the temple. These guys are invaluable, as long as the gatekeepers were on duty, there would be order, there would be peace, the only people there would be the ones who were prepared to be there, ready to worship. and They were ready for action kinda guys, you weren't going to disrupt the service. Vs 6 speaks of these guys being men of great ability, notice Vs 8 (read)

Vs 9 again speaking of able men, God's enlistings are God's enablings and we should serve the Lord with every ability He's equipped us with. We thank God for the gatekeepers. and Of course they cast lots to see what group guarded which gate. Vs 20 begins to speak of the Levites over the treasuries of the house of God. Ahijah was that man, then there were several underneath him as well. In Vs 26 we see another fella who was over another portion of the treasures and dedicated things, notice (Vs 26-28).

Vs 29 through the end of the Ch dealing with various officials and judges appointed by David over Israel outside of Jerusalem.

Ch 27

Vs 1

Here's the deal David divided the military into 12 divisions each one having 24,000 soldiers and each division was called up 1 month out of the year. and There was no worries about a draft because if you were of age, you served in the military when your time came, period. and It lists the 12 divisions and the head of each division and what you find is that at the head of each division was one of David's mighty men. Translation, if you hadn't been in some battles and come through the other side, you weren't fit for leadership. Only those who'd successfully fought the enemy in battle were assigned to lead the troops, and I think there's some real wisdom in that, no one who was a novice, but those with some war-faring skills under their belt. Vs 16-24 lists various leaders over the tribes, and Vs 25-34 brings out David's personal administration. (Vs32-34, read)

So all kinds of lists, names that are pretty much irrelevant to us, yet God knows and has recorded everyone of them. and You know what? Our names are pretty much irrelevant to most people, but God knows who you are, and He has you written down in His book. He has a plan for each one of us individually, and it fits in the big picture collectively. We serve a God of order and organization, and it's not that our worship can't be spontaneous, but it shouldn't be disorderly. So be diligent about what God has called you to do and be a blessing to the people in His name.

Prayer Points:

God may there be an active concern for holiness in each of us, and may we be found a people of prayer, praise and thanksgiving, being a blessing to Your people in Your name. Help us that we not lose focus but that we continue to set our heart and our soul to seek You as we serve You. and God as we serve You, may it be with our whole heart, not holding back, not ½ hearted but with all that we are, being flexible and yielded to what You want to do, the way You want to do it.